



# **The Rise of the Nones and the Decline of Denominational Christianity: The Case for Reasoned Reform in the Christian Church**

*Mr. Charles R. Miller*

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More and more people are rejecting the trappings of organized religion and are practicing their faith unaffiliated with any religious sect. Sometimes called “the Nones”, Time Magazine reports these individuals are the fastest growing religious group in the United States. Partly because of this trend, Protestant denominations are in a downward spiral. They have lost one third of their congregations over the past decades and there are no signs that this decline will be reversed anytime soon. The author seeks to answer the question: Why are so many people disenchanted with denominational Christianity? He examines those factors that he believes, based on his personal experiences, has cost Christian churches credibility which, in turn, has been translated into a loss of confidence in their teachings and their practice of Christianity. Mr. Miller is uniquely qualified to make such observations. He spent a lifetime of service in one of the world’s largest Pentecostal denominations – serving as teacher of the Adult Sunday School class, Trustee and then Deacon – before experiencing a crisis of faith and dropping out of church altogether for over twenty years. Mr. Miller identifies with “the Nones” because he was one himself for two decades. The author, who returned to his faith a year ago, challenges many doctrines of Christian churches as unjust, out of date or simply inaccurate interpretations of the Bible. In support of his case, he takes the reader on a tour of early Christianity and the beliefs of those giants of the faith – Augustine, Aquinas, Ambrose, Tertullian, Origen and others - who formed most of Christianity’s doctrines and teachings and either assembled the New Testament or exerted great influence on which books were to be included. What the journey reveals is the surprising differences in the personal beliefs of the men who founded Christianity and who did not always agree on its doctrines or interpretations of the Bible. It is an eye-opening experience and a fascinating trip! Mr. Miller uses numerous examples to show why many Church doctrines and teachings are in need of an overhaul, a Second Reformation if you will. In presenting his case, Mr. Miller covers a broad range of topics including whether the United States was founded on the Christian religion; the Church’s ongoing battles with science and scientific discoveries; the processes involved in forming the New Testament; whether contemporary Christianity is even close to the teachings of Jesus Christ; alliances between religion and political ideology; the Church’s propensity to turn wars on sin into wars on sinners, and whether the Bible is infallible and without error. Whether or not you agree with Mr. Miller’s conclusions, you will not be bored and hopefully, you will feel challenged to take a hard look at what you believe and why you believe it.

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