



Deconstructing Faith:

A Gospel Response

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Deconstruction - How is the term used?

Popularity of term has led to ambiguity of what it means

- Process of examining beliefs that leads to a strengthening of one's faith, making one's faith their own
- Process of tearing apart beliefs not to strengthen faith, but to destroy faith, to walk away



Faith Deconstruction – What is it?

- Claims of those who are faith deconstruction proponents
 - Authority is in the reader/hearer, not the author
 - The Bible is not inerrant, inspired, authoritative, not to be relied on
 - Christianity, the Gospel, is simply a social construct
 - The Bible promotes power relationships, oppressor over oppressed
 - Commandments – given to oppress
 - Evangelical Christianity promotes oppression (men over women)
 - Therefore, we need to deconstruct, tear apart, throw out beliefs taught by the Bible – specifically beliefs of evangelical Christianity
 - Deconvert, Progressive Christian, Exvangelicals, Agnostic, Atheist



Faith Deconstruction – Why

- Desire to know the reasons for beliefs – Is Christianity reasonable? Does it make sense? What evidence is there?
- Trauma, suffering
- Alliance of evangelical churches with a political party – played out with slander, arrogance, lack of love for those who hold different positions
- Popular trend



Faith Deconstruction – Why?


- Church hurt (reason most often given)
 - Hypocrisy
 - Abuse – spiritual, physical, sexual
 - Wrong theology of the Gospel – the Gospel plus, the Gospel shaped by culture
 - Sexual purity
- Desire to sin
 - LGBTQ, pornography, other sexual sin
 - Pursue, do whatever one wants



Faith Deconstruction – Why?

- Fear of asking hard questions
- Questions discouraged
- Answers are thoughtless
- Churches don't know what to do with faith struggles

Consider Jesus – John 11



Faith Deconstruction – How do we respond?

Need to know...

- What are the premises?
 - Truth or lies
- What is the process?
 - Who? What?
- What is the goal?
 - Stronger faith or abandoned faith



How do we respond?

- As ones who know the Gospel
 - Transformed and being transformed by the Gospel
 - Continually recognize our own need for the Gospel – humility
 - Ongoing transformation because of the Gospel – loves as Christ loved us
 - Understands in head and heart the grace of the Gospel –
 - All by grace – 100%
 - “Deconstructs” grace and....

How do we think about those who “deconstruct?”



How do we respond?

- As ones who know the Gospel
 - John 4:23-24
 - John 6:35, 8:12, 10:9, 11:25, 14:6
 - John 20:31
 - Romans 10:9-10
 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
 - Philippians 1:18-21

The Gospel = Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the crucified and risen Lord,



How do we respond?

- As ones who know the Gospel
 - The Gospel = Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the crucified and risen Lord
 - What is my only and my sure hope?
 - What is my greatest joy?
 - What is my highest goal?
 - What is my first pursuit, my passion?
 - What is my driving motivation?
 - What do others say about me as a Christian?



How do we respond?

- Be willing to ask ourselves the hard questions
 - Have I “deconstructed” my beliefs, the Gospel, by my words or actions?
 - The older brother in the prodigal son parable
 - Do I need to ask forgiveness of any who have been hurt by my own “deconstruction?”
 - Are there beliefs I hold that I need to “deconstruct?”
 - Do I know why I believe what I believe?



How do we respond?

- We listen...
 - What do you mean when you say you're deconstructing?
 - What's happened that's led to you examining? That's begun this process?
 - What's this process look like for you?
 - Who's walking with you through this?
 - How do you see this affecting you?



How do we respond?

- Listen for the lies in their premises
 - The Bible has no authority
 - My feelings give me my truth
 - I look inward for my identity
 - Religion, Christianity is subjective truth, not objective truth
 - I'm my greatest goal, I'm my own god



How do we respond?

- Remember where this began
 - Genesis 3 – be like God
 - Genesis 11 – name for ourselves
 - Exodus 32 – make us a god
 - Judges 21:25 – did what was right in their own eyes
 - Romans 1:21-25 – exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God, exchanged the truth of God for a lie



How do we respond?

- Remember who the faith deconstructor is
 - Created by God in His image
 - Sinner, or saint battling sin
 - Doubting or deceived
 - Wounded or wounded rebel
 - Seeker for God or to be own god
 - Loved to the uttermost by Christ



How do we respond

Moving toward reconstruction

- Stand fast on the Gospel – words, attitudes, actions
- Invite the questions
- Research the answers
- Enter into the spiritual battle by praying
- Persevere with love that is patient
- Follow the example of Christ
- Release to God what only He can do



Resources

- Childers, Alisa and Tim Barnett. *The Deconstruction of Christianity: What it is, why it's destructive, and how to respond*. Tyndale House. 2023.
- Keller, Timothy. *Making Sense of God: An invitation to the skeptical*. Viking Press. 2016