

# The Concurrently Companion



## Episode 49: Hypocrisy, repentance, and the religious nones

### Topic introduction

Today, we're SOARing an article from the Associated Press, written by Peter Smith: "America's nonreligious are a growing, diverse phenomenon. They really don't like organized religion."

*Key terms: the spiritual "nones," organized religion, dogma, de-churched, unchurched, post-Christian, tentmaker, vocational ministry, liturgy, sins of omission or commission, agnosticism, atheism, relativity, accountability, spirituality, hospitality, repentance*

### Questions

Why do we recommend using SOAR when we look at things in the news?

What emotions might threaten to plow you under and derail the conversation regarding "organized religion" and the "spiritual nones"?

*Survey:*

What is the big picture or a brief summary of the article?

*Observe:*

What do you notice?

How is the article written?

What details are included?

What does it make attractive?

What details seem to be missing or left out (what would you include if you were reporting this story)?

According to the article, what types of things prohibit people from feeling at home with organized religion?

What is God like, according to the article, in the minds of these individuals?

*Ask: Who (and what is their background/vocation), what, when, where, why, how?*

*Analyze:*

Why are these things important?

What would we affirm about the storytelling as believers?

What is attractive to the individuals discussed in the story for leaving organized religion?

What (if anything) can we affirm regarding the individuals (their experiences and conclusions) about whom we read in the article?

What might we challenge through a biblical perspective?

Does the reporter suggest anything that should be done about this phenomenon? Does the reporter have any bias you can perceive?

What other stories do you know that this connects to? Compare/Contrast.

What questions does the article raise in your mind?

*Respond:*

What is the call to action for the Christian? For the church?

How might we live out a missional response to what we learned about those who do not feel at home in the church/organized religion?

## **Scriptural anchors/provision**

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. — James 1:26

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