**The Fastest-Growing Religious Group in America**

**Introduction:**

According to James Emery White in his book, The Rise of the Nones, the fastest growing religious group in America is the “nones” [the religiously unaffiliated]. In the book, the author describes who the “nones” are and what they believe and don’t believe. He then lists ways that we can approach them and make a connection. Since this group comprises nearly 20% of the United States population, we need to listen.

**Body:**

1. **Who Are These People?**
2. They don’t care about practicing religion nor do they oppose it. Religion just doesn’t matter to them.

* They are not changing religious faiths. They are abandoning religion altogether.
* They are almost entirely Americans.

1. The “typical none” is male, young, white, not atheists, favors abortion and same-gender marriage, and tends to live in the west.

* Many “nones” consider themselves spiritual, but not religious. Many even pray on a daily basis.
* Another characteristic of the “nones” is that they are not “seekers.” They are not actively seeking or looking for a specific faith or religion. They are content with the way they are.
* Side note: According to a 2011 Baylor University Religion Survey, 44% said that they spend no time seeking “eternal wisdom.” In another study, 46% said that they never wonder whether they will go to heaven.

1. Many ideas and philosophies have helped cause the increase of the “nones.”

* The emphasis on evolution in many organizations, education, media, and government
* The secular boom of the 90’s
* The greed and immorality of televangelists
* Christians are perceived by many as unloving, uncaring, and hypocritical.

1. The “nones” live in a post-Christian nation, one where the very memory of the gospel is becoming non-existent. Three factors that are helping to turn America into a post-Christian nation:

* Christianity is losing its place as the dominant worldview [belief]. Many don’t think faith is relevant anymore.
* Many influential people are telling our nation that one’s faith is to be practiced in private, never in public. The spiritual is placed only in the private arena. One is not to even talk about faith publicly.
* People today are confronted with a huge number of religions, faiths, and philosophies that compete for their attention. For many, this means all truth claims are valid.

1. America has been bombarded by the “spiritual but not religious” teachers, books TV, radio, Internet . . . Some of their New-Age teachings seem to have influenced the “nones.”

* Three out of ten believe in spiritual energy in physical objects, 25% believe in astrology and reincarnation, 60% say that they have a deep connection with nature and the earth, 30% have felt “in touch” with someone who is dead, 15% have consulted a psychic.
* There are multiple truths out there. People may create truth for themselves despite the facts. Truth may also be whatever the majority believe to be true. [Example: Holocaust]
* Morals are seen as almost entirely relative. Morality is just a personal choice.

**Conclusion:**

So we have tried to describe who the “nones” are and what they believe. It’s mainly a belief in themselves and nothing else. (Acts 17:16-21)

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