

**E B F**

Evidence Based Faith

New York Times, December 29, 2016



## The Evangelical Scion Who Stopped Believing

The son of a famous pastor, Bart Campolo is now a rising star of atheism — using the skills he learned in the world he left behind.

By MARK OPPENHEIMER DEC. 29, 2016

“he began telling friends that he was a ‘post-Christian.’”

# Why liberal theology has led to shrinking congregations, Toronto Star, December 2016

As a researcher it's not often you make a discovery that flies in the face of conventional wisdom but, when we finished assessing our data, that's what happened. We found it is conservative theology — with its emphasis on the **factual truth of scripture and God's activity in the world** — that fuels church growth. Liberal theology leads to **decline**.

## Why liberal theology has led to shrinking congregations, Toronto Star, December 2016

We found, **without exception**, the clergy and congregants of the growing mainline Protestant churches held more firmly to traditional Christian beliefs — such as the belief Jesus rose physically from the grave and that God answers prayer. The clergy of the growing churches were the most theologically conservative and the declining church clergy the least. When we used statistical analysis to determine which factors are influencing growth, conservative Protestant theology was a significant predictor.

**E**vidence

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the **evidence** of things we cannot see. **NLT**

**B**ased

Elegchos: a proof, that by which a thing is proved or tested

**F**aith



**“Why Christianity  
and not another  
religion?”**

**WCI, 1988**

# None of the Above

## American Religious Identification Survey

1 in 4 people self identify as a none	1940-4%	50 years
	1990-8.1%	18 years
	2008-15%	4 years
	2012-19.3%	2 years
	2014-25%	

The nones — people who are unaffiliated with brand-name religion — are the new major force in faith. And they are more secular in outlook — and “more comfortable admitting it”

## None of the Above

they're not hostile atheists, but rather **apatheists** who are ambivalent about religion . White says many of them are not opposed to the idea of God in general, but are turned off by a church full of lawyers (**power**), guns (**politics**), and money (**greed**). Nones are the product of a **secularized, privatized, and pluralized post-Christian world** in which many think they've heard and rejected the gospel, but most, in fact, don't even have the basic theological furniture in place to make a decision about it. Infected with "bad religion," they don't believe they're sinners, but "mistakers." **They don't look for solid arguments, but statements that have a feel of "truthiness," and "wiktiality"—truthiness approved of by popular majority opinion.**



## Acts 2 vs Acts 17, James E. White

“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, **as you yourselves know.**” Acts 2:22

“May we know what this **new teaching** is that you are presenting? You are bringing some **strange ideas** to our ears, and we would **like to know what they mean.**” Acts 17:19-20

some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to **hear you again** on this subject.” vs 32

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The background is a dark, deep blue with a fine, grainy texture. A faint, glowing geometric pattern, possibly a cube or a similar 3D shape, is visible in the background, rendered in a slightly lighter shade of blue with some yellowish highlights, giving it a three-dimensional appearance. The overall mood is mysterious and contemplative.

**How much faith do you need?**

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “**We have seen the Lord!**” But he said to them, “**Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.**” **John 20:24-25**

Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen.

Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. **He saw and believed.**

**vs 6-8**

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. **The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. vs 19-20**

Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, **that we may die with him.**” **John 11:16**

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, **so how can we know the way?**”  
Jesus answered, “**I am the way** and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except **through me.**” **John 14:5-6**

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. **Stop doubting and believe.**" vs 26-27

How much faith do you need?

51%

“We both believe, and disbelieve a hundred times an hour....” **Emily Dickinson**

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, “**I do believe**; help me overcome **my unbelief!**”

**Mark 9:24**

It's not the strength of your faith that matters, it's the object of your faith



Thomas said to him, “My **Lord** and my **God!**” vs 28

Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have **not seen and yet have believed.**” vs 29