

Prayer and technology

I am a late-adopter when it comes to things technological. This doesn't necessarily mean I lack intelligence, it's just that I lack the 'know-how'. But Chromecast and Spotify have become the means by which I now access a diverse range of watching and listening options. In doing so, I am discovering songs that I would never have found and viewing options that would have been unlikely to be on my radar. You see, somewhere out there in cyberspace, 'someone' (excuse my simple understanding) now offers me other things I may enjoy based on my previous viewing and listening.

Shuffle Play enables me to listen to an eclectic mix of tracks without the predictability of order that previous listening habits trained me to expect. The result is that I hear in a fresh way things that had become so familiar that I'd stopped truly hearing. When songs become simply background music and we fail to stop long enough to truly hear them, we enjoy their familiarity, but the intensity of the rhythm and lyrics may pass us by. This is a sad diminishing of the performer's gift.

The repetitive nature of prayer can also fall victim to this same familiarity. If your prayers have become a series of words and phrases patched together but no longer requiring much thought or attention, can I encourage you to try 'shuffle play'? Delve into other resources of prayer—perhaps from centuries past, or the Bible or from the pen of current writers. Go on a Google adventure! In the discovery of some of these prayers, we are provoked into new adventures in prayer. We are required to slow down, venture out and be drawn into the ageless invitation to commune with God as we allow other people's words to become ours. In this year of prayer, let's expand our adventures in prayer.

By Colonel Heather Rodwell

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