

TRANSCENDENCE

A Life of Prayer

The Prayer Deception

Prayer Is Stupid, Unless..., Amy Julia Becker

There is a **practical utility** to Scripture reading. But prayer? Prayer is absurd, inefficient, immeasurable. Stupid.

Unless it's true that God **exists, interacts, and cares,** in which case prayer is an **inexhaustible gift** to my spirit.

Prayer Is Stupid, Unless..., Amy Julia Becker

Paul Miller in “A Praying Life”, writes about praying like a **child**—asking **as if** God wants to take care of us. And he writes about understanding our lives as a **narrative**, which means understanding our lives as lives of purpose, woven into the meaning of the entire universe. Our lives as participation in God's story.

Transcendence comes from the Latin prefix trans-, meaning "beyond," and the word scandare, meaning "to climb." When you achieve transcendence, you have **gone beyond ordinary limitations**

By every available **metric**, more and more
Christians are not engaging in **authentic** prayer.

Why?

Our disengagement from prayer falls into a **variety**
of reasons that break down into **two categories**.
One of **belief**, and the other of **behaviour**

Reasons We Don't Pray

The Pagan Problem

In pagan religions, there is a **cause** and **effect** concept.
And inadvertently we have **imported** this into Christianity

“If I pray, and do these actions, my god will hear me and grant my request”

Reasons We Don't Pray

The Belief Problem

This may follow from the previous problem, in that Christians don't believe that prayer **works** (as they understand it)

“God won't act anyways”

Reasons We Don't Pray

The Sin Problem

We believe (but do not say out loud) that we are too **sinful** and because of this, God ignores our prayers. How could God overlook our sins to even see us?

“My habitual sin has hidden me from God”

Reasons We Don't Pray

The Discipline Problem

We believe prayers need to be **intense** and **focused**. But because of the business of life, we don't have time

“I'll pray when I find some free time”

Reasons We Don't Pray

The Emotional Problem

We think prayer needs to come from our **heart**. If our **emotions** aren't in it then God won't hear it

“I don't feel like praying, I'm not in the mood”

The reality we are faced with is that it usually isn't **one** reason, but that it is a **combination** of the five

Pagan

Belief

Sin

Discipline

Emotional

Belief
Remembering
Reminding
Inviting
Recognizing

Participation
Partnership
Vulnerable
Process

Prayer is the **consciously** and **intentionally** creating **space** for God

Behavioural
Disciplined
Habitual
Need

Intimacy
Sacral
Holy
Combative

So often Christianity is seen as something that happens **to us (passive)**. The Biblical record shows that it is in fact the opposite of that. Not that we 'control' the outcomes, but that we **participate** in our own **spiritual journey**.

The **lie** I have been told all my life is that God would do it. That I was a **spectator** in my own spiritual life

When Elisha was in his last illness, **King Jehoshaphat** of Israel visited him and wept over him. “My father! My father! I see the chariots and charioteers of Israel!” he cried. **2 Kings 13:14**

Elisha told him, “Get a bow and some arrows.” And the king did as he was told. Elisha told him, “Put your hand on the bow,” and **Elisha laid his own hands on the king’s hands**. Then he commanded, “Open that eastern window,” and he opened it. Then he said, “Shoot!” So he shot an arrow. Elisha proclaimed, “**This is the Lord’s arrow**, an arrow of victory over Aram, for you will completely conquer the Arameans at Aphek.” **Vs 15-17**

Then he said, “Now pick up the other arrows and strike them against the ground.” So the king picked them up and struck the ground **three times**. But the man of God was **angry** with him. “You should have struck the ground **five or six times!**” he exclaimed. “Then you would have beaten Aram until it was entirely destroyed. Now you will be victorious **only three times.**” **Vs 18-19**

Elisha died and was buried. **Vs 20**

But by only shooting the ground three times, not even using everything at his disposal, he revealed the **lack of zeal**, the **lack of commitment** he had for **giving everything he had** to the **accomplishment** of the **mission**. He didn't **do everything he could**. And that **caused** God to withhold His full hand of blessing, the full measure of what He was willing and able to do. **James Emery White**

In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, **Jehoash** son of Jehoahaz became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned sixteen years. He did **evil** in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which **he had caused Israel** to commit; **he continued in them.** 2 Kings 13:10-11

Three Lessons

God's tool (arrows) for **change** is prayer

The **natural** 'Christian' won't understand that

Our lack of participation will **hinder** God's work

Everything about your spiritual **growth** and **development** will start and stop at your prayer life. **Everything**

The **lack** of prayer might be an **indicator** of **systemic** spiritual **rot**

Ask me and I will tell you **remarkable secrets** you do not know about things to come. **Jeremiah 33:3**

this verse links **revelation with prayer**: “The invitation suggests that **divine revelation** becomes reality when it is sought” **F. B. Huey Jr.**

Get Involved

Invite

Serve (kids, baking, tech, worship)

Support (text2give, etransfer)

Pray



Ray of Hope



Thursday November 17th

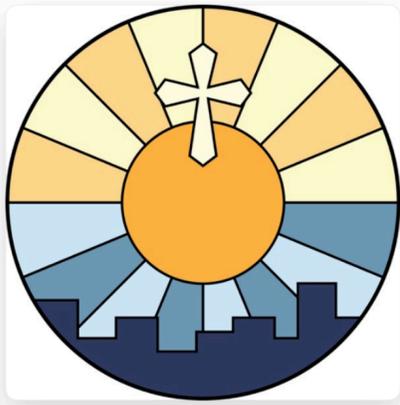
Month of November





Family Bowling Night-Friday November 18th, 6:30pm





UCC Waterloo Sermons

Raja Stone

CHRISTIANITY · UPDATED WEEKLY

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UCC Waterloo Sermons

1 h 47 min.



MAY 22

Half life part 4

UCC Waterloo Sermons

MAY 15

Half life part 3

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MAY 8

Half life part 2

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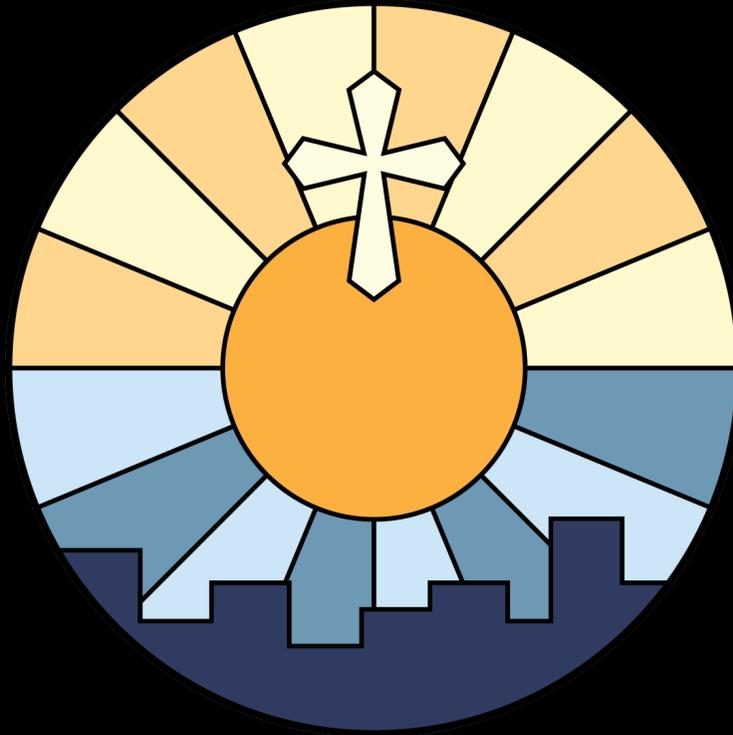
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