



Prayer and Wishes Chapter 1 (What we believe in)

Questions for discussion

1. Where is your hope found?

I had hope in people. After divorce that hope leaned to the left just a little. I had hope in a church. The deeper I went into ministry, my hope leaned to the right. I have leaned towards sex. I have bent myself towards a wife, work, and many other things. I even tried to believe in sports stars, movie stars, and other famous people. I pray. I wish. I have hoped in a great many things.

“I was watching a show the other night about a killer on the loose. One of the people hiding in peril said “isn’t this the moment when the police arrive.” When we are at the end of our rope; where is that kind of help found? A victim cries “save me, I’m living in fear of another.” The bills just keep mounting. When will the Calvary arrive? Some people are waiting for their ship to come in. In relief we say “were safe now the dawn is rising.” Who saves you when all is lost? When hope seems hopeless?” Chapter 1, p, 1

2. Who do you pray and wish to?

Do you wish to something greater? Is a prayer to a greater being like a god? I have had good luck charms and numbers. Why are they lucky? Why chose a God to pray too? Is the thing you rely on greater than you? Are they worthy of your hope?

“I feel we pray or wish because we trust a God or the well more than our human counterparts. We know humans. God’s can be favorable at times. They let stars slip through their fingers from time to time for us to wish upon. They bring miracles. They are a wealth of unforeseen knowledge. It’s smart to pray to something above us. It’s better than praying to something equal or beneath us. Who prays to a slug or your sister?” Chapter 1, p, 6

3. How far will you go for answers?

I traveled to the mountains for answers. I hiked into Egypt and took a 4-hour journey to the top of the mountain of God (Sanai)? I have taken a retreat with others to get my head straight. There have been prayer groups and wishing wells. There has been a lot of travel into the wilderness to experience peace. Did I find it?

“One thought is that coins are a way to sacrifice something valuable to the God’s in the water. Spiritual water might be found in a well. Possibly a well is found in the wilderness more than in a city. In ancient times the wilderness is where the spirits dwelt. I often wonder if that is why we go on a pilgrimage or trek in the wilderness to find ourselves. Are we praying to unseen forces in those places? Do we find God’s or spirits in a well or wilderness outside of town? I believe more often we do. People seem willing to travel far for answers.” Chapter 1, p, 7

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4. What things bring you luck?

I love wearing the number 17. Strangely enough, I have never bought a number 17 jersey until this year. When I played hockey, I wore the same t-shirt most of the time. Did it bring me luck? No, but I hoped it would. There have been lucky coins. I own a small totem pole neckless that looks like a cross. I wore that thing a ton as a kid. Lucky?

“Yet, the number is strange. Why is the number 4 bad luck in Asia? In North America we avoid making a 13th floor. By the way. The fourteen floor is still the thirteenth. Just saying. I will admit I like the number 17. Why? I have always worn it on my jersey. My wife likes 77. Yes, it’s on several of her favorite players jerseys. She says she likes the lucky 7 in the number. I guess I do too. However, we chose, many of us believe in numbers good and bad. Believing in Gods, spirits, wells, wishes, numbers and prayers are part of our lives. Most of this world believes in something.”

Chapter 1, p, 9

5. Is fate real?

Do we try and manipulate fate? Make a wish or say a prayer to change our fortunes. Some people think fate is all we have. Even some God-fearing Christians believe we are predestined to a certain fate. Prayer seems hollow if fate is real. A wish is useless if fate is all we have.

“It would be a sad day to believe in fate. To think that a stray bullet could kill you just because you were destined to die seems random, odd, and unlucky. That a person had to get mad, get drunk, and had to kill you. Is it destiny, fate or something else? Seems a bit disheartening too. What do you believe in? Does fate mean I was going to be divorced? My mom was going to die May 30, 2017? I believe we pray so that fate is yet undetermined. I believe we wish because we want a different outcome. Is fate real?” Chapter 1, p, 10

6. Why do we believe in things ?

Do we just believe in things we see? I have wondered if people only believe in the things told to them. Do you make up your own mind? What criteria makes something real to you? Has your mind been changed by an event? Do you believe in things the same way you always have?

“To believe in something means we have experienced something. Sometimes it’s history that teaches us to avoid ladders, look before we cross the road, and toss coins into a well. We don’t pray or wish by accident. I bet we did not discover black holes by accident either. None of those things negates the existence of God, spirits, or the supernatural. In fact, it enhances them in my way of thinking. There is always more to know. More to learn, discover, and theorize on. Let’s not stop hoping and wondering about where we are. It should be reversed: I am therefore I think.” Chapter 1, p, 14