

## MY LETTER ON PRAYER

This is an excerpt of a letter I had published in The Freethinker in 2003.

I believe that the Christians are right that prayer develops their faith and makes them take it more seriously and that people fall away from the faith when they stop praying. That is why I think it is very important that prayer be exposed for the superstitious uncharitable activity that it really is. If people get ashamed of praying it will lead to a downslide in religious influence.

It is certain that human life is absolutely valuable. The biggest essential for human life is consciousness. Consciousness is more important than free will or memory or virtue. This means that nothing ever justifies a God letting us endure suffering for consciousness is hurt by suffering. Yes, we have to cause some suffering for a greater good but it would mean that a God would have no justification for making suffering possible for he has the power to prevent all suffering unlike us. For example, he should not have made viruses to cause agonising diseases. Prayer implies that God needs to make us suffer for a good reason which is therefore a total insult against the dignity of human beings.

Everything we get in life comes about as the result of a worldwide process for all events effect each other. When you are praying you intend that a lot of things will happen both bad and good in the world to make the forces of chance give you what you ask for. Is it not fanaticism and criminal then to ask for the gift of patience when so many terrible events and deaths had to happen before you could get it? Is it not fanaticism to ask (indirectly) a God you only believe in but do not know to kill people to give you what you want? You are trying to get people killed over a belief because that is all that God is. God makes life cheap when you can try to kill just for the sake of a belief when you need proof.

If prayer does any good it does it in spite of itself.

### The WEB

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12608c.htm>

Catholic Encyclopaedia. This discusses Quietism.

### Books Consulted

#### BOOKS CONSULTED

A CATECHISM OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, CTS, London, 1985

A HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY, VOL 6, PART II, KANT, Frederick Copleston SJ, Doubleday/Image, New York 1964

AQUINAS, FC Copleston, Penguin Books, London, 1991

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL, Friedrich Nietzsche, Penguin, London, 1990

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, Association for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, Dublin, 1960

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, Veritas, London, 1995

CHARITY, MEDITATIONS FOR A MONTH, Richard F Clarke SJ, Catholic Truth Society, London, 1973

CHRISTIANITY FOR THE TOUGH-MINDED, Edited by John Warwick Montgomery, Bethany Fellowship, Minnesota, 1973

CRISIS OF MORAL AUTHORITY, Don Cupitt, SCM Press, London, 1995

EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT, VOL 1, Josh McDowell, Alpha, Scripture Press Foundation, Bucks, 1995

ECUMENICAL JIHAD, Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1996

THE GREAT MEANS OF SALVATION AND OF PERFECTION, St Alphonsus De Ligouri, Redemptorist Fathers, Brooklyn, 1988

HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS, Peter Kreeft and Ronald Tacelli, Monarch, East Sussex, 1995

HONEST TO GOD, John AT Robinson, SCM, London, 1963

HOW DOES GOD LOVE ME? Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986

IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH, Dave Hunt, Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon, 1996

MADAME GUYON, MARTYR OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, Phyllis Thompson, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1986

RADIO REPLIES, 1, Frs Rumble & Carty, Radio Replies Press, St Paul, Minnesota, 1938

RADIO REPLIES, 2, Frs Rumble & Carty, Radio Replies Press, St Paul, Minnesota, 1940

RADIO REPLIES, 3, Frs Rumble & Carty, Radio Replies Press, St Paul, Minnesota, 1942

REASON AND BELIEF, Brand Blanshard, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1974

REASONS FOR HOPE, Ed Jeffrey A Mirus, Christendom College Press, Virginia, 1982

THE BIBLE TELLS US SO, R B Kuiper, The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1978  
THE BRIEF OF ST ANTHONY OF PADUA (Vol 44, No 4)  
The Dark Side, How Evangelical Teachings Corrupt Love and Truth, Valerie Tarico, Ph.D, Dea Press, Seattle, 2006  
THE GREAT MEANS OF SALVATION AND OF PERFECTION, St Alphonsus De Ligouri, Redemptorist Fathers, Brooklyn, 1988  
THE IMITATION OF CHRIST, Thomas A Kempis, Translated by Ronald Knox and Michael Oakley, Universe, Burns & Oates, London, 1963  
THE LIFE OF ALL LIVING, Fulton J Sheen, Image Books, New York, 1979  
THE PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD, Brother Lawrence, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1981  
THE PUZZLE OF GOD, Peter Vardy, Collins, London, 1990  
THE SATANIC BIBLE, Anton Szandor LaVey, Avon Books, New York, 1969  
THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE, Michael Molinos, Christian Books, Gardiner Maine, 1982  
THE STUDENT'S CATHOLIC DOCTRINE, Rev Charles Hart BA, Burns & Oates, London, 1961  
UNBLIND FAITH, Michael J Langford, SCM, London, 1982