

Stunned by Liberty Stage Rusher, Jordan Peterson Opens Up About His Prayer Life and Jesus' Resurrection

On March 29, Jordan Peterson spoke at Liberty University's Convocation as part of a panel. But the remarks were derailed early on by an unexpected guest onstage.

Around 21 minutes into the address, a man who identified himself as "David" rushed the stage and said, "I'm unwell, I need help. I need help. I just wanted to meet you. I'm unwell. I called 911. ... I want to know Him better."

The man then collapsed into a sobbing heap and had to be led off the stage. Peterson told David, "I hope that you find the help you need."

David's appearance clearly rattled Peterson, who remained on the verge of tears for most of the rest of his remarks. During that time—while trying to offer advice to help David—he brought up the subject of prayer.

"People often ask me if I pray, which is an annoying question as far as I'm concerned," Peterson says. "But they still ask me that. And I've suggested a form of prayer which I would say I do engage in, and that is to practically speaking to do something like sit on the edge of my bed or on the edge of a chair and think 'There's probably something that I'm doing wrong, or not doing well enough, that I'm being blind to. That I could fix. And that I would fix.' You need both of those, right? Because there's lots of things about your life that you know aren't right that you could fix but you won't. Who knows why? You don't have the discipline or the vision or the courage or the integrity of character or the maturity or God

only knows the reasons, but there are some things that you're doing wrong or not doing that you could fix, that you would fix, and you have to sit and ask.

"I think it's the reflection of the New Testament idea that if you knock, the door will open, you know, and if you ask, you will receive. It's a very interesting line because it sounds like something that's naively optimistic. It sounds like it's representing God as the granter of wishes in some sense, but I don't believe that's what it means at all. I think what it means is that if you actually want to know something, and you actually want to devote yourself to something, if you're willing to make the proper sacrifices and reorient yourself, that you can move towards what you're aiming at."

Later, Peterson was asked by David Nasser, Liberty's senior vice president of spiritual development, what believers could pray for him for. Peterson seemed somewhat surprised at the question, and emotionally responded, "My fervent hope, and perhaps this is something that could be turned into a prayer, is that the mistakes I am inevitably going to make while I'm pursuing, that I don't pay an undue price for the mistakes that I'm inevitably going to make, as I pursue what I'm pursuing. That's my fervent hope, and it has been since all of this has broken around me, that I would be careful enough in my speech ... so that I would stay on the right track, on the straight and narrow path, and fulfill whatever obligations are my privilege to fulfill. What I hope from the people that are supporting me is that if they wish to pray me is that ... I remain careful enough and fortunate enough so that my inevitable faults don't interfere catastrophically with whatever good I might be able to do."

Later, Peterson discussed Easter and his difficulty in believing a literal account of Jesus' bodily resurrection.

"With the resurrection, it's an issue that I wrestle with continually," Peterson says. "Because there's so much in the

New Testament that is profound beyond comprehension. You see this in the biblical writings in general. Like the story of Cain and Abel, for example, is 10 sentences. It's some fragment of a story, not even a full paragraph, and it's infinitely deep. You could study that story and analyze it for your entire life and never get to the bottom of it. It's a real miracle that a story like that can exist, and there are statements in the New Testament that are like that. They're so surprising. You see that in the Sermon on the Mount in particular, but not only there, that are so surprising that it's almost impossible to understand how they could have come about from the standard scientific materialistic perspective.

"But the claim is so overwhelming and also so mysterious that I don't know what to make of it. I don't know what to make of the idea of the physical resurrection. It's complicated conceptually right within the confines of the Gospels themselves. I don't know what it means metaphysically. I understand what it means symbolically, and that's usually the approach I take, given that I'm a psychologist. I mean, I do believe that the part of the human being that leads us to redemption is the part of us that dies when it's in error, and is reborn as something better and new. And I think that's true practically and scientifically and metaphysically. It's true at every level of existence. But I also don't know what it would mean to live that way fully."

Later, after Peterson responded to a question with more discussion about how God and Christ's words are symbolic inspiration for pursuing "the highest possible ideal" to transcend limits, Nasser responded with the gospel. Nasser said he admired Peterson's clearly "compassionate soul," but that David—and Peterson as well—could only become their best through Jesus Christ.

"I just want to tell you sir that no matter how much David—who jumped on stage or is sitting with you—no matter how much, I believe, we self-diagnose and begin to take steps forward, we

can certainly fix the circumstances and take forward, but ultimately without Christ, in the center of our life, I just believe we lose our way," Nasser says. "At very best, we just become a really good perform-aholic. And I'm more concerned about the man that David can be when he's a man of God and the marriage he'll have and the fatherhood he'll have and the person that he'll help one day who's crying out for help."

Watch the full Convocation video from Liberty University [here](#).