



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 18, 2025

A Christian Resurgence in the U.S.? To Some “Elites” and Gen Z, Faith Is Now Cool

“At least five times” in history, Christianity “has to all appearance gone to the dogs,” G.K. Chesterton observed in 1925.

“In each of these five cases it was the dog that died.”

Now, just maybe, there is a sixth case. It was in 1882 that the sickly but self-deifying Friedrich Nietzsche announced that “God is dead.” And in 2016, hard-left *Salon* ran the headline, “This is the end of marriage, capitalism and God. Finally!” Its [thesis was that](#) millennials were rejecting organized religion, belief in God, marriage, and capitalism, and that this reflects enlightenment. It’s true, too, that “capitalism” (read: economic freedom) may be on the ropes. As for Christianity, though, the academic who wrote the *Salon* essay certainly was perceiving something real. But was it just another (devil) dog having its day?

And is that canine now in its death throes?

After all, nine years later some of an even newer generation — the Zers — are rediscovering Christianity. What’s more, a new report holds that the “elite” has “changed its mind” on the faith.

But a question remains: What of their hearts?

Is This Another “Road to Damascus Moment” Moment?

Reason recently [reported](#) on this story:

Depending on who you ask, America’s young people are experiencing a religious revival. Gen Zers are now more likely to attend church weekly than millennials, with young men in particular leading the return to religious services. While Gen Zers are still more likely to identify as religiously unaffiliated than previous groups, there’s evidence that certain kinds of religious devotion are also growing in popularity — earlier this year, Roman Catholic dioceses around the Western world reported spikes in adult conversions.

As the decline in religious attendance has slowed, the past few years have also seen a clear rise in the status of religion. It’s becoming more and more socially acceptable to be religious in elite intellectual spaces — something that could have a real impact on how religion is perceived by everyone else.



shuang paul wang/iStock/Getty Images Plus



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 18, 2025

Of course, it's not surprising that people are searching for meaning. No amount of material wealth, comfort, cynicism, and atheistic agitation eliminates that God-shaped hole at a non-believer's core. What, after all, is the point of life? What are we if, as atheism holds, there is no God and we, being "cosmic accidents," have no souls?

We are then, as I always frame it, mere organic robots — some pounds of chemicals and water.

But is this really what you think and what you see when looking into, let's say, your beautiful child's eyes?

Moreover, if there's no God and thus no Truth, transcendent by definition, how can it logically be said that any moral or "value" is right or wrong, good or bad, better or worse? (Says who?) All then truly is "vanity," as Ecclesiastes puts it.

And people generally yearn for something more. They instinctively sense that man does not live on bread alone.

A New Army of God?

Returning to *Reason's* thesis, the outlet explains why it believes religion is regaining currency:

- 2000s internet "New Atheism" characterized religion, especially Christianity, as anti-intellectual and lower-class, fueled by backlash against Bush-era conservatism.
- Evangelical churches' suburban kitsch aesthetics (e.g., smoke machines, cheesy music) were mocked by establishment atheists.
- The Republican Party's shift under Trump, with diminished focus on religious issues such as marriage (post-*Obergefell*, 2015) and abortion (post-*Roe* overturn, 2022), diminished faith's right-wing associations.
- Wes Anderson's 2025 film *The Phoenician Scheme* reflects this transition, portraying Christianity credibly for an (pseudo?)elite audience.
- Catholicism's aesthetic appeal ("smells and bells") is driving its popularity among young adults.
- Religion is becoming "cool" again among the educated pseudo-elite.

Seed on Rocky Ground?

One could wonder, though, how deep these "conversions" are. Are these new adherents shining with the light of holiness — or just glomming onto the latest shiny thing?

Just consider the mention of Catholicism's "aesthetic appeal." It's certainly understandable that people would find the faith stylish, especially upon attending a traditional Latin Mass. Yet while the "smells and bells" are wonderful (I'm a Catholic), they are the faith's symbolism, not its substance.

Know, too, that Jesus spoke of seed on "rocky ground" because superficial belief is a perpetual problem. And coming to mind here is the 2002 Barna Group research [I've often cited](#). It found that only six percent of teens believed in morality (objective by definition).

Among "born again" teens, the figure was higher — *nine* percent.

In other words, these people might say they believe, but their philosophical foundation is that of a non-believer. After all, Jesus said, "I am the way, [and] *the* truth" (emphasis added). He did not say *a* "truth," *your* "truth," or a "belief-system" progenitor. And He certainly didn't say, "The road to Heaven is narrow."



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 18, 2025

“But, hey, man, whatever works for you.”

The Heart of Faith

In reality, the relativism (the “my values” mentality) Barna explored is what Chesterton predicted would be the “next great heresy.” This will, he wrote in 1926, “be simply an attack on morality; and especially on sexual morality.” It renders Christianity irrelevant, too, as it makes the sacrifice on the cross incomprehensible.

After all, the faith teaches that Jesus died for man’s sins. Yet if all is relative — if “morality” is mere human opinion — then there are no sins, only perspectives. There then was no reason for Jesus to sacrifice himself. And there then is, too, no reason to seek forgiveness because there’s nothing to forgive. You may as well just embrace hedonism and be done with it.

It would be interesting to conduct a survey on how many of these new converts believe in Truth (“objective morality”). This isn’t to sound a cynical note, mind you. It’s a given that among these adherents are true believers. Moreover, even some of those enticed by superficials will, perhaps aided by God’s grace, come to deeper faith.

We should realize, though, lest we be that seed on rocky ground, that faith is not merely about emotion. Rather, it is “an act of the will, informed by reason,” good theology informs. Also note that, relating to our time’s great heresy, morality is an integral part of it. If faith is not transforming your thoughts, words, and deeds — if you aren’t in this world but not of it — well, you’re doing it wrong.

In other words, you don’t embrace faith because it’s “cool,” though it may be. You embrace it because it’s true.



Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative,
non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



Subscribe

What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.