

## Deconstruction of faith 1/3

Hi all,

Many of us have seen well known Christian musicians, pastors, and others 'fall away from the Lord'. The modern term is 'deconstruction' of their faith.

Notable Christians who have 'deconstructed their faith' include: Marty Sampson, former Hillsong worship leader, Kevin Max from DC Talk, Derek Webb from Caedmon's Call, Michael Gungor (worship leader).

Kevin Max (DC Talk) said he has been "deconstructing for decades" and he now follows "the Universal Christ", believing in the "presence of the divine in literally every thing and every one."

**Deconstruction:** "The process of dismantling one's accepted beliefs" (A.J. Swoboda in *After Doubt*)

### Sometimes the lines are blurred

Sometimes a person who has deconstructed their faith thinks they are in a reformation. But deconstruction of anything is a tearing down of an existing structure, whether it be a building or a person's walk with the Lord. It isn't an active re-forming.

Reformation is the act of re-forming one's beliefs. That is a normal and good process.

### Rapper Lecrae Tweeted:

"One type of deconstruction actually involves using scriptures to deconstruct unhealthy ideas and practices." This is good and a life-long process of renewing our minds to God's ways and truth.

But on the other hand, he observed: "Many millennials are using culture to challenge scripture. This often leads to culture taking the precedence over scripture, and sadly people begin to deconstruct themselves out of the faith. We begin to question the Bible because it doesn't line up with culture."

This is modern deconstruction: Believing more in popular culture than in scripture, or their walk of what they know to be the Lord. It is a state of confusion of emotions and thoughts that leads to deconstructing one's faith.

Dutch reformer Jodocus Lodenstein wrote in 1674: "The church is Reformed, and always being reformed, by the Word of God."

**That is the key:** Is the deconstruction happening for the purpose of re-forming one's faith by the Word of God, or simply deconstructing it? Are you un-learning false doctrine and error and replacing it with right and balanced understanding, or just deconstructing your faith in the Lord and scripture?

### Popular culture and deconstruction.

When a person deconstructs their faith through modern culture, they see the Bible as a tool of oppression, old fashioned, and out of touch - not the standard of truth to be studied and lived by.

Going down that path then leads to the inevitable point of view that their truth is what matters, not the Bible's idea of truth. Each person therefore has their own truth, and my truth might not be your truth. "Everyone has to find their own truth" has been heard repeatedly in popular culture.

In other words, when you pull down scripture as one's final authority, all that is left is personal opinion. Truth is what each person makes it.

### Objective truth vs subjective truth

A lamp is in the room.

That is a true statement. It doesn't matter if you don't believe in lamps, or don't believe the lamp is in the room. It is in fact, in the room. A person may not like it that the lamp is in the room. They may not like the style of the lamp. They may be of the opinion that lamp shouldn't be there.

But it doesn't matter what they think or believe, feel or opine; the lamp is in the room. That is called objective truth.

But someone had to put the lamp there. Truth must have a truth-maker. Someone put the lamp there, then the lamp is observed to be in the room. These two elements are required for there to be objective truth. Truth answers to the truth-maker.

A lamp is in the room.  $1 + 1 = 2$ . If you jump out a window you will fall. Someone put the lamp there. Mathematics is the foundation that includes  $1 + 1 = 2$ . Gravity is the reason if you jump out a window you will fall. There is always a deeper foundation to truth, a truth-maker.

### **Popular culture, even among Christians, defines truth in a different way.**

When a person deconstructs their faith, they reject truth and the truth-maker. The individual is the truth-maker, therefore whatever they say is truth, is true. They will say of a (Bible) teaching: "What is true for you is not true for me." That's called subjective truth.

This allows a person to make emotional decisions based solely on their opinions and feelings. They will deny objective truth because their emotions don't agree with someone else's beliefs.

### **About the lamp**

In subjective truth, the person is both the truth-maker and the observer stating something is true. "I don't agree with the lamp being in the room."

They are the truth maker and determiner of what is truth: "I don't want a lamp in the room" and "I don't like the style of the lamp." Those 2 opinions form truth to them, so they feel they are right. Therefore the lamp is wrong. (subjective truth)

When applied to their faith in Christ, they deconstruct their faith because the Bible and teachings don't agree with their feelings and opinions. They believe teachings that are illogical and clearly proven wrong by scripture, common sense, even science. It is idolatry, placing their opinions above scripture, laying aside logic and objective truth, elevating self above all.

Next week, Deconstruction requires a crisis, and deconstruction seen in the New Testament.

Until then, blessings,

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Deconstruction 2/3, Shipwreck

Hi all,

I've been explaining the process of 'deconstruction of their faith' that many well known Christian musicians and ministers talk of doing. Of those we know, there are many more of our sons and daughters, grandchildren and friends who are also deconstructing their faith.

Deconstruction is not the act of reformation, which is to re-form ideas and understanding about the Lord. It is the act of tearing down all they were taught and knew and replacing it with popular culture's ideas.

Deconstructing one's faith requires a crisis.

A crisis of faith starts the process. It could be a tragic event that doesn't fit what they thought was God. It could be unanswered prayers concerning someone they loved taken by illness or accident. It could be they see a moral failure in a leader they had put on a pedestal.

Maybe they see something they don't agree with or question, and they find no answers in their church. Maybe they grew up isolated from other world views and were suddenly thrust into the world in college or their first job that challenged their beliefs.

Sometimes it starts with a person who can't reconcile Old Testament stories of violence, slavery, or death penalties for seemingly minor things by today's standards. They make the mistake of measuring

cultures 3000 or more years removed from the standards of today, rather than setting the Bible in cultural and historical context.

Christianity is not about fighting demons; it is about encounters with truth

Paul writes in II Corinthians 10:3-6 that our spiritual warfare is not power encounters with demons, but truth encounters. Here is the passage in the Greek:

"For the weapons of the warfare of us are not fleshly but divinely powerful to the demolition of strongholds, arguments overthrowing and every high thing lifting itself up against the knowledge of God and subduing and taking prisoner every thought into submission and compliance with Christ."

This makes it clear our battles are not primarily with demons, but our own thoughts and emotions. Our battle is one of encountering truth, objective truth, and bringing thoughts and emotions of subjective truth into obedience. Demons can intensify, entice, focus us on our emotions, but the primary battle is not wrestling with demons - but with our own thoughts and emotions.

We do this everyday in other areas as a matter of maturing in Christ.

Let's say we watched two people talk we love or respect, and we are offended by one person's way of speaking to the other. Not a sin, just something we think should have been handled differently. Or maybe that one person strongly holds an opinion you don't agree with.

An imagination and emotion rises up that makes us angry; we form an opinion they are wrong. We are disappointed in them. We now have an attitude towards that person. Our emotions are running away with us; thoughts are one with our emotions. To feel is to think, to think is to feel.

But then love rises up. A godly thought rises that it isn't our business how those two people interacted with each other. A godly thought rises into our minds from our spirit that says we need to mind our own business and lay our ideas and emotions and thoughts aside about it.

A godly thought comes that we reacted that way because our mom and dad acted that way to each other and it brings up all sorts of memories we need to take control over. Do we bring those emotions and thoughts captive to Christ, or entertain them and form a stronghold in our emotions towards that person? If we hold onto that stronghold, a demon can easily enter to entice us to more bitterness and wrong thinking.

We want to grow. We see the problem is with us not them. We 'forgive' though it isn't actually forgiving for no sin was involved. We let go and acknowledge to ourselves it isn't our business how 2 other people talk to each other. And the Lord's peace returns to our soul and thoughts towards our friend.

We have just successfully encountered the truth, brought thoughts and emotions captive, and grown a little bit in Jesus. Our battle was with truth, for Jesus is Truth.

Truth is our weapon by which we grow in Christ.

Jesus said He is the way, truth, and life, and way to the Father. In deconstruction ungodly thoughts and emotions are entertained and enlarged upon not brought captive to Christ. The belt of truth of Ephesians 6:11 holds the rest of the armor of God together.

Shipwreck of faith: I Timothy 1:19

1:19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some have left concerning faith and have made shipwreck...

Shipwreck: 'naugeo', literally, to break a ship. It is where we get nautical. Paul suffered a shipwreck documented in Acts 27. They ran aground and the ship broke apart, battered by the waves against the immovable shore. The word picture Paul uses is that of a person's faith running into the shore. Their faith breaks apart by waves and wind coming against it. What are the wind and waves making their ship of faith shipwrecked?

Ephesians 4:14-15:

"That we no more be like little children, tossed to and fro by every wind of cunning teaching and craftiness by people in their deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love we will grow in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, Christ.

People battling what popular culture says versus what they think they know of the Lord, need someone to walk them through deconstruction that they may go through a reformation.

In Philippians 1:9-10 Paul prayed they would have much knowledge and discernment. Acts 17:11 the Berean people are praised for examining scripture to see if Paul was telling the truth.

Jude v22 says to have mercy on those who doubt, and Jesus engaged those with hard questions.

Christianity isn't constructed by popular culture, it is a revelation from heaven. These people need someone who knows the Lord help them reconcile the issues they are wrestling with, that they might receive their own revelation from the Father concerning these things.

How to help someone struggling in their faith is next week. Until then, blessings,  
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### **Deconstruction 3/3, Answers**

Hi all,

How do we pray for a person deconstructing their faith? How do we talk to them?

#### **How to pray**

Jesus said in John 6:45: "Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to me." Hearing from the Father happens inside, internally, in the wrestling of thoughts and ideas. IF a person will learn what He is saying, they will come to Jesus.

In Matthew 16:16-17 Peter exclaimed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus told him: "You are blessed Simon, for man didn't reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven."

Peter heard and learned from the Father, and came to Jesus.

#### **Paul's prayers for others were also 'internally focused'**

In Ephesians 1:17-19 he prays:

"...cease not to give thanks for you, and that God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him (Father), that the eyes of your understanding would be opened to know the riches of His glory..."

Ephesians 3:14-20 provides more insight into his prayer in the first chapter:

"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. I pray that He (Father) out of His glorious riches, will strengthen you with power by His Spirit in your inner man...so that you would be rooted and grounded in (unconditional) love, so you will know the full volume of the love of Christ which is beyond knowing in the mind...."

#### **Combine those into a prayer for that loved person:**

"Father, I lift up \_\_\_\_\_ to you in the name of Jesus. I ask you give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of you, that you would open the eyes of their understanding to know your invitation in Jesus. That by your Spirit you will strengthen them in their inner man so they will become rooted and grounded in your love Father. That they will then be able to comprehend your great love for them beyond their ability to reason it out. Let them know that they know they are loved by you. Reveal these things to them deep inside them Father, and strengthen them to hear and believe, and come to Jesus with these revelations...." and words to that effect.

You can rebuke the devil over their lives all you want, but the human will is sovereign, and the whole kingdom flows from revelation from the Father. First, that Jesus is His son given for us, and then all else. It IS all about internal revelation from the Father. Pray for them accordingly. Don't tell the Father what you want Him to do, ask Him to do what He has already revealed about how He works in the inner man. Work WITH Him instead of telling Him what to do.

**Talk to them, as they allow, as they wrestle.**

Don't get in the Father's way by trying to reap a harvest before it is time. You may need many conversations with them over years as they wrestle. The Father is persistent. You may be on a roller coaster with them - up and all for God one moment, then down in a valley the next. You won't be able to see what the Father is doing in them internally, but when you see them wrestling with things deep inside, it is evidence it is the Father working.

Many see someone wrestling and think it is the devil after them. Certainly he can be an opponent in wrestling, but the match is between the Father and the person's will, and truth. Jesus is Truth.

**They use the same words but use a different dictionary to define those words.**

When people in popular culture mix up the differences between objective truth (Jesus) and subject truth (pop culture) communication becomes confused and unclear.

A very common example of using the same words but a different dictionary to define them, is the Jehovah Witnesses. They say they believe in Jesus, but they believe Jehovah created Jesus as the arch angel Michael. They believe when Jesus was born He was mere man, not God in the flesh. They believe Jesus wasn't literally raised from the dead, but only spiritually raised.

Same words, different dictionary. That's what is happening in popular culture. Therefore we need to define things for a struggling person. Bring them back not to religion, but the wisdom of how God defines things.

**Deconstruction is not about rebuilding a correct understanding of God**

So in their struggles, we have to rebuild that for them, brick by brick, over time, letting each brick of truth settle into and solidify with its mortar. The brick is the truth, the Holy Spirit and your wisdom are the mortar. It will take time for each 'brick' to connect with other bricks by the Holy Spirit mortar.

Deconstruction is not about getting your faith in God right, it's about making your views on everything match reality as seen in popular culture. So as we pray for the Father to give them revelation, to wrestle with them, to separate popular culture's thoughts from the objective truth of Jesus Christ and the love of the Father.

**Deconstruction has no end goal, no destination to deconstruction.**

When remodeling a building one does so with the intent to rebuild. Not so with those deconstructing their faith. They are just deconstructing.

The Father is internally, moving them from the authority of self to the authority of God. Satan used deconstruction in the Garden of Eden. "Has God said?" (Genesis 3:1)

Before the act of sin occurred, a lie was received. To say another way, an idea to deconstruct what God said came before the act. It was a lie, but the lie is designed to deconstruct what God said, and to bring confusion into the thoughts and emotions.

A loved one going through deconstruction is like a divorce. A divorce is a living death. It is a goodbye and hello again cycle that stirs up old memories and emotions. When we help someone reconstruct their ideas and faith in God, we need to focus on one brick of truth at a time, reaffirmed by our love for them, that we are for them, that we are here for them. In their wrestling with God and themselves, like any construction process, it doesn't look like the beautiful finished building - but give it time and faith in the Father's faithfulness.

New subject next week, until then, blessings,  
John Fenn

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