

The decline of religion affects everything

Faith is the glue that holds us together

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President Eisenhower, the architect of our victory in Europe during World War II, once observed, “Our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith.”

Ike echoed the sentiments of President John Adams, who said: “Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

That’s why the loss of faith is so deeply troubling and a development that will affect every aspect of American life.

In the latest Gallup poll, only 49% of Americans said religion matters in their everyday lives, a 17-point drop from a decade ago. The “nones” — those with no religious affiliation — grew from 16% in 2007 to 29% today, surpassing Catholics at 20%.

Since the baby boomers, each generation has been less religious than the last. Fewer than 45% of 18- to 29-year-olds identify as Christians, compared with 78% of those 65 and older.

Such trends don’t happen in a vacuum. Here, they are the result of decades of indoctrination by public education, academia, the news and entertainment media and politicians.

The left insists that the First Amendment establishment clause prohibits any religious expression in public schools. In public education today, pro-choice pleading and transgender advocacy are embraced, while mention of God is verboten. A high school football coach lost his job for praying on the field after a game. He was eventually vindicated by the Supreme Court.

In 1951, William F. Buckley Jr., the father of modern conservatism, published “God and Man at Yale,” in which he accused the Ivy League school of indoctrinating students in socialism and secularism. Yet colleges and universities of that era look like Sunday school picnics compared with 2025, when it’s easier to get recognition of a chapter of the pro-Hamas Students for Justice in Palestine than a Christian club.

In movies and on TV, religious characters are usually portrayed as frauds or fanatics: Elmer Gantry or Osama bin Laden. The news media report on clerical scandals in loving detail. They frequently apply the prefix “ultra” to groups that are serious about their faith (such as “ultra-Orthodox Jews”) to stigmatize them.

The Democratic Party wages a holy war on religion. During the COVID-19 crisis, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo capped church attendance at 10 to 25 — even at St. Patrick's Cathedral, which can seat up to 3,000. Who needs prayer during an epidemic anyway?

The Democratic Party sees serious Christians and Jews as a threat to democracy. In 2024, the nones were one of the few groups where Democrats increased their share of the vote over 2020.

The loss of religion affects nearly every aspect of American life. The decline of marriage and fertility parallels the fall of religion. The loss of faith tends to promote a solitary existence.

In 1960, 75% of U.S. adults were married. Now, slightly less than half are. Once, churches guided youths on sex. Today's youngsters are more likely to listen to talk show hosts or podcasters on the subject.

The fertility rate, the number of children the average woman will have in her lifetime, has fallen from 3.5 in 1950 to 1.62 in 2023, well below the replacement level of 2.1. Demographic decline could lead to a fiscal crisis.

The only people having large families are members of faith communities: the Amish, Mormons, traditional Catholics and Hasidic Jews. Believers accept the command in Genesis to be fruitful and multiply.

Charity, productivity and even civility are influenced by religion. More than 2,000 verses in the Bible command us to care for the poor.

Work is seen as a way to glorify God. Ecclesiastes enjoins, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." Ask the average employer about the work ethic of millennials and Zoomers.

Even manners have become coarser in a godless age. In my parents' day, people were more polite and considerate. Men deferred to women. They didn't shout obscenities on the street. Airline passengers didn't get into fistfights at the boarding gate. Maybe there is something to "Do to others as you would have them do to you."

Faith is the glue that holds together a diverse people and a shield against the growing darkness.

Ike toured the liberated death camps of Europe. The Old General saw what happened when the God of the Bible was replaced by a savage deity worshipped with blood sacrifices.

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