

General Topics :: Who is the God that is being referred to here?

Who is the God that is being referred to here?, on: 2011/2/11 18:32

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704858404576134601105583860.html?mod=WSJ_LifeStyle_Lifestyle_5

One night last summer, Lady Gaga sat in a tour bus in England, covered in stage blood from her concert that day. She told me that she had cried hysterically before a recent show because she'd had a dream that the devil was trying to take her. She then said, in earnest, that the spirit of her dead aunt was literally inside her body and that she had eaten a bovine heart to face her fear of her father's heart surgery.

If a stranger on a train had said all of this to me, I would have moved a few seats away. But this was one of the most famous women in the world. "It's hard to just chalk it all up to myself," Lady Gaga said of her success, explaining that there was "a higher power that's been watching out for me."

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Reuters
Snoop Dogg

Cut to...Snoop Dogg in the living room of his home outside Los Angeles, smoking a blunt and discussing his comeback after leaving Death Row Records. "God makes everything happen," he said. "He put me in that situation with Death Row, and he took me out of it."

Cut to...a hotel room where Christina Aguilera is gorging on junk food and discussing her success. "All of this isn't something that I did," she told me. "It's something that is totally there for a purpose." In a separate interview, Ms. Aguilera's mother explained that fame was her daughter's destiny: "We thought there must be some divine intervention. Early on, I realized...God has plans for her."

When this year's Grammy winners accept their awards on Sunday night, God is likely to be thanked and praised more than a few times. It's a longstanding showbiz tradition, after all, prevalent at the Oscars, the Emmys and even the AVN Awards for adult movies. Until I began interviewing many of the winners of these awards two decades ago, I thought this was a sign of humility and gratitude (or at least an affectation of them). But the truth is more interesting than that.

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WireImage/Getty Images
Eminem

Before they were famous, many of the biggest pop stars in the world believed that God wanted them to be famous, that this was his plan for them, just as it was his plan for the rest of us not to be famous. Conversely, many equally talented but slightly less famous musicians I've interviewed felt their success was accidental or undeserved—and soon after fell out of the limelight.

As I compiled and analyzed these interviews for my new book, I reached a surprising conclusion: Believing that God wants you to be famous actually improves your chances of being famous. Of course, from the standpoint of traditional theology, even in the Calvinistic world of predestination, God is much more concerned with the fate of an individual's soul than his or her secular success, and one's destiny is unknowable. So what's helping these stars is not so much religion as belief—specifically, the belief that God favors their own personal, temporal success over that of almost everyone else.

Speaking to the media prior to last Sunday's Super Bowl, Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers, who went on to become the game's MVP, explained, "God always has a plan for us." Similarly, former Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver Santonio Holmes declared that the game-winning catch that made him the Super Bowl MVP two years ago was "God's will." And in the Super Bowl before that, the New York Giants wide receiver David Tyree said of his team's win, "It felt li

ke it was destiny.Â... I knew God would do what he said he was going to do."

Let's call it competitive theism, a self-styled spirituality that can be overlaid on any religion and has nothing to do with personal morality. This faith gap, I've noticed in the interviews I've done, is often what sets the merely famous apart from the ridiculously famous. It can make the difference between achieving what's possible and accomplishing what seems impossible.

Though scientists, to the best of my knowledge, have yet to study the relationship of faith to superstardom, they have studied addicts, transplant patients and natural disaster victims, and they have found that actively seeking God's intervention has improved people's odds of survival.

This isn't to say that every person who tops the charts believes in God's will. There are plenty of exceptions, but fewer than you'd think. Contemporary pop stars have rarely declared themselves atheists. In fact, the pop stars condemned by religious groups have often been the most fervent believers, from Elvis Presley (who was reading a book about Jesus when he died in his bathroom) to Lady Gaga (whose "Born This Way," a new single launched with great fanfare this weekend, declares that "no matter gay, straight or bi," we are all part of God's plan).

Even a miscreant like Eminem, who is up for 10 Grammys this year, has a sense of divine mission: "God sent me to piss the world off," he rapped on "My Name Is," his first hit single. In an article he wrote for Vibe, he said, "I do believe in God, and I do pray.Â... God is my higher power, and he always has been."

This hardly proves that there is a God guiding the destiny of these stars. But it does suggest that unshakable confidence and a powerful sense of purpose are good predictors of success. Look at Justin Bieber (who released a single two months ago titled "Pray") who seemed untouched when getting booed recently by fans at a New York Knicks game. Or consider the derision heaped on Ms. Aguilera for botching the national anthem at the Super Bowl. If an unknown singer had made the same mistake, most people would have felt sorry for her.

But the more successful you get, the faster, louder and more savage the criticism becomes. To deal with the psychological burden of becoming a household name and the attacks that come with it, it helps to be thick-skinned. It helps even more to have a sense of divine mission and to feel that, when everyone else seems to be against you, God is walking at your side. Most stars who feel even a sliver of doubt about being in the spotlight will buckle under the constant pressure. Fearing criticism or failure, they become risk-averse and pass up opportunities.

The hip-hop mogul Diddy, for example, has been in and out of courtrooms over the years, facing charges for assault, gun possession and bribery—yet he continually bounces back with a new name and a new career. When I asked him if he ever felt fear, he replied, "My faith is in God. Like, look who I'm rolling with. Look who my gang really is. My gang is God. Come on, now, I don't have fear."

The meek may indeed inherit the Earth, but until then, stars who are presumptuous enough to see themselves as God's chosen ones are likely to dominate the pop charts, award shows and sports championships. Talent counts for a lot, but so too does the motivating power of divine conviction.

Re: Who is the God that is being referred to here?, on: 2011/2/11 20:01

Luk 4:5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

Luk 4:6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Luk 4:7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

2Co 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Re: Who is the God that is being referred to here? - posted by linda7 (), on: 2011/2/12 6:36

The God that is being referred to is not the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob.

And the LORD said, Behold, the people one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: AND NOW NO THING WILL BE RESTRAINED FROM THEM, WHICH THEY HAVE IMAGINED TO DO. (Genesis 11:6 KJV)

Re: Who is the God that is being referred to here? - posted by DesertRose, on: 2011/2/12 10:05

From some of the comments made, it appears God is nothing more than a lucky rabbit's foot in one's pocket.

Men making God into their own image is idolatry.

Re: , on: 2011/2/13 3:52

This reminds of the Paul Washer sermon (I think it was in 10 indictments) where he was exposing the false, watered-down gospel preached in America.

It went something like:

Christian to sinner: "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life."

Sinner: "Wow! That's great! I love me too! And I have a wonderful plan for my life also! And you're saying if I accept Jesus..." (I forget how the rest went, you get the picture)

I also think of the sermon "Ten Shekels and a Shirt" where Paris Reidhead talks about humanism creeping into religion, where according to humanism everything God does is for the happiness of man, and that this idea is unChristian and from the pit of hell. The previous comments on this article all made good points that show how that is. Paris Reidhead goes on to talk about how humanism is completely opposed to true Christianity, which is totally about men being won to Christ to exalt and obey him as HIS reward. Only that brings glory to the true God.

The ironic thing is come judgment day NONE of the accomplishments and honor those celebrities have gotten will mean anything at all, while those who lived for Christ's honor and not their own will be glorified with him!

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day." (Isaiah 2:11)

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:17-18)

"(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phillipians 3:18-21)

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)

Edit: Regarding the title to the thread, it's interesting that in Exodus 32:5 the feast that was made to the golden calf was called "a feast to the Lord."