

PRAYERS FOR THE DECONSTRUCTION JOURNEY

Prayers of
Hope, Joy,
Anger and
Despair

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INTRODUCTION

Praying in general can be difficult but praying while in the midst of deconstructing from toxic beliefs is hard, holy, and sacred work.

I offer these handful of short prayers for those who feel lonely, lost, and afraid on this deconstruction journey. May these prayers remind you that you are not alone.

These prayers are also for those who desperately still want to pray, but who do not have the words to pray. Here, take these prayers and use them as your own. May you remember that you are loved.

The prayers included run the gamut from calling on God to bless the marginalized, to anger at injustice and oppression, to expressions of loneliness, to righteous indignation, to admiring the beauty of life.

God can handle our full humanity-joy, grief, anger, disbelief, doubt. Part of the deconstruction journey is letting go of the idea that God only loves us when we are "perfect" or "happy." Or that God only "hears" us if we approach God in the "right" way.

**God knows and loves us-
all of us-not just the parts
that Fundamentalist
Christianity deems worthy
of love.**

**We don't need to hide who
we are anymore. God sees
us fully and delights in us.**



Blessed Are...

Blessed are the abused, the discarded, the marginalized, for You have called them Your own.

Blessed are the fuck ups for they have experienced Your boundless grace and forgiveness.

Blessed are the stubborn, for their persistence has compelled You to act.

Blessed are the angry for their thirst for justice shall be quenched.

Blessed are the lost, the wanderers, the adventure seekers, for they shall forge new paths.

Blessed are those who never quite belong because they will create communities of radical welcome.



Blessed Are...

Blessed are the marginalized for they shall soon be lifted up.

Blessed are those leaving behind toxic religion, for You will bandage up their wounds, and journey with them towards freedom.

Blessed are those who speak out against injustice and who hold to account institutions of oppression, for they are embodying Your love and justice.

Blessed are the Queers who point to a God whose love is much more expansive than we can imagine.



How Long O' Lord?

How long O Lord, must we watch our children bleed and die at the altar of white supremacy, nationalism and love of guns? How long must we fear for their lives as we send them off to daycare, school, church, or the movies, wondering if they will return to us safe and sound.

How long must we struggle to put food on the table, working multiple jobs to still face eviction and hunger?

How long must we deal with those seeking to take away our reproductive rights, force us to give birth, and then reject any and every single piece of legislation that would help us care for the kids they want to compel us to have?



How Long O' Lord?

How long O Lord, will white supremacy have the last word? How long must Black, brown, and other people of color live in fear that today will be another day where we are harassed, bullied, and threatened simply for existing?

God, please do not turn your face away from us. Instead comfort us, protect us, remind us that we are loved. Watch over our children who deserve to live without fear. Move the hearts of those in power to do the right thing and protect the vulnerable and marginalized.

While others may abandon us and look at us with disdain, you hold us in your arms, letting us know that we are loved.



✦ Prayer for the Defiant ✦

"Who do you think you are?"

Fundamentalists shout at me when I dare proclaim a God that uplifts the marginalized and who calls women, trans and nonbinary people into ordained ministry.

"Who do you think you are?"

User 54321890 writes, telling me I am going to hell because I dare preach about a God who is prochoice; a God who trusts people to do what is right for their bodies and their lives, a God who understands that the world we live in is one marred by violence and oppression and sometimes not bringing a child into this world is the most loving act a person can do.

"Who do you think you are?"

Screams the conservative white male pastor when I describe God as mother, or trans, or nonbinary. I have the audacity to worship a God who is male, female, both, neither, and beyond.



✦ Prayer for the Defiant ✦

"Who do you think you are?" "You are a false prophet!" "You are the antichrist!" "You are Jezebel!"

The accusatory voices continue to call me names intent on tearing me down because I dare worship a God who destroys empires and who ushers in a kingdom of justice and equality.

Who am I? I am a beloved child of God.

Who am I? I am called to preach the Good News of a God whose love knows no bounds.

Who am I? I am one of the fools tasked with helping usher in the kingdom of God. (Hint we are all called to be such fools)

Who am I? I am defiant, beloved, beautiful and bold.



Prayer for the Courage to Burn it All Down

Holy God of liberation,
Give us the strength to do the hard work of
destroying the structures of society that
oppress, kill, and destroy. Too often we call out,
'reform, reform!' and yet nothing changes.

We want to 'reform' institutions whose very
basis is built on racism, violence, and
exploitation.

We claim we want to create positive change, but
even doing the bare minimum seems like too
much work. We are so desperate to hold onto
power, wealth, and possessions that we don't
notice or care about the rows of dead bodies
our cherished institutions leave in their wake.



Prayer for the Courage to Burn it All Down

The only thing left to do is to burn it all down. Rain down your holy fire and let it consume the altar of white supremacy, let it consume the altar of corporate greed, let it consume the altar of capitalism.

Give us the strength to light a match to the greed and hatred within our hearts that says it is ok to let others die so we are not inconvenienced.

Give us the courage and strength to love others more than material possessions and property.

Help us to imagine and work towards a more just and equitable world.



Prayer to Help Us See Beauty in the Midst of Pain

Dear Loving Mother,

In a world filled with daily instances of injustice and violence,
it is easy to get overwhelmed and to feel
despair.

Help us to be able to acknowledge the injustices and pain in
the world, while also bearing
witness to the beauty.

Help us to hold onto both truths: that the world is a violent
place filled with
oppression and the world is also a beautiful place.

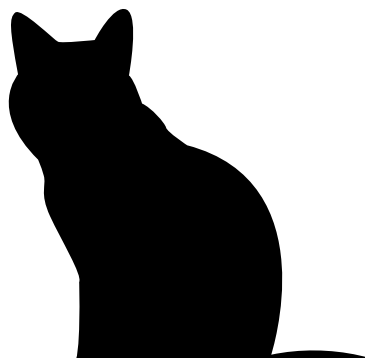
When we are overcome by despair, remind us to take a deep
breath and to step outside.

To hear the
sounds of the birds happily chirping.

To notice the beautiful flowers that neighbors are tenderly
planting.

To appreciate the sounds of children laughing and running.

To pet the friendly dogs and
cats that walk the streets with their humans.



Prayer to Help Us See Beauty in the Midst of Pain

When isolation threatens to cut us off from all that is good in the world, remind us to turn to the handful of friendships that sustain us, that nurture us, that refuel us.

Remind us that pausing to appreciate the joy and beauty in the world, isn't ignoring the large amount of pain and suffering in the world.

Rather, it is filling us up and healing us, so that we can continue to work towards a more just world.

Remind us that joy is not the enemy of justice, apathy and indifference is.

We can appreciate and cultivate moments of joy while also acknowledging the pain and sorrow of this world.



Prayer When Feeling Directionless

God,

It sucks not knowing what my next steps are. It sucks seeing my friends, family, and acquaintances, appear to have it all together, their lives following a carefully scripted plan.

Yes, even though I know the reality is often much more complicated than what can be shown on an Instagram post, I can't help but feel left behind. Behind in my career. Behind in my personal life. I can't help but wonder if I have failed to live up to my potential.

God, I feel lost, alone, and afraid. Where do I go from here? Am I doomed to wander aimlessly, like the Israelites who spent 40 years lost in the desert. I can't help but ask, God, did I do something to anger or annoy you? If so please tell me. It seems as if you provided others with a clear roadmap and direction for their lives. Did my map get lost in the mail? To be fair, a map probably wouldn't have helped. I wouldn't know how to read it anyway.



Prayer When Feeling Directionless

God,

I am confused and directionless. Where do I turn? What should I do?

God, I am not asking for detailed plan for my life. Ok that's a lie, that sounds amazing actually.

But I am also asking for you to remind me that you have not in fact left me alone. That you are with me as I take a few steps forward and then a few steps back, and then suddenly veer off to the left before heading right.

Remind me that my self-worth isn't tied to what job I may have or whether or not I have met the imaginary standards of success placed on me by others. Help me to see the beauty in this messy, disorganized life.



About Naiomi

Naiomi Gonzalez (She/They) is a professional nerd. They have a BA in Religious Studies from Moravian College (Now Moravian University), an M.Div from Brite Divinity School, an MA in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies from George Mason University, and an MA in History from Texas Christian University.

They are Puerto Rican, queer, and nonbinarish. They have a passion for helping other Christians, especially those questioning fundamentalist Christian theology, expand their understanding of God. They affirm a radical God that rejects homophobia, transphobia, sexism, imperialism and exploitation of all types.

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