

February 12, 2022 Second Saturday Chat Transcript

Meaghan: Good morning, everyone, thank you for joining. A reminder to please keep yourselves muted! Thank you.

Carol: Good afternoon from sunny Tampa, FL!

Claire: greetings from Maryland....

barb: Sunny Portland Oregon. Hello

Karen: Hello from St Paul, Minnesota:)

Julie: Hello from Claremore Oklahoma

Sharon: Greetings from Ottawa, Canada

marrion: Welcome from the mountains of North Carolina.

Linda: Greetings from Northfield MN. Always grateful to join in on these conversations. Thank you

Samuel: greetings from Laurens, SC

Janet: Greetings from Canada's east coast!

Robert: Greetings from Roswell, New Mexico

Alexis: Greetings from Laconia, NH!

Sandi: Good Morning from Edmonton, Alberta Canada

Robert: Greetings to all from my New Sharon snow bank.

Carla: Greetings from Berea KY

Larry: Greetings, everyone, from Dallas, Texas

susie: Good snowy morning from Colorado

Virginia: Greetings from Dublin, Ireland

Don: Hi yo all from New Hamburg, Ontario

liliana: Hello from Denver Colorado

Sheila: You mean God is not UP in the sky sitting a a huge main frame directing 8 billion people's every move for every day? Oh My goodness.. OM Gosh. From Sheila in South Dakota

lyn: Greetings from Franklin, Massachusetts.

John: Greetings from foggy Auburn, WA

Mary: mystery. unkown

KATHLEEN: How about simplifying it to "we are in the presence of something holy." Open enough, not personified, but some warmth to it in the form of awy. I Love the idea of the unconditionally and it speaks to me deeply, but in the language of prayer it is a bit cool & purely intellectual.

barb: Yes. In the presence of mystery.

Sheila : Kathleen..I really resonate with your suggesstion

susie: Bereft and drowning in transactional living in this world right now. Sad. Wish I could feel this sense of awareness and trust it.

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Robert: I have a suspicion that petitional prayer has within it a denial of the holy unconditional presence.

Gail : Kermit speaks for me!

susie: Robert Aubrey, well said, I agree

Carol: I'm curious about our being "created in God's image" which seems to personify "him" This confuses me.

Joe: Is this what Merton meant by the False Self and the True Self?

Mary: Using the unconditional for God frees us, at least a little, from the finite limits of our human thought and language.

Donna: This does resonate - feels like a welcome back to my tradition. I feel this in Nature, the wild places, the cathedral of earth, sea and sky, as John Philip Newell quotes from the Celtic tradition. A felt presence, when I feel there is union with the trees, birds and plants, rocks, stream. We are all one.

John K.: It is a joy just to explore this with you all....whether I understand it all or not is less the point than we are attempting.

susie: How does petitions prayer undermine our faith in the unconditional? Very powerful.

Clairer: From my experience, I'd say, in the presence of the Sacred, the Holy, like others have said. Unconditional doesn't quite work for me...

Robert: In an unconditional world, the imago Dei would be openness?

barb: Thank you Donna. Yes!!!

Jim: What do we do with the fact that "God" as described in the Bible has never existed then or now? The attributes of God exists, but what do they come from?

Claire: I understand what Donna says. yes.

KATHLEEN: Our mortality is part of the conditional, the

brant: The scholars edition to which Marianne is referring is: THE FIVE GOSPELS: Funk, Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar. Published by Macmillan

Mary: experience of the mystery/unconditional vs belief. use of the word, or listening to small

thin voice: can be opposite of being 'gobstruck' (or other flavors, such as experiencing the void, or fullness. penetrating light, love...). Sometimes words get in the way of experiencing the mystery...as engage part of brain that is more rational, executive functions (ie quid pro quo). (yet that is the road in exploring: words)

Sandra: What you just said about our having God in the frame of the transactional - really hit me strongly. Such truth about how we have been taught to talk and relate to God. I'd love for us to have some more discussion about this.....PLEASE.

Jennifer: What you say about prayer resonates with me deeply. At the same time, I ask myself, how does this relate to the kind of prayer we have when we are thinking of someone who is sick, or a family that has lost a loved one, and asking God to be with them? How does this apply to my prayer when I ask God for help when I don't know what to do? I recognize that those are to some extent transactional expressions to a personified God - and yet those kinds of prayers

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have been deeply meaningful to me, and I feel answered in such prayer. How does that live in this rubric you are suggesting?

Claire: I hear you, Jennifer.

susie: Jennifer, how do you know you are heard or answered? I rarely feel heard or answered. Isn't that completely transactional?

KATHLEEN: Is not the unconditional, so much of the way we live our mortal lives, is also holy? Should we wholly separate the conditional and unconditional? It seems like we are placing the conditional on a lower level, in the same way Western thought has placed man higher than the rest of nature in the old traditional view.

Tom & Diane: This is a video of Caputo reflecting on Mathew 25 and Radical Theology and asks the question, "can it preach?"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2nq8baHDFY>

Mary: feels slightly Greek !

Virginia: The word / concept that for me always goes with "unconditional" is LOVE - whether God's or ours for our beloved

Holly: transactional mindset v. unconditional for me comfortable almos habitual versus scary.

Dick: Is " the unconditional" a metaphor for "God?"

Peggy: Thank you for that story of CPE.

Linda: As Alzheimers took my Mothers brain she no longer judged me and condemned me to hell for being a Lesbian. The only connections we had at point were "heart connections". I called them that and discovered in them the unconditional. I am grateful for you giving us that full concept of God and the experiences we can have in relationship with each other.

Paul D: I wonder if this is about our finite minds attempting to comprehend the mystery of the unknowable. We will never get it quite right. It is a place of awe and wonder.

Kathleen: I have heard the voice sometimes suggesting a task, mentoring, prophetizing, and even an experience I don't understand.

Michael: As a pastor, I'm always wondering how things will "preach." My next prayer may begin in this way: Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of a gracious, loving, forgiving, and generous God. And as we open our hearts and minds to such a God, we take the risk of becoming, ourselves, gracious, loving, forgiving, and generous people!

Stephen: I see a connection between Sartre; Zen; and the conditional and unconditional. All the same thing.

Donna: I am still unclear about the secular morality - what that means to live a life like that - how does that differ from those who hear the still small voice? As each, for example, cares for the sick, the hungry, the earth and its creatures, etc.

Ken: The language of supernatural theism is part of the Book of Common Prayer. Other traditions may have something similar. Is there any hope, practically speaking?

susie: A voyage of discovery into the unknowable.

Paul D: and it is painful, very painful

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Tom &: To Dick: This from Caputo's book "The Weakness of God": "In chapter 1, which runs together Paul's idea of the weakness of God with Derrida's idea of something "unconditional without sovereignty," I form the notion of God as a weak force that lays a claim to us unconditionally but has no army to enforce its claims."

Mary: I believe that a longing for THE MORE is, and always has been, the human condition

Alexis: I grew up as a Missouri Synod Lutheran, so God with a clipboard and black marker is familiar! Grateful to have found The Episcopal Church at age 25.

Marianne: The book by Martin Hägglund This Life: why mortality makes us free might be very interesting for most of us.

Mary: an Experience of God can be the power of nature...which can be overwhelming, (especially to our ancestors)... so any image of a supernatural god becomes understandable, and even useful

Jennifer: susie when I say I feel heard or answered, what I mean is that I do not experience such prayers as a monologue. It's not like talking to myself - something shifts for me in the interaction, sometimes profoundly.

jim: Is not our 'challenge' of understanding "God" begin and/or end with our understanding of the Bible? Prof. Borg seemed to understand that it is and that it started with the Enlightenment. Imagine if we didn't have the "New Testament"! I would think our "issues" with understanding the Bible started with the Gutenberg bible? We would most likely not have this discussion without understanding this issue.

Sharon: Sound similar to God saying 'I am that I am'

Mary: to me an interest in the Jesus story is the political, in the world situation, and the takeaway of caring for others

Marianne: Raoul Follereay who did so much to bring the isolation of lepers wrote a prayer in which he says: "Lord, teach us only to think of others, to love first those who are not loved. Lord, let us be hurt by the suffering of others." (my translation, so perhaps not well written, but this seems to link with the man who just spoke, Robert, I think.

Patrick: Thank you Linda Larson

Paul D: thank you so much for your personal sharing

Kjell: The unconditional can be very scary for those who need to name and control because it is only in naming and controlling that they feel comfortable.

Bob: Linda Larson, that is an extraordinary story!!! Deserves to be shared widely, if possible!

jim: God Bless for sharing this!

Janet: Thank You for sharing this with us Linda! Heart Connection, wonderful

Dick: We experience the unconditional in Linda Lawton's story.

Loren: Just wanted to comment that this is a collection of such kind and good people. It is a blessing to be a participant this morning. Thank you all.

Caroline W: Linda, thank you so much for sharing this.

Samuel: Could you expand on how this leads to non-competition as a way of life. Thankfully the

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concepts today seem to be highly counter cultural, regardless of religious beliefs, exemplified especially this Super Bowl weekend.

Cheryl: It is what it is! I am who I am because I am who I am.

Jacobegli: Pure being...

Cheryl: Uncommunicatable knowledge...

Iliana: I'd like to say something ...In order to get to such experiences...we do need to be opened by the spirit to something new; also hearing new things like from Marianne prepares us for new experiences

KATHLEEN: Language binds us and opens us up. Part of what it is to be human.

Claire: Could we talk about how to pray when someone is in need...sick, dying, troubled....

Mary: For me, the deconstruction has come first, and I am still finding new ways of sitting with God/ the unconditional

Jim: How do we imbue this understanding in our congregations?

Jim: ...fear and trembling to death"?

Cheryl: Be available...

Robert: Jimmock: or fear and trembling before freedom to 'become' others and the responsibility that carries with it?

Marianne: Is part of the human condition not also to be quite selfish and so not share so that we can care for ourselves at the cost of others? If we were not, perhaps there would not be so much disparity between the haves and have-nots. If we propose that God loves us all, then we all have the duty to be his love representative in this world, since he does not have the magic wand after all.

Cheryl: All this conversation points to the encouragement to "Pray Always!"

Virginia: I like that, Marianne. Thank you! So easy to be selfish!!

Marianne: Virginia, when will we be able to vote for a party of sharing???

Virginia: Indeed!

Alexis: There are no points to be won with God. And that is a difficult concept in our transactional society.

Elaine: Fingers pointing to the moon.

Cheryl: From last week: Somethings are factually untrue but are metaphorical true.

Eileen: We could try on the idea that all religions reflect the All, the Everything/Nothing, while taking on these cultural conditions. We need perhaps to continue to distinguish the Unspoken from the conditional, cultural expression that we have to have while we have bodies and walk this earth.

Virginia: Sometimes I find my most effective sharing of gospel truth is when a child asks a basic question. Like "Why should I be baptised?" Being put on the spot is really helpful. Gives room for the Spirit!

Eileen: Oh my. What a great inquiry. Am I living or am I being lived? Thank you, La!

Cheryl: "The EVENT"



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Carla: One can save the chat by going to the thee dots .

liliana: One we are being lived, we allow the Holy to live in us and we LET GO!

liliana: Which is happiness!

Carla_: Three dots.....

Donna: Thank you Marianne, and all who are sharing- this is so very helpful to me at this juncture in my life. The synchronicity of the timing is speaking to me. I will share with my soul friends who are also seeking.

Samuel Wilson: Brilliant song - taken out of remake