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Modern Christian's Psalm

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pathology that I can effect my own salvation through my own suffering. So whether he's an environmentalist or a jihadist is not clear.

As far as I understand the Dutch Reformed denomination, its basis is derived largely from Calvinism and this could explain Schrader's misperceptions about the true nature of Christianity. A priest I knew long ago once said that the devil works on a more global scale, seeking to influence society as a whole: consider, for example, Russia's embrace of communism, or Germany's indignation at their wounded pride after World War I, or the passions of populism we have witnessed in the United States. God, however, works very intimately on the individual and establishes a very personalized relationship with each soul. Like Peter when he walked out to Christ on the water, it is easy to become quickly discouraged when the entirety of the world's stormy conditions are taken into account. He is rescued when he again turns his attention to Jesus alone. Bernanos

seemed to understand this as a Catholic, for the priest's hope is refreshed when he sees God's work on the countess, Schrader has tended towards the opposite.

Although both narratives converge on many plot details, their treatments of suffering differ fundamentally. Schrader sees Christians as intentionally seeking out suffering to the point of mutilation or death, in order to "effect their own salvation". He sees Christians as having a sadomasochistic desire for suffering because it will "automatically" bring about their own salvation, and perhaps the salvation of others as well. This is, of course, a very distorted view of Christianity. Bernanos, on the other hand, understands the mystery of suffering as part of God's plan for salvation. It is an act of true love to suffer with and for another person, as the priest does in his novel. He does not advocate an inordinate desire for suffering for its own sake, nor does he propose that the priest can bring about his own salvation by suffering as much as possible; rather, Bernanos' idea of suffering aligns perfectly with the way in which Christ bore the Cross for

our sake. True, suffering and salvation are interlinked because without Christ's passion and death, there can be no Resurrection. But we must surrender our will to God so that he can lead us in His plan for our salvation, a concept which is in direct opposition to Schrader's view. Because he believes that Christians are trying to "effect their own salvation" through suffering, he doesn't understand the Christian's call to surrender his will to the Father. Toller, as we see in the film, is driven to the point of madness in trying to "effect his own salvation", even to the point of potential suicide. The priest in Bernanos' novel, however, commends his spirit to God and does nothing to intentionally bring about his own death. When he dies it is with peace and by natural causes. He trusts that God has brought his mission to an end in this life and is now calling him back to his eternal Home.

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New Voices New Poetry in English

N. S. Boone

Modern Christian's Psalm

O God, hear our prayer.
We invite you into dialogue,
For we know that you are always ready to listen and respond to us;
Like best friends who answer any text
With affirming words in minutes,
So you are always available,
Ready to applaud our efforts to engage you.

Great Spirit, ever-growing intelligence
Give us the data we need to convince everyone of your egalitarianism;
Pour out the truths of science so that everyone knows
The same things in the same ways—
About the necessity of equal outcomes for all,
And the need for unbridled expression of the multiplicity of gendered and racialized identities.
Give the nations a thirst for justice so that the historically marginalized can rise up
And righteously beg for more money, more air time, more free time, more opportunity to shout out
truth to power
O Righteous One, give us the power we deserve;
Give us the wealth of the nation to redistribute.

Ever-expanding Technium, Thou who hast always known all,
Grant us clear communication channels,
So that everything will always be seen by everyone,
So that all will be watched and recorded,
Yea, even our dreams and desires through brainwaves tracked and plotted
So that nothing will be hidden and every secret shouted from the rooftops!

Great Becoming,

We acknowledge the faults of the past,
And we are grateful that we do not have to walk in the errors of our Fathers,
That we are not bidden to history,
That we now know and understand so much more
And are better able to structure and plan an equitable society,
That we are nicer, more humane, and sanitary
And that we have nothing more to learn from dead white men,
Save for what not to repeat.
Tear down the memorials, rip up the old books, throw the men of old into the sea, to be forgotten forever!

May your enemies be ridiculed ceaselessly on late-night television,
May they be blacklisted and backchanneled, canceled and shouted down.
And do not leave their children to them, but make them be educated
In the great truths of your love, tolerance, and equality.
May all who question your ways be silenced.

Great Mother of Earth and Heaven,

We acknowledge our carbon footprint.
Grant us time because of our good intentions;
Give our green technologists time to sell their inventions to everyone.
Make them profitable so that we can have climate-controlled workplaces,
Lightning-fast transport, and electronic everything yet still be labeled Green in your eyes.

Great Temporal Spirit

Never let us be surprised by anything new,
Never be upset by the trends of the young,
But keep us ever in-the-know,
Keep us young and fluid,
Ever pliant, ever adaptable to new ways
Of structuring how we live, and work, and process ideas.
O God, we beg you—never let us become outdated.

Our Loving Infinitude, we know

You are honored by our efforts
To make the world into our image.
We know you will never condemn anyone whose Instagram posts are inclusive.
We know you are only concerned with social sins and that you will provide all the medications we need
To have mental health and stability.
When we groan inwardly, you help us outwardly so that we no longer worry about the Self,
Except as a figment of what we once thought, evaporated as easily as a desert mirage.

Great MetaDeus,

Satisfied are all the woke
Who now can know themselves fully
Through their own brain patterns thrown upon a screen
And never be held accountable,
Understanding that their will is not their own,
And that a better state of mind you make available
Through the miracle of pharmaceuticals.

All entertaining, all amazing, all-inspiring Om,

We celebrate in the dance that is the universe
Laughing with you as you wink at us,
Your co-creators. Amen.