

The Concurrently Companion



Episode 43: Reckoning with deconstruction stories (with Amy Auten)

Topic introduction

Today, we're talking about deconstruction of faith: What is it? Where does this term come from? What is our personal experience with this topic? What do we see in the data survey data about why people are deconstructing?

Discussion

Key terms: *deconstruction, crisis, apologetics, doubt, apostasy, epistemology, miseducation, idolatry, emotional health*

Discussion questions

What does “deconstruction” mean in the context of faith? What is the difference between doubt and apostasy?

What are some historical-philosophical roots to the idea of deconstruction? What were Derrida's ideas and arguments?

How can we have confidence that there is meaning—truth—behind words? Where does our confidence in *knowing* lie?

What is a healthy doubt process? What process might lead to harm? How do we handle (what is our posture towards) a crisis of faith?

What are the top six reasons young people are leaving the church? What are some of the failings of the church in this age?

What are the “externals” of the age that drive young people to look for meaning? How does pain and suffering factor into this equation? How do we/the church help them find the meaningful core: What can we say and do to affirm their process (and the emotions that come with it)?

How has apologetics changed in the last century? What was emphasized in Lewis's time versus now? What would a “whole-person apologetic” look like and consider?

Why does Jonathan opt for the term *excavation*? Do you find that term fitting? Why or why not?

How does idolatry (worshiping or believing in something that is not the true and living God) come into play in the deconstruction process?

What is the outcome (see the book of Judges) of becoming one's own authority?

How do we foster healthful process in kids and teens as they wrestle with the things of this world? How do we keep the main thing the main thing (sort through primary and secondary issues and help our children do the same)?

Consider diving into Tim Keller's material *Counterfeit Gods* and *Prodigal God* or Pete Scazzero's *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*.

Diagnostic questions

What have I made of utmost importance? My reputation? My comfort? Behavior? Myself and my authority in my kids' lives? Busy-ness? Preoccupation with my own pain? Entertaining myself or self-medicating? Are those things obstacles to engaging in my children, my peers, my church, my family members? Am I building an anxious learning environment, an anxious home environment, or one that is gracious for the process? Is this a legalistic or moralistic environment? Am I seeking submission to the good authority of the loving Father, pointing to His goodness, truth, and beauty? Am I allowing my children to rest, develop curiosity?

Is the individual across from me isolating or relationally connecting? Are they acting out? Are they asking for help? What media are they engaging/message are they hearing? Are they engaging wholesome routine activities? Are they engaging the spiritual disciplines/means of grace—fellowship, word, worship, sacrament?

Scriptural anchors/provision

And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. — Matthew 13:4-8

It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found. — Luke 15:32

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