

In the Prayer Meeting

Terrence Mak

In the prayer meeting, everyone was fired up, crying out for God's justice, petitioning for God's church. I sat, silently sat, thinking about the lonely and the depressed. Yet not a word escaped my mouth. This is at least the fourth week already, silently waiting for the motivation that never came. As I was rationalizing in my head that silent prayer is just as good, some voices pop up. "Why didn't I cry for help? Why didn't you try harder?" It is the voices of my accuser. Not dissimilar to the voice of the Accuser except the snake is also played by me.

Then, as the Lectio Divina read "what are human beings that you are mindful of them?", hopeful thoughts came to me. "Maybe I can also be "them", maybe the stars are not as brilliant as a broken person beheld by God, maybe I can find God in the loneliest place, maybe God is waiting for the deep darkness that scares away my shadow to show me the true light, maybe even life is worth living, maybe..., maybe..."

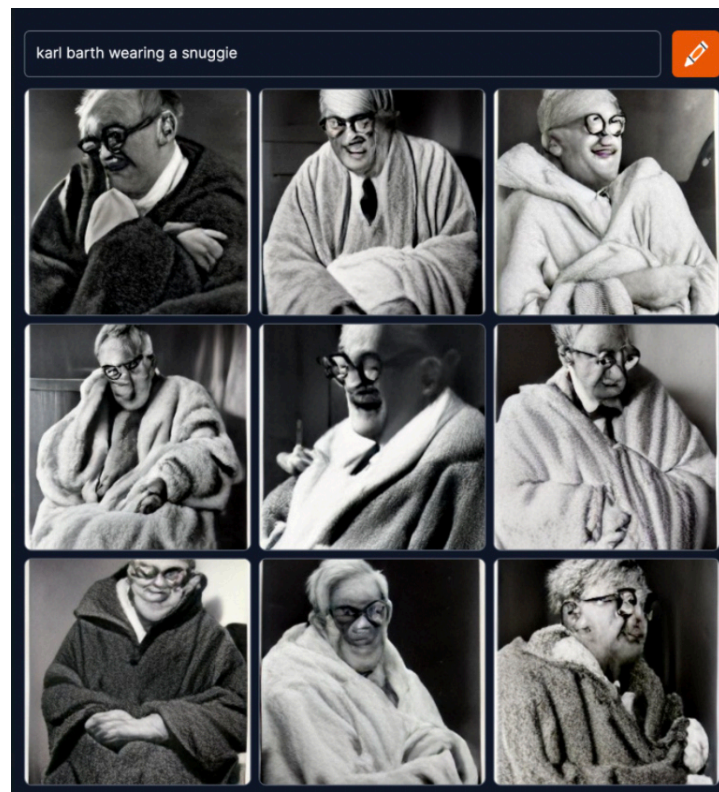
"It is time for the Lord's prayer", a voice brought me back to the earthly realm, where the "maybes" die.

As I left the prayer chapel alone, strange questions came to my head. How many people are also praying and waiting for these "maybes"? How many never got them in time? What should the liturgy be before suicide? What would be the prayer that brings him back from the dead?

I have no answers for them, but I want to pray.

I pray that one of my "maybes" will come true for you even if it has not been for me yet.

We used an AI art generator to produce the following images and I refuse to elaborate further.



Anonymous

Et Cetera

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Dad Joke of the Week

I went into a zoo, but the only animal they had was one dog.

It was a Shih Tzu.

Overheard at Regent

"Richard B. Hays? More like

Richard, Be-HAVE! Amirite?"

ETC. Submission Guidelines

ETC. welcomes submissions from all members of the Regent community, including students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

ETC. publishes fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and visual artwork.

ETC. welcomes submissions on any topic, but preference will be given to pieces that are directly relevant to the Regent community.

Written submissions may not exceed 1000 words in length.

Visual artwork will only be printed in black and white.

All submissions are subject to minor edits. If substantial edits are needed, the submission may be returned.

All submissions are to be sent to: etcetera@regent-college.edu

His Truth is Marching On: The Work of Elvis Gospel Ministries

Mo Hickman

The year was 1997. Their names were Madeleine and J. Peter Wilson. Their goal was to bring people to Jesus. Their secret weapon was Elvis Presley. Yes, the drug addicted king of rock'n'roll music and sex symbol of the mid-late 20th century. They saw him as a disciple-figure and believed that his gospel music and love for the Lord could be a powerful evangelistic tool to save souls, twenty years after his (presumed) death. The following gospel message is available on their website, elvisgospel.com:

*“You can just say about all that Gospel stuff **Return to Sender** because we’ve **Got a Lot of Livin’ to do**. You can also say that religion is just a kind of **Good Luck Charm** – only a bit of superstition to make you feel better when you get **All Shook Up** once in a while, or regret paying the heavy price for **One Night of Sin**.*

*Some, however, are afraid that they’re too bad and that it is too late for **A Fool Such as I** and that they have missed their chance of finding God. Some fear they’ve **Lost that Lovin’ Feeling** for the things of God they once had, and that’s that. Elvis believed that God would give us another chance. Like many of us he needed it and we believe he found it.*

*You may feel deep down about God, that **You’re Always on my Mind** and when the chips are down and you’re left to your thoughts, **I Just Can’t Help Believin’**. We say that Elvis would not want you to stop there. **It’s Funny How Time Slips Away**... we ask you **Doncha Think it’s Time to Reconsider Baby. Are You Lonesome Tonight?** Is there an emptiness in your heart? If you feel stirred and moved and would really like to know the Lord for real, perhaps for you **It’s now or Never**.*

*When you think of Jesus dying on the cross you may not understand all about it, but **If that Isn’t Love**, nothing is. Many before you have said **“Where could I go but to The Lord?”** Elvis’ songs show how easy it can be to begin that relationship with Jesus, even a simple prayer sincerely said is how you can **Put Your Hand in the Hand (of the Man from Galilee)**. All we can say is that when anyone is willing to **Reach Out to Jesus** they will know in their heart **He Touched Me**, and then they will want to sing for all to hear **How Great Thou Art**.*

***Only Believe** and there will be everlasting **Life and Peace in the Valley** for you.”*

It is impossible to know how far their message has spread and how many lives have been touched by their ministry. They are based out of East Yorkshire and their Facebook page *Elvis Gospel U.K.* has eight thousand followers. Madeleine published a book this year, *Elvis Presley, Gospel Singer: An Inspirational Life* which has ranked #207 on Amazon’s Christian Gospel books best sellers list. While this ministry’s success may seem relatively minimal, their dedication to it is remarkable.

Why did they create an evangelistic ministry based on Elvis Presley in 1997? Perhaps they were Elvis fans themselves and wanted to share their appreciation of his gospel music with others. Perhaps they felt a calling from God directly to spread the gospel through the work of Elvis Presley. Perhaps they wanted a Christian response to the Elvis cults that were worshiping Elvis as a god himself, such as the First Presleytarian Church of Elvis, the Divine and others reported to have been practicing “Elvism” or “Presleyanity”. It is unknown why Elvis Gospel Ministries was started, as the website does not have an “About Us” section and no one else on the internet has documented this organization. But elvisgospel.com is alive for anyone to find, read, repent, and follow in Elvis’ example of having a loving relationship with the Lord. They “would be very pleased to hear from anyone who feels called into this area of ministry.” One can join their prayer request email chain by emailing info@elvisgospel.co.uk with the subject, “Elvis Gospel Prayerletter”.

While it may be comical to imagine anyone converting to Christianity through this ministry, there is not a hint of sarcasm or irony in its content. The founders are completely sincere in the work they are doing and their passion for evangelism and prayer. Elvis Gospel Ministries may be a poor example of how to integrate Christianity and culture, but they are an amusing example of how anything can be turned into a gospel message if you just believe. Which pop culture icon will be sermonized next?

What’s the most bizarre group you’ve ever come across online? Can you think of any other celebrities that one would be able to form a cult around? Write to EtCetera and let us know!

An Imminent Threat

Dryden Demchuk

It was brought to EtCetera’s attention this week that Regent College was recently discussed on the UBC subreddit (For anyone who is not familiar, Reddit is a highly popular social news website consisting of individual discussion forums, known as “subreddits”).

A user posted about the existence of Regent on the UBC subreddit approximately two months ago, expressing confusion and dismay at the prospect of an entire college being devoted to the study of theology: “I’m wondering if theology is still a big area of study in our modern age” the user stated, expressing genuine curiosity at the prospect of a school devoted to such an outdated subject.

(Before anyone suggests it - Yes, EtCetera is open to the possibility of arranging a meeting between Jens Zimmermann and this reddit user)

The post garnered a fair level of discussion. One user confessed that he is not a Regent student but does frequent our bathroom facilities when the need arises. Another user chimed in to settle any confusion in the thread between “theology” and “religious studies” - a useful contribution.

The most alarming contribution to this thread - the main reason EtCetera felt the need to share news of this online discussion - was one user who expressed a desire to (may God be with us) *heckle our profs*.

Yes, you read that right.

The user’s full comment reads as follows (please be advised that the following text may contain content that some readers find graphic and disturbing):

“As an ex-Evangelical and atheist, It’d be fun to attend the classes [at Regent] and heckle the profs.”

EtCetera has never considered itself to be a “breaking news” sort of publication, but there are times when perhaps this is a necessary role. EtCetera could not let the imminent threat of professor heckling slip by unnoticed - the community must be made aware of the dangers that we have been unwittingly facing every day.

We have been sitting ducks, resting under our green roof, firmly planted on UBC’s turf, feeling a sense

of security with our surroundings. It is never easy for a community when this facade of security is ripped away. This is why the prophets and the revelators are always executed.

Truth be known, the EtCetera team was not sure if it would be ultimately beneficial or not to bring these dangers to light. Perhaps, we thought, it might be better to dwell in blissful ignorance. But EtCetera is committed to the truth - not to bliss. And the truth is, there is a willing heckler out there, whether we choose to face this reality or not.

Regent Faculty, please be advised - there is an ill-meaning individual on the loose who wishes nothing less than to give you a good heckling for your beliefs. If you so much as mention the foolish notions of “god” or “church” around this individual, they will not hesitate to deliver a thorough heckling. After all, this individual identifies as both an ex-evangelical and an atheist. This means that your PhDs and years of academic rigour stand no chance against their ability to heckle you, and heckle you real good. Please, beloved faculty, we beg of you to abandon your egos and your heroic desires - do not, I repeat, *do not*, attempt to engage the heckler. We all know that the collective faith of our community balances delicately on the edge of a knife - a balancing act that could very easily end should one atheist undergraduate student choose to make so much as a snarky remark within sixteen yards of our building’s doors.

EtCetera expects to actively report on this situation as it unfolds. Stay tuned for more information.

And may God help us.

Thank you to Regent student Andrew Giesbrecht for submitting this tip to the EtCetera team.