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Christianity, Losing its Strength

“One nation, Under God”, these four words are said together towards the end of the USA national anthem. Children grow up in classrooms saying the words “Under God”, every day before the start of class. The original founders of this nation wanted religious freedom, not a nation without religion. With most of the original colonist being from Europe, United States of America was established as a Christian nation. However, as of late the percent of this nation that aligns with Christianity has been declining. According to the PEW Research Center, 71% of the USA said they were Christians in 2014, which is 7% less than the 78% in 2007 (“US Christians Numbers”). Although America in the past has been primarily Christian, in modern times the United States Christian population has declined because of the lack of interest in religion by the millennial generation, the individual voice social media gives to people, and the pluralist views from liberal political leaders.

Millennials care less about religion than any other generation before them has. One of the main reasons behind this cultural shift in religious beliefs is because of the lack of progression that religion makes. Our nation has become much more progressive throughout the past few decades, not only is abortion becoming more acceptable, but there is also a shift in the support of

gay marriage. Since the early 2000's gay marriage has been a topic of discussion in political debates. 31 percent of millennials who have gone faithless, say that the church's view on homosexuality was a part of their decision (Terbush). This shows how the inability for religion to progress is causing society to lose part of the millennial generation. It is very hard for someone to pick and choose parts of the bible, rather than believe the entire thing. The Bible is referred to as the truth in church, and when someone doesn't agree with parts of it, it discredits the rest of the book for that person. The same is seen through abortion, the bible states "You have been my guide since I was first formed . . . from my mother's womb you are my God" (Psalm 22:10-11). In this verse, God is conveying to his people that from the time of conception the child has a relation with the lord. If God believes that he has a relationship with the child, before it is even born then God is also saying that child is alive from the point of conception. However, according to a recent poll done by YouGov, only 36% of millennials believe that a fetus is alive at conception. This disagreement between the bible and the millennial generation's beliefs are caused by a lack of interest because you can't be interested in something you don't believe in. While disagreements with the teachings of the bible have an impact on the lack of religious belief of this generation, it certainly isn't the only issue with lack of interest. Naturally, with how old the bible is, one can't simply read it, interpret it, and understand it without having a translation or a prior background. The authenticity is lost, and conclusions are already drawn for many Christians by a translator. This inability to have a personal view of the bible leads to a lack of interest because the morals, and concepts are derived from a third party. In a culture where anything can be found on the internet, many millennials are used to drawing conclusions from

information rather than getting conclusions drawn for them. This is derived from the extra technology that is available to millennials, including social media.

Social media gives every individual the ability to discuss any controversial points they wish to discuss. The problem with this is that many of those people have no information to back up what they are arguing. Those who do have information on the topic, are often wrong because they receive their information from social media articles that have no merit. With children on Facebook as young as five years old, it is easy to understand why their beliefs in religion are fading. Fifteen years ago, religion and politics were two things that people didn't discuss in such a public format. Parents were able to teach their children about God in a positive way, rather than children hearing so many things testing their faith at such a young age. Any day of the week you can visit Facebook, and likely see at least one controversial post. Many of these posts are against what the child believes in, and can very easily convince him/her that his/her personal beliefs are incorrect. For an adult, seeing an opposing view on religion isn't something new. Adults have the ability to move on and keep their faith close to their hearts. Children on the other hand are very impressionable. Being young, they are also oblivious to what is truly happening in the world, while thinking they know everything at the same time. Facebook has been able to take full advantage of this trait within young people. Not only are people posting their beliefs for the public to see, but there are also advertisements disguised as articles. These articles often have little to no merit. While these articles are often based on speculation rather than facts, the Pew Research Center says that 61% of millennials are using Facebook as a primary news source (Mitchell, Gottfried, & Matas). This means that the generation believes most of what they see on Facebook to be factual, including those articles, or posts trashing

Christianity. This consistent opposing force of the anti-religious is causing millennials to believe Christianity has many scientific impossibilities, and is out dated. Along with being a focal point of different articles, religion has taken a front seat in politics, meaning religious political advertisements on Facebook as well. With its becoming more acceptable to advertise one's personal beliefs in public, it's bound to effect the political landscape, as well as the religions.

When the thirteen original colonies were first created in the USA, many of the citizens were running for the religious freedom the United States has offered. From the beginning, the European leaders of the "New World" have had pluralist, liberal political views. Originally however, those tolerances were for other Christian churches who ultimately have the same base of fundamental beliefs. Catholics, and Baptists alike, still read a very similar bible in church. Up until 1971, the USA never dealt with much variation in religion as it was over 90% Christian. However according to Gallup Polls, in 1971, the percent of American's who considered themselves Christian dropped below 90%, and eventually fell to 70% by 2014. The liberal political leaders want to convey this diversity as a positive for the nation. Most candidates on the democratic tickets for elections support policies that go directly against Christianity, such as abortion or the marriage of homosexuals. Today's politicians are even more pluralist than those who originally started what was supposed to be a religiously free nation, one in which the church was separate from the state. The nation was designed to respect the will of the people, however politicians have forced their will onto the people. In the world today if someone doesn't approve of gay marriage, they are referred to as un-accepting individuals with hate in their heart, rather than someone who believes in their religion. There is no longer room for people to stand up for what they believe in because of the back lash received from the media. This has caused

Christians to be shamed in the media for their beliefs and ideals. Political figures are also changing what is being taught to children in public state funded schools. Alabama, a state that is known to be part of the “bible belt” had to change their curriculum in 2015. According to Fiona Macdonald, Alabama is now requiring their schools to teach children about climate change, as well as evolution in a more serious manor, rather than warning the students that they are controversial topics. Students are now being taught things that push the political agenda, rather than being taught separate theories and have the ability to pick which theory is correct themselves. Regardless the reason, religion is being away from society.

The millennials have a bad reputation amongst elderly generations. While that reputation has been centered on a lack of work ethic, lack of religion can be added to that list of criticisms. With controversy surrounding the terms “Under God” in the pledge of allegiance, and “In God We Trust” on the USD, it is only a matter of time until the politically correct liberal politicians rid the United States of freedom of religion in public places. While originally the founders wanted to see a nation with freedom of religion, nobody ever promised freedom from religion. The need to not offend anyone has lead this nation to get away from supporting their religion in public, but that same religion is ok to attack. This has lead to a lack of interest in religion from the newer generations, individuals denouncing religions on social media platforms, as well as pluralist politicians making changes to policy. While it is impossible to imagine the USA without a church, it is not hard to imagine this nation with a declining group of Christians; Christians who will keep their religious views to themselves, because we are already living in that society today.

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