Why people walk away from their faith...

What we need to do so we won’t!

You have to anchor the boat properly.

What kind of anchor holds your faith?

You have a very good chance of walking away from your faith.

It begins with doubt.

When doubts come...

They didn’t walk away because of Jesus...

Your anchor cannot be in how people act or what people think or even what you think.

Your anchor has to be in Jesus who rose from the dead.
Bell: There wasn't one exact moment, but there were a series of moments. One was developing a personal friendship with a member of my church who was gay. That led me on a years-long project of trying to figure out what
the Bible said about homosexuality. The idea that the Bible may have gotten this wrong was a big moment for me. September 11, 2001, was also a turning point. It was in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 that it struck me that people of other religions also believe God is commanding them to do things, things I thought were unspeakably evil, which led me to recall the things that my people — Christians — have done and continue to do in God's name that are unspeakably evil. That was the beginning of me wondering whether religion is just a belief system that people use to justify their perceived supremacy. From that initial wake-up call, I started getting involved in a lot more ecumenical and interfaith dialogues and that further relativized my beliefs.

Joshua Harris – Wrote I kissed Dating Goodbye – pastor for 11 years to a very large church—now he has divorced his wife — and said this: I have undergone a massive shift in regard to my faith in Jesus. The popular phrase for this is “deconstruction,” the biblical phrase is “falling away.” By all the measurements that I have for defining a Christian, I am not a Christian. Many people tell me that there is a different way to practice faith and I want to remain open to this, but I’m not there now.

Marty Sampson -Time for some real talk. I’m genuinely losing my faith, and it doesn’t bother me. Like, what bothers me now is nothing. I am so happy now, so at peace with the world. It’s crazy.

This is a soapbox moment so here I go ... How many preachers fall? Many. No one talks about it. How many miracles happen. Not many. No one talks about it. Why is the Bible full of contradictions? No one talks about it. How can God be love yet send four billion people to a place, all ‘coz they don’t believe? No one talks about it. Christians can be the most judgmental people on the planet—they can
also be some of the most beautiful and loving people. But it’s not for me.

I am not in any more. I want genuine truth. Not the “I just believe it” kind of truth. Science keeps piercing the truth of every religion. Lots of things help people change their lives, not just one version of God. Got so much more to say, but for me, I keeping it real. Unfollow if you want, I’ve never been about living my life for others.

All I know is what’s true to me right now, and Christianity just seems to me like another religion at this point. I could go on, but I won’t. Love and forgive absolutely. Be kind absolutely. Be generous and do good to others absolutely. Some things are good no matter what you believe. Let the rain fall, the sun will come up tomorrow.

Philemon 23–25
23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,

2 Timothy 4:10
10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica...

1 Timothy 1:18–20
18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,
19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, 20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

John 6:66–69
66 As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.
67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?”
68 Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.
69 “We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”
1 Corinthians 15
1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand,
2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,
5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.
6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;
7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles;
8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?
13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;
14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.
15 Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised
Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.
16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised;
17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.
19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

If the resurrection of Jesus is not my anchor - then I should walk away because it has to be the ONLY anchor.

Jesus has to be the anchor that supports my faith.

1 Corinthians 13:12
12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

If I get Jesus then what I don't totally get right now - I don't need to.

Can we know for sure beyond a shadow of a doubt that what we believe is true?
Sheri Bell:

I’m guessing God is totally cool with science.

Every time I see an amazing sunset, or the clockwork ebb and flow of a beach, or the birth of new life, I am thoroughly convinced that God, the Creator, exists. Because each of these visuals is simply mind-blowing in their intricate precision and beauty. God spoke, says the Bible, and creation appeared.

This universe is too intricate to just happen.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—
have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

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**Blood Flow Requires A Complex, Well-Designed System**

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Physicians have a special place among the thinkers who have elaborated the argument for intelligent design. Perhaps that's because, more than evolutionary biologists, they are familiar with the challenges of maintaining a functioning complex system, the human body.
I think there are good answers to the challenge of contradictions, but even if there were contradictions in the Bible, I would not abandon my faith. It might make me rethink inspiration, inerrancy, and how the Bible was put together, but it would not cause me to walk away from Jesus.
“When you grow up in a community that holds a shared belief, and that shared belief is so incredibly central to everything, you simply adopt it.

Everyone I was close to believed in God, accepted Jesus into their hearts, prayed for signs and wonders, and participated in church, youth groups, conferences, and ministry. So, I did too.”
I was developing a personal friendship with a member of my church who was gay. That led me on a years-long project of trying to figure out what the Bible said about homosexuality. The idea that the Bible may have gotten this wrong was a big moment for me.

Jon: “If God is all loving, and all powerful, why is there evil in the world? Can he not do anything about it. Does he choose not to? Is the evil in the world the result of his desire to give us free will?

What about famine and disease and floods and all the suffering that isn’t caused by humans and our free will?

Randy Alcorn “The Bible itself raises this question. It never backs away from it. The problem of suffering and evil is in Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Job and many of the Psalms. God does not condemn people for asking such questions. For instance, Jeremiah 12:1 says, ‘Righteous are You, O Lord, when I plead with You; yet let me talk with You about Your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously?’ Many of the Psalms ask, ‘Why, O Lord do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? Why are the heavens silent when I ask for help? Why do the good suffer? Why
do the evil prosper?’ Anyone who tries to gloss over or minimize the problem of evil doesn’t get it.

Our anchor has to be on Jesus – that He is God – that He paid for our sins – that He rose again.

You will never walk away from your faith if you make Jesus alone the anchor.