



How Audacious Are Your Prayers?

Tool for HeartConnexion® Living

What image comes to mind when you hear the phrase “audacious prayer?”

Audacious means 1) extremely bold or daring, recklessly brave, fearless; 2) extremely original, without restriction to prior ideas, highly inventive; 3) recklessly bold in defiance of convention, propriety, law, or the like; insolent; brazen; 4) lively, unrestrained, uninhibited. (Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1). 2007)

You may find it audacious to believe that there is a God who cares about you. If God exists, some of us have the sneaky suspicion that his agenda is to make our life miserable. Have you ever prayed for God to make life a lot safer and domesticated than what audacious sounds like?

The act of honest prayer is inherently audacious in that it goes against what we think the odds are in some situation – otherwise we don't think about needing to pray. It goes against what we call reality or scientific laws. Our own deep doubts can make praying seem audacious. “I believe. Help my unbelief.”

Ted Loder observes that our spontaneous expressions that we might not call prayer are audacious: “Even when prayer is inchoate (not intentionally shaped) in something that sounds more like a curse, or a moan or a desperate plea or a spontaneous ‘whoopee,’ there is a gut deep, intuitive refusal to accept the odds or to calculate too closely either the limits of the possible or the sneakiness of grace.”

It is a paradox that audacious prayer can seem so dangerous from inside a domesticated Christianity. Erwin McManus offers his analysis of the situation:

“We created a religion using the name of Jesus Christ and convinced ourselves that God's optimal desire for our lives was to insulate us in a spiritual bubble where we risk nothing, sacrifice nothing, lose nothing, (and) worry about nothing. Yet, Jesus' death wasn't to free us from dying, but to free us from the fear of death. Jesus came to liberate us so that we could die up front and then live. Jesus Christ wants to take us to places where only dead men and women can go.”

If audacious prayer is seen as dangerous then a life lived with audacious faith would be outright heretical to many. The image we get of Jesus as “meek and mild,” lamb-petting, always obedient, never embarrassing anyone is just not true. But look at the best-selling Christian books and the consistent theme is “how to be more blessed” as if that is the product we are selling.

So, here are some questions for your reflection:

How do I pray audaciously if my faith is focused on living a safe, domesticated life more intent on arriving safely at death rather than on daring to live a death-defying expression of faith?

What would have change if my faith became more audacious? Who would that offend? What risk am I willing to take to step out of a domesticated faith?