

Dangerous Wonder Prayer Service

All: In the name of the Father.....

Reader # 1 When we were children there was an aliveness inside us. It was the voice we heard deep inside- a warm and loving voice, a living, believing voice, a wild and dangerous voice. Every time we heard that voice, we recognized who it was: God. There is still deep within all of us, a voice. It speaks to us continuously, knocking on the door of our consciousness. When we are children, the voice is very loud , shattering our awareness with overwhelming clarity; the voice of God, which has always been speaking to us, even before we were born.

All: Thank you Lord for the gift of your call, your guiding voice throughout our lives

Reader #2 One sad day, we are aware of an absence. We can no longer hear the God-voice, and we are left with only silence- not a quiet silence but a roaring silence. We did not want to stop hearing God's voice. Indeed, God kept on speaking. But our lives became louder. The increasing crescendo of our possessions, the ear-piercing noise of busyness, and the soul-smothering volume of our endless activity drowned out the still, small voice of God. Most of us cannot say when it happened, we only know that it happened. When we became aware of the absence of God's voice, there were a thousand deaths within us. Idealism and innocence died first. And across the scarred terrain of our souls, one could see the withered remains of dreams, spontaneity, poetry, passion, and ourselves-our real selves, the persons we were made to be. How easily we can find ourselves at the middle or end of our lives, dull and bleary eyed, listless and passionless.

All: Lord we come before you seeking to hear you clearly again, allowing you to live at the center of our hearts & our lives

Reader #3 The death of the soul is never quick. It is a slow dying, a succession of little deaths that continues until we wake one day on the edge of God's voice, on the fringe of God's belovedness, beyond the adventure of God's claim on our lives. Farmers say cows don't intend to get lost, "they just nibble their way to lostness!" None of us intends to have our souls wander onto the dull and listless highway of the American Way. First comes the work of education, then a career, then of marriage, then children, a new home, and one day we wake up to discover that we have nibbled our way to lostness.

All: Lord help us to recover the inner child and place before you all the distractions that keep us from keeping the main thing, the main thing, that we belong to you & our time in this world is a preparation for our time in eternity with you.

Reader #4: We are in a war between dullness and astonishment The most critical issue facing Christians is not abortion, pornography, the disintegration of the family, moral absolutes, MTV, drugs, racism, sexuality, or school prayer. The critical issue today is dullness. We have lost our astonishment. The Good News is no longer good news, it is okay news. Christianity is no longer life changing, it is life enhancing. Jesus doesn't change people into wild-eyed radicals anymore, He changes them into "nice people."

All: If Christianity is simply about being nice, we're not interested. Lord we want to live in and with your passion.

Reader #5: What happened to radical Christianity, the un-nice brand of Christianity that turned the world upside-down? What happened to the category-smashing, life-threatening, anti-institutional gospel that spread through the first century like wildfire and was considered, by those in power, dangerous? What happened to the kind of Christians whose hearts were on fire, who had no fear, who spoke the truth no matter what the consequence, who made the world uncomfortable, who were willing to follow Jesus wherever He went? What happened to the kind of Christians who were filled with passion and gratitude, and who every day were unable to get over the grace of God?

All: Lord, we're ready for a Christianity that "ruins" our lives, that captures our hearts and makes us uncomfortable.

Reader # 6 Our culture is putting out the light in men and women's souls. Dullness is more than a religious issue, it is a cultural issue. Our entire culture has become dull. Dullness is the absence of the light of our souls. Look around. We have lost the sparkle in our eyes, the passion in our marriages, the meaning in our work, the joy of our faith. The Bible names our problem: sin. Sin is more than turning our backs on God, it is turning our backs on life! Immorality is much more than adultery and dishonesty it is living drab, colorless, dreary, stale, unimaginative lives. The greatest enemy of Christianity may be people who say they believe in Jesus but who are no longer astonished and amazed. Jesus Christ came to rescue us from listlessness as well as lostness; He came to save us from flat souls as well as corrupted souls. He came to save us from dullness. Our culture is awash in immorality and drowning in dullness. We have forgotten how to dance, how to sing, and how to laugh. We have allowed technology to beat our imaginations into submission and have become tourists rather than travelers. Television dominates our time, alters our values, numbs us to life in of its wildness. We have been stunted by mediocrity.

All: We want to be filled with an astonishment which is so captivating that we are considered wild and unpredictable and dangerous. We want a faith that is considered dangerous by our predictable and monotonous culture.

Reader #7 Matthew 18:3 describes an incident in Jesus' life when He called a little child to come close to Him and then said to the adults in the audience, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

All: Make of us a wonderful community of people- who have not had their childlike attributes taken from them- gently guide us back to the place of danger and wonder.

Reader #8 : Somewhere along the way we had the child chased out of us. Our childlikeness is usually snuffed out by people who tell what we can't do. They are dream stealers. Don't listen to these people and never become one yourself.. Those who kill their own dreams will try to kill yours.

All: Lord we seek a lifetime of Holy moments. We want everyday to live in dangerous proximity to You. We long for a life that explodes with meaning, that is filled with adventure, wonder, risk, and danger. We long for a faith that is gloriously treacherous. We want to be with you, not knowing whether to laugh or cry.

Response: Lord Hear Our Prayer

For our students, their human & spiritual growth, we pray to the Lord:

For our students parents & families, may they become beacons of life & hope, we pray to the Lord:

For the church, may it be renewed to become more pure a vessel of Jesus' love,
we pray to the Lord:

Let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us: Our Father.....

God is Good. all the time

Excerpts from: Dangerous Wonder by Michael Yaconelli