

## **Chapter 2: The Falling Away**

The decline of the Christian Faith has been caused by more than the emergence and progression of science. The established church has generated its own problems in terms of its historical conduct. In modern times it is quite understandable that the church as an organisation receives increasing disapproval from a younger generation. The churches history of control, manipulation, and slaughter prevents many people from considering if God exists or even to learn His teachings. This may be due to people's tendency to associate the negative actions of an organisation to its belief system. What I am attempting to demonstrate is that the religious system itself causes many people never to consider the existence of a creator and who would want to go to church anyway? Why would anyone want to spend their Sunday morning in a cold building sat on hard pews, listening to a sermon that they don't understand? It is not surprising that people have moved away from these beliefs when the religious system, which is attached to them, does not provide any stimulation or motivation for someone who does not understand its teachings.

As a result of misunderstood religious practices the modern mind forsakes ancient knowledge and wisdom because it refuses to understand the meaning behind its practices. This mindset is completely related to image. Therefore the more that the image of the church as an organisation becomes tarnished so it seems that the beliefs and ancient knowledge are lost to many as they will never consider the Bible itself as a source of wisdom or enlightenment because of these negative connotations. Also many of the rituals of the established Christian religious system hold little meaning to a younger generation who seem unable or unwilling to understand them.

A pattern has now emerged. Beliefs become associated with rituals. The older generation continue these practices and younger people don't understand them. As a result of this they move away from the church because it does not provide them with any meaning. However there is one common factor between the generations. The rituals themselves have become more important than the reason for which they were first undertaken. The faith is not passed down, only the continuation of repetitive practices.

The worldly view of the church is largely based upon its visible activities rather than the knowledge and principles on which it is based. The church is divided into different denominations and interpretations of scripture have caused the formation of different groups, which apparently follow the same principles, but from an outside perspective appear to conflict with each other. This has caused uncertainty resulting in an empty following of religious tradition, which seems increasingly outdated when compared to our modern lifestyle. New levels of socially acceptable behaviour often conflict with church views resulting in an overall abandonment of its traditions and principles. However if you examine the trend of religion and the adoption of science as the de-facto standard of knowledge and wisdom the pattern is quite similar.

All major religions have some form of principles and guidelines and a moral code of conduct as their foundation, which is either derived from the ancient knowledge itself or by agreement of those who are members of the groups themselves. These groups also have their martyrs. Those who would face death to stand for their principles. Unfortunately they also have those who would kill and corrupt to spread their ideology for their own personal gain. Although this seems archaic and barbaric to the modern mind it is apparent that science has a very similar history when it is closely examined.

The principles of science faced a struggle against established religion. Any person who spoke against the beliefs of the church faced exclusion and death in just the same way that Christians faced in the beginning of the foundation of the church. One example of this was the charges of heresy, which were brought against Galileo Galilei in 1616 and 1632 for accepting and teaching Copernican's theory that the earth is spherical, not flat, and for proving that the earth orbits the sun. These teachings were in contradiction to the Catholic churches beliefs and lead to his arrest. However the Bible does not contain any contradictory information to Galileo's claims and his condemnation was influenced by those who were seeking to keep power rather than to discover the truth.

One of the most startling observations of historic Christian religious practice was the fact that at one time ordinary people had no access to the Holy Scriptures. This was due to the establishment's insistence on teaching using the Latin language, when only those who were educated could understand it. Therefore the teachings of the church were completely inaccessible to the average person at that time. It was only later that people had the opportunity to study the scriptures themselves, but before this could happen, corrupt men had exploited Christianity for their own means to such an extent that in future years many people would be hesitant to learn its teachings, especially in these modern times, because of the horrific history of holy war and persecution.

The church was a mysterious organisation in historical times to many people. Only the privileged few could really understand its teachings. However it is also evident that science itself has a similar characteristic. This is only understandable when it is related to the average person. Sciences teachings are simply too difficult for all people to be able to understand. Therefore the average person is unable to question its facts fully. In essence we have the same problem existing today as the church suffered in the past. Scientific terms and explanations have become the new Latin. Ironically some scientific terms use Latin words to describe its ideas, especially medicine.

You may be wondering what problem this causes. For some scientists there is no difficulty in learning all the required knowledge therefore they have no problem, but the rest of us are vulnerable to being deceived. When a scientist presents his or her information we are unable to prove for ourselves whether this information is the truth or a lie. Only after many years of study and access to appropriate equipment could we really evaluate the work of science for ourselves.

Even though we may not understand all of the principles of science or even be able to validate its facts we all embrace its technology. This is our visible truth, a comfort and a helpful tool. This is sciences contribution to the modern person. In essence it has become as the miracles of old. We don't quite understand it but we can embrace its benefits. This causes us to accept sciences facts largely without question, why bite the hand that feeds you? Why cast away your comfort? People never wish to leave their comfort zone. Therefore it is rare that an average person will ever question the work of a scientist.

I suppose that personal comfort could be the reason why so many people have chosen to completely believe all of the concepts of science. After all it can provide some help in our daily lives. It takes away any accountability to a creator by explaining the universe without including any concept of its creation. As strange as it may seem, for some people it is more comfortable to believe that life formed by accident and evolved to its present state, rather than to consider the possibility of creation. It may be an impossible task to prove that God exists, but it is also an impossible task to prove that

He does not. Due to the fact that many people disregard the notion that the argument of the existence of God is two-sided, any personal responsibility that may be inherited from our society to consider His existence is eliminated, because we naturally disregard the necessity to prove His non-existence if we are to embrace an atheistic explanation of our origin.

If belief in God and Jesus has fallen away to some extent because of the teaching of science and other philosophies what role has the church played in defending the Christian faith? Who has answered the numerous critics? Even the British Royal Family who have declared themselves as “defenders of the faith” have compromised its ideals by accepting other spiritual teachings which are contrary to the beliefs which they claim to defend. It seems evident that as societies belief system has become less tolerant of Christian teachings. The established churches religious practices have also shifted towards the acceptance of other philosophies and views rather than defending the principles on which they were founded. What is the result of this? Simply, we now live in a time where some churches no longer teach their beliefs, but rather encourage the modern principles of an accepted lifestyle. The practice of teaching a modern, politically correct morality and acceptance of other religious beliefs is contradictory and confusing when fully examined against the beliefs on which the church founded itself as the teachings of all faiths when studied state that they are the only true faith. Therefore if you study the various texts you would discover that, despite what some of our religious leaders would expect us to believe, the harmony between their teachings does not exist.

A major influencing factor, which has caused people to fall away from believing in God, is their assimilation of the opinions and arguments of the media and their peers. It has become a defacto standard to disregard any unpopular beliefs to be more politically correct and tolerant of other people. Therefore it's not just the teachings of science, which have caused us to change our thought processes or spiritual outlook. It is a combination of all factors that have been mentioned in this chapter. Therefore if we begin to think for ourselves and form our own opinions and beliefs we must examine all the evidence, lack of evidence, and teachings which have been made available to us over thousands of years of civilisation. We must begin to distinguish between facts, opinions, fiction and statements of faith to arrive at a deeper explanation of “life, the universe and everything”. My best friend of many years Nestor Lopez described this to me using the following analogy: “It is as if we have been tuned in to an incorrect frequency, that we are unable to receive the truth anymore.” Therefore we need to re-tune our minds into a frequency of learning and understanding all the knowledge which we have available to us rather than just simply accepting all that we are told without examining these issues for ourselves.