



---

# LIFE IN THE KINGDOM

---

The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:7-11 "Asking in Prayer"

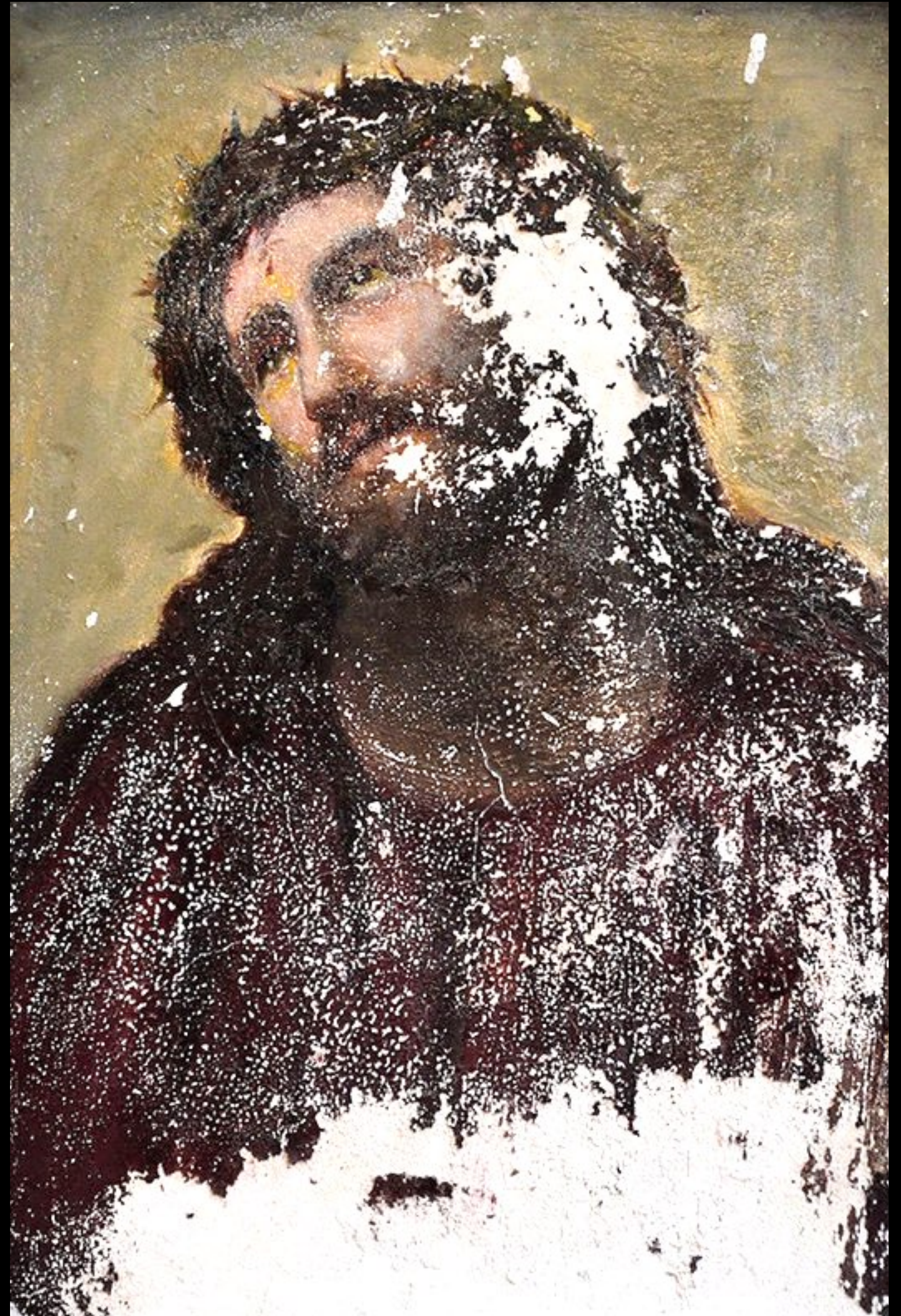
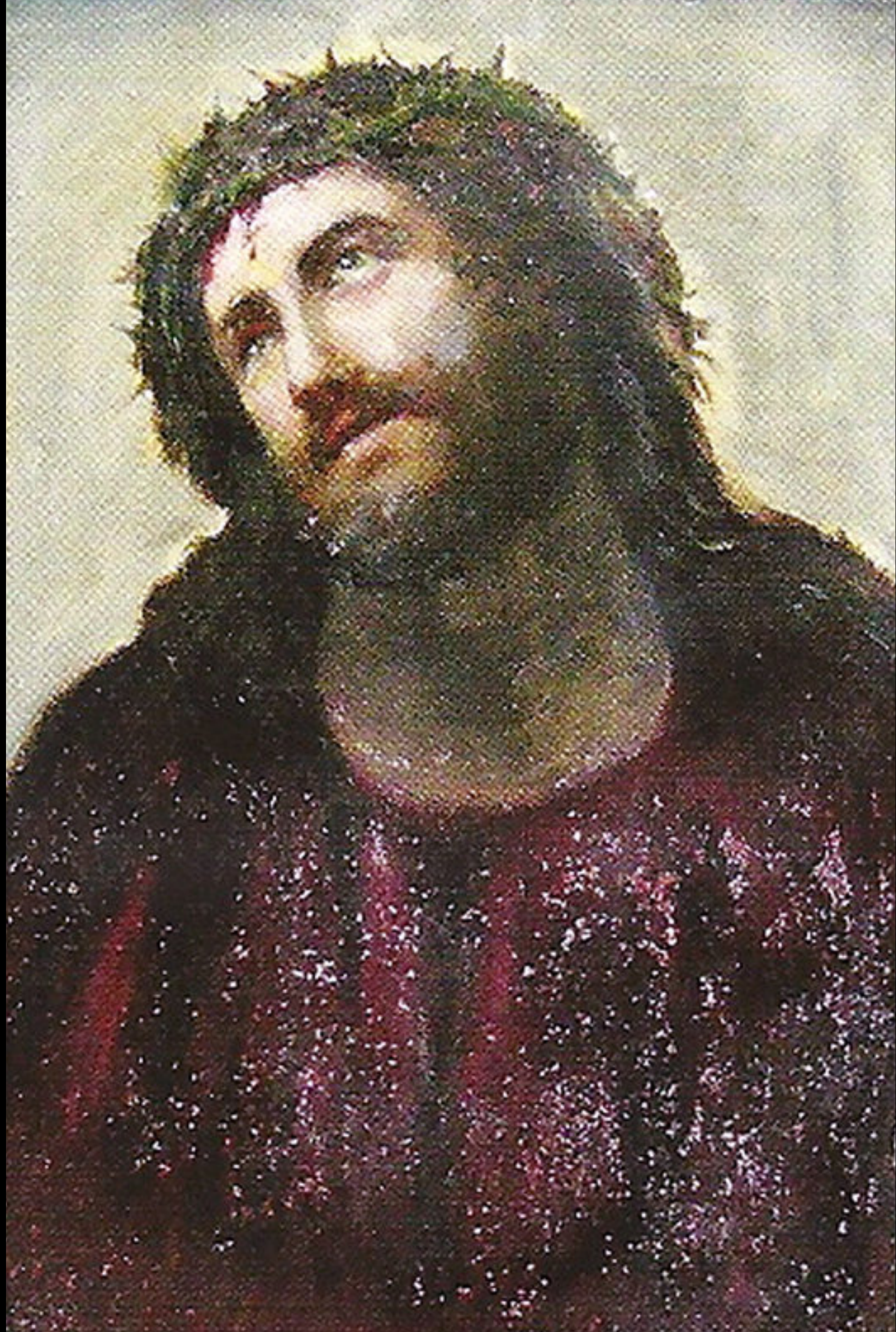




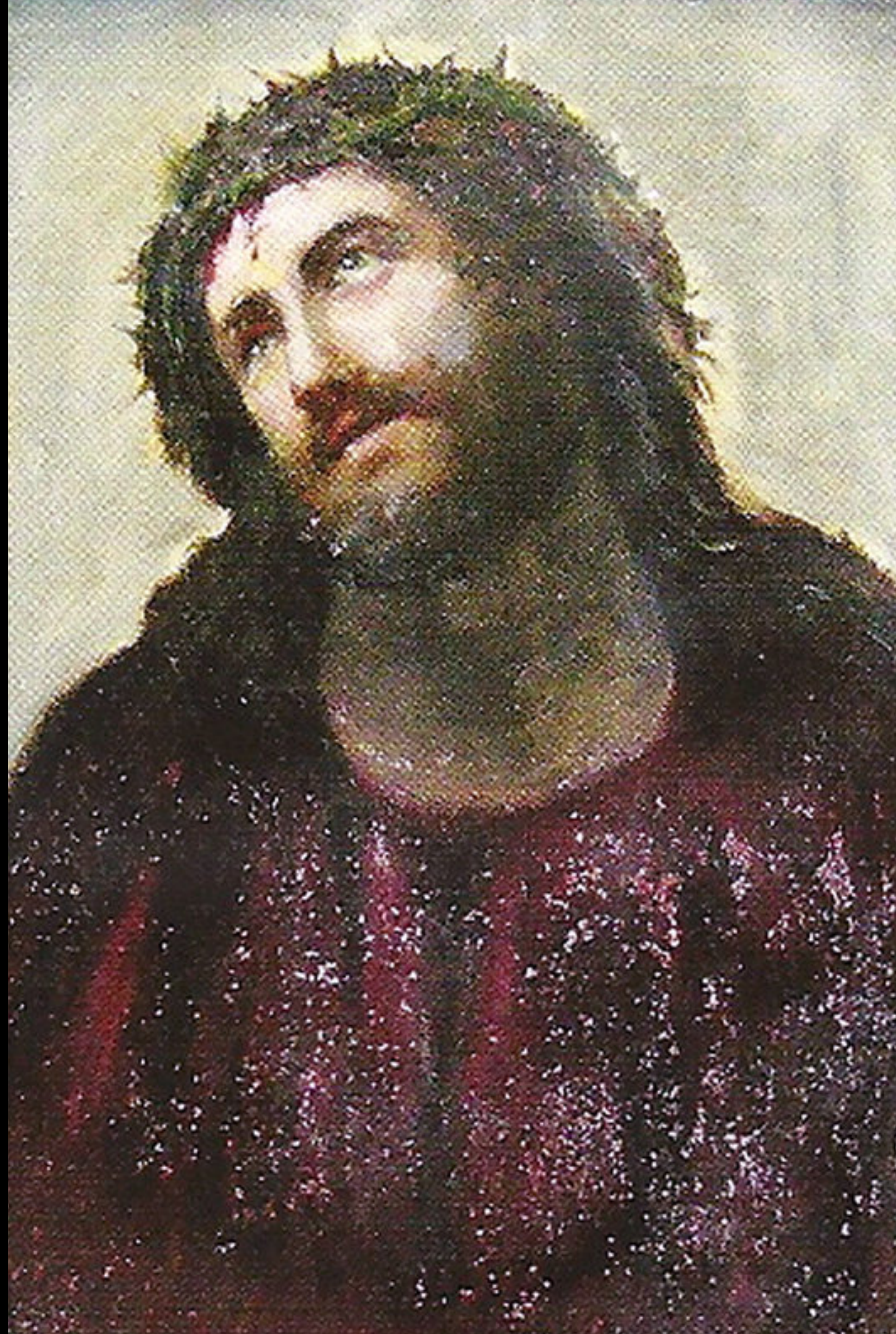
Matthew  
7:6

“Do not give dogs what is sacred;  
do not throw your pearls to pigs. If  
you do, they may trample them  
under their feet, and turn and tear  
you to pieces.”









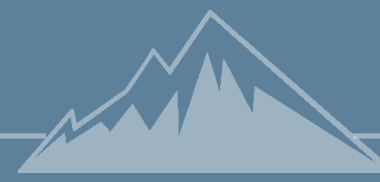




## Luke 22:31-32

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”





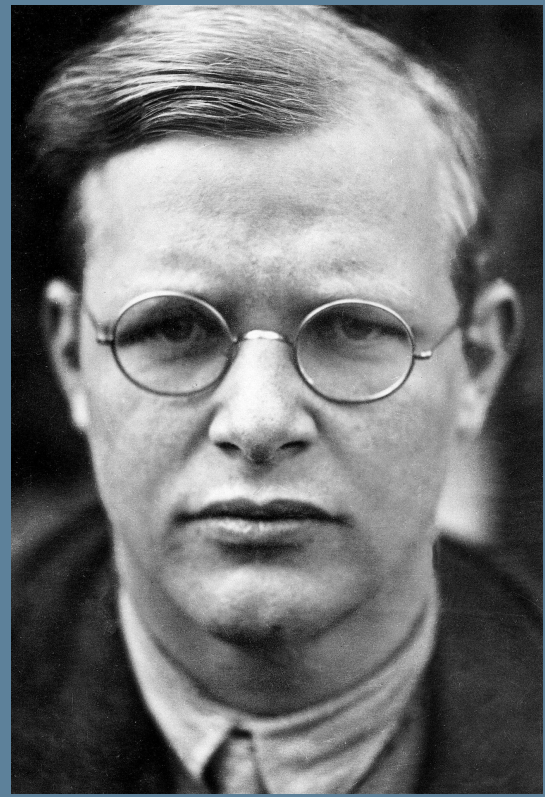
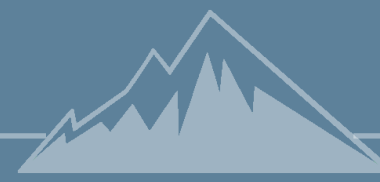
Dallas  
Willard

I think there is perhaps no other scene in all scripture that so forcefully illustrates the community of prayerful love as this response to Peter. How earnestly Jesus longed for Peter to come out right in his time of testing! But he left him free to succeed or fail before God and man— and, as it turned out, before all of subsequent



Dallas  
Willard

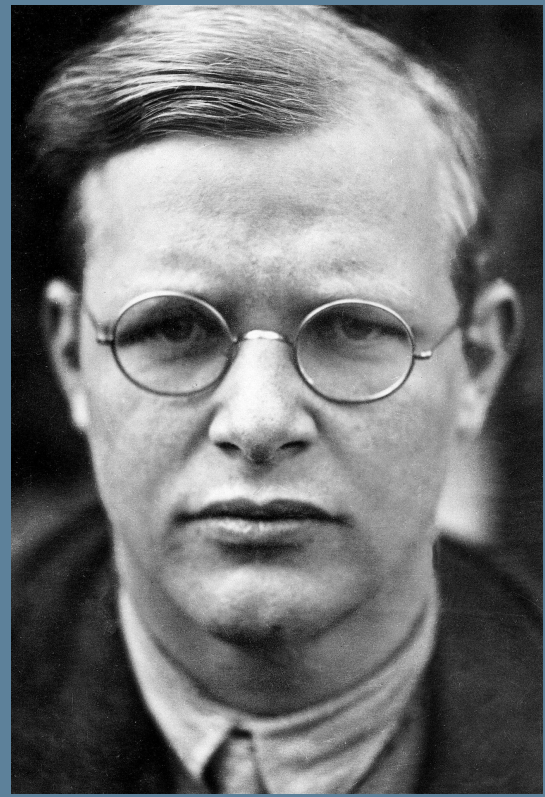
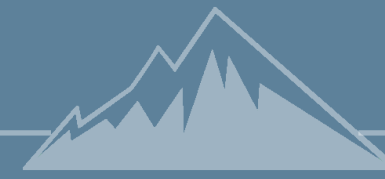
human history. He used no condemnation, no shame, no “pearls of wisdom” on him. And he didn’t use supernatural power to rewire his soul or his brain. It was just this: “I have requested, concerning you, that your faith might not die.” ... It is Jesus’ beautiful pattern for us to practice in our relationships to those close to us.



Dietrich  
Bonhoeffer

... I must release others from all my attempts to control, coerce, and dominate them with my love. ... Self-centered love constructs its own image of other persons, about what they are and what they should become. It takes the life of the other person into its own hands. Spiritual love recognizes the true image of the other person as seen from the perspective of Jesus Christ.





Dietrich  
Bonhoeffer

It is the image Jesus Christ has formed and wants to form in all people. ... This spiritual love will thus speak to Christ about the other Christian more than to the other Christian about Christ. It knows that the most direct way to others is always through prayer to Christ and that love of the other is completely tied to the truth found in Christ.





## Matthew 7:7-11

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Which of you, if your son asks for





Matthew  
7:7-11

bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!





At the heart of prayer is  
asking God for the things  
we need and want.





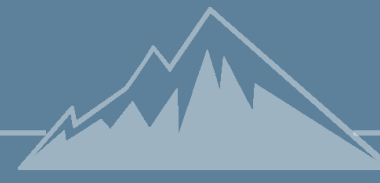
A doration

C onfession

T hanksgiving

S upplication

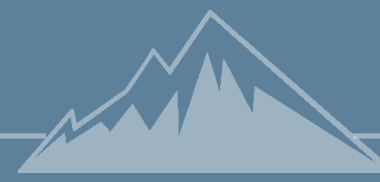




Matthew  
7:11

If you, then, though you are evil,  
know how to give good gifts to  
your children, how much more  
will your Father in heaven give  
good gifts to those who ask him!

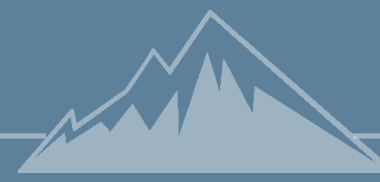




Dallas  
Willard

God is not a cosmic butler or fix-it man, and the aim of the universe is not to fulfill my desires and needs. On the other hand, I am to pray for what concerns me, and many people have found prayer impossible because they thought they should only pray for wonderful but remote needs they actually had little or no interest in or even knowledge of.



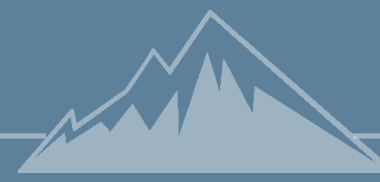


Dallas  
Willard

Prayer simply *dies* from efforts to pray about “good things” that honestly do not matter to us. The way to get to meaningful prayer for those good things is to start by praying for what we are truly interested in.

... What prayer as asking presupposes is simply a personal relationship between us and God, just as with a request of child to parent or friend to friend.





Dallas  
Willard

... Accordingly, I believe the most adequate description of prayer is simply, "Talking to God about what we are doing together." ... Prayer is a matter of explicitly sharing with God my concerns about what he too is concerned about in my life. And of course he is concerned about my concerns and, in particular, that my concerns should coincide with his. This is our walk together. Out of it I pray.



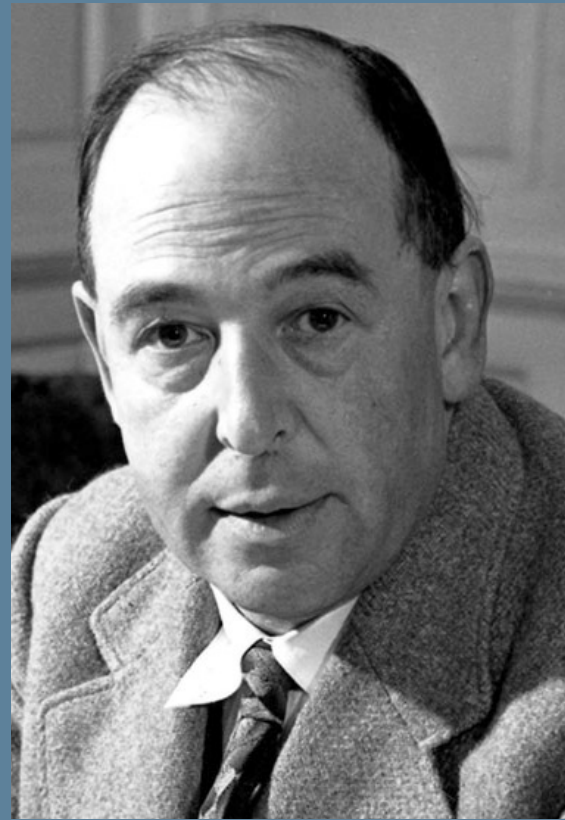
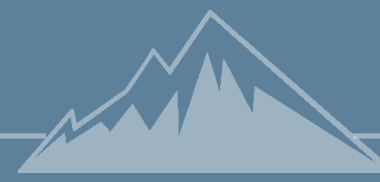






Asking God for the  
things we want and need  
is an act of submission  
and surrender.

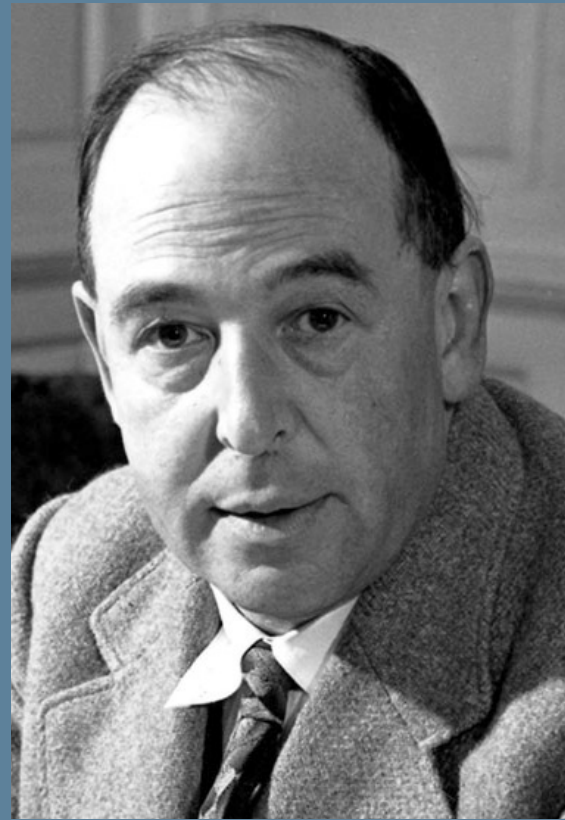
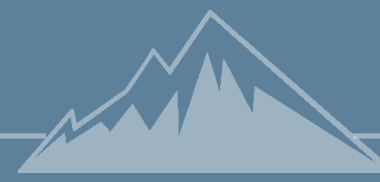




C. S.  
Lewis

Prayers are not always “granted.” This is not because prayer is a weaker kind of causality, but because it is a stronger kind. ... That is why God has retained a discretionary power of granting or refusing it. Except on that condition prayer would destroy us. It is not unreasonable for a headmaster to say,

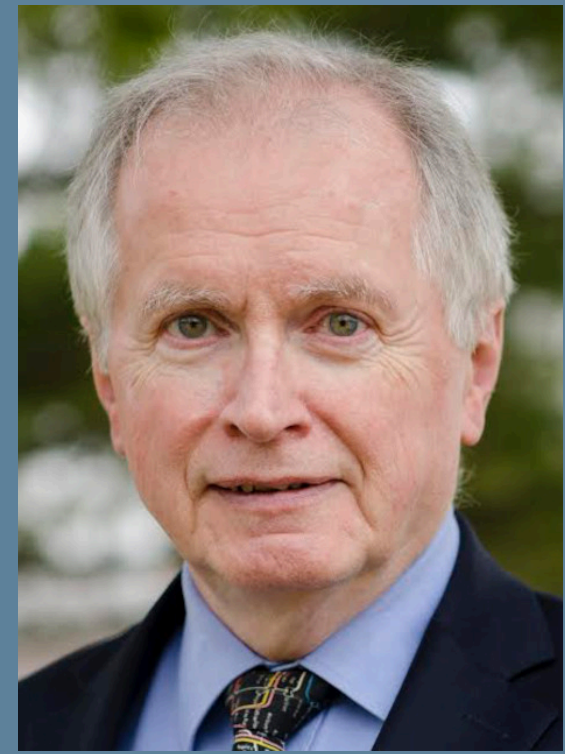
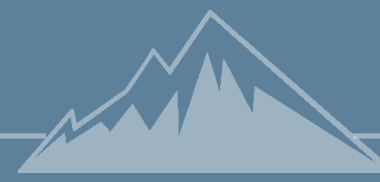




C. S.  
Lewis

“Such and such things you may do according to the fixed rules of this school. But such and such other things are too dangerous to be left to general rules. If you want to do them you must come and make a request and talk over the whole matter with me in my study. And then—we’ll see.”

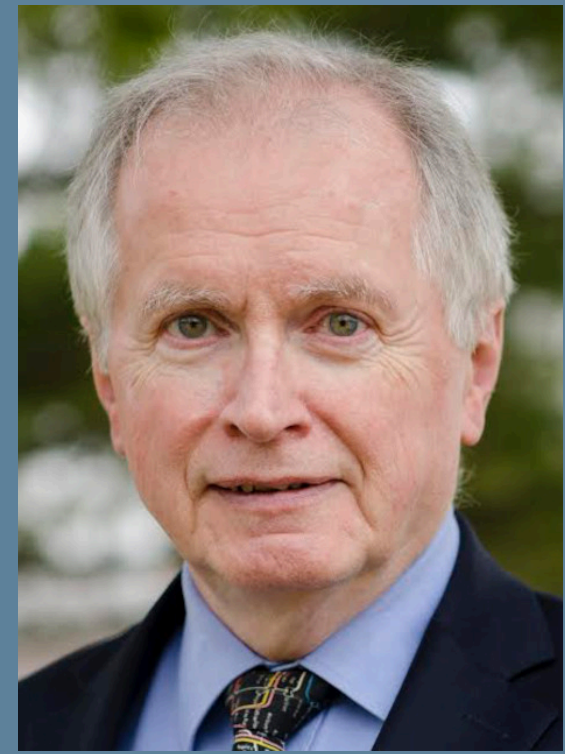
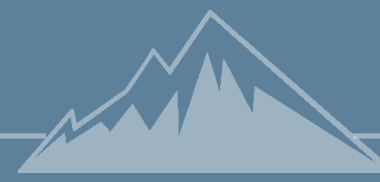




D. A.  
Carson

The Western world is not characterized by prayer. By and large, to our unspeakable shame, even genuine Christians in the West are not characterized by prayer. Our environment loves hustle and bustle, smooth organization and powerful institutions, human self-confidence and human achievement, new opinions and





D. A.  
Carson

novel schemes; and the church of Jesus Christ has conformed so thoroughly to this environment that it is often difficult to see how it differs in these matters from contemporary paganism. ... Our low spiritual ebb is directly traceable to the flickering feebleness of our prayers: "You do not have, because you do not ask God."





Prayer requires patience and perseverance, believing in all outcomes that God is good.

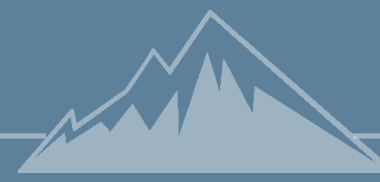




Matthew  
7:7-8

Ask and it will be given to you;  
seek and you will find; knock and  
the door will be opened to you.  
For everyone who asks receives;  
the one who seeks finds; and to  
the one who knocks, the door will  
be opened.

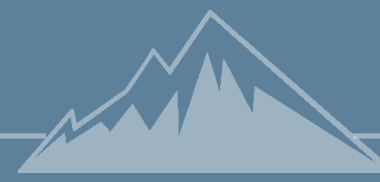




Philip  
Yancey

We may approach God with some material benefit in mind, and sometimes, blessedly, we receive it. But in the very act of praying we also open up a channel that God can use in transforming us, in making us good. Persistent prayer changes me by helping me see the world, and my life, through God's eyes. ... I learn that I cannot "fix" the people I am praying for.





Philip  
Yancey

I cannot get everything I want in the time frame I want. I must slow down and wait. I have to present my requests in a manner that seems at first like surrender. I “give them up” to God, and through that act of submission God can at last begin to grow in me the qualities, or “fruit,” that I needed all along: peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.





2 Kings  
20:1-6

In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, "This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover."

Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, "Remember, LORD,





how I have walked before you faithfully  
and with wholehearted devotion and have  
done what is good in your eyes.” And  
Hezekiah wept bitterly.

2 Kings  
20:1–6

Before Isaiah had left the middle court, the  
word of the LORD came to him: “Go back  
and tell Hezekiah, the ruler of my people,  
‘This is what the LORD, the God of your





## 2 Kings 20:1-6

father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the LORD. I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my sake and for the sake of my servant David.' "