



fļej: to grow the plummage necessary for flight



## Why I Pray (part 1)

I struck up a conversation with a Buddhist. We were talking about the general evil in the world. He was listing gas prices and blaming Bush. I talked about the rise of crime in big cities. Then he gave me one of those classic Buddhist phrases:

*Desire is the root of all evil.*

He announced it as if these were the final words on the subject. I told him I wasn't so sure. So many desires are good (the desire for beauty, the desire for peace). Surprisingly, he agreed, which made me want to dig deeper into his worldview. After a short pause in the conversation I asked, "What do you do when you find yourself repeating the same evil thing again and again? How do you stop?"

"That's a good question," he said. He took a moment, sizing me up, thought about it

*What do you do when you find yourself repeating the same evil thing again and again?*

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and said, "I'm not really sure." His eyes faltered. "I guess," he went on, "I just try to be calm and not get upset. Take a deep breath and count to ten." His voice trailed off. He had this sad look in his eyes. He knew that I was not fooled. He hadn't figured a way out of his bad habits. I saw a longing for God in him, a longing to find more help than he had discovered.

As I walked away from that conversation I thought how most Christians would answer the same way. We all have these sins we've struggled with for years. But do we have any better way out of our evil? How do we stop the evil in ourselves? Are the solutions we have for our sin any different from the Buddhist, Hindu, Jehovah Witness or Muslim?

*But do we have any better way out of our evil?*

Lately, I've been noticing how I work on the sin in myself. For decades I've tried to fix my evil by working harder at being good, remembering better, noticing my sin more. But, honestly, it seems like I take one step forward and then mess up really big and lose all the ground I've gained. And then I feel like a failure and want to give up.



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Early believers in Jesus were not called “Christians.” They were called followers of “The Way” (Acts 9:2).

*The Way helps us embrace vulnerability and it will lead us to prayer.*

Christ offered then and offers now another Way, a better Way to become new people.

Christ’s way gives us a chance to be more appropriately human.

This Way starts with remembering that even Christians still need Christ.

The Way helps us embrace vulnerability and it will lead us to prayer.

The Way will take us down a road of facing the sin, sitting in it and discovering what drives us there.

In Part 2 of this series on prayer we will walk a path of prayer that is more risky and therefore more exciting. In the next *fledge* we’ll explain how “specific prayer,” those prayers that can be clearly asked and clearly answered, provide one way to become like Christ, fully human.



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Bring any question or puzzling life situation



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