

# NOOMA® Open | 019 Rob Bell



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"I stood over the clear plastic box that had this couple's son in it and he's got these tubes and wires coming out of his chest and his stomach and his mouth and his nose. And I prayed. And I asked God to heal him. And then I found out later that all kinds of people were praying for him. And he hung on for a little while, but he didn't make it and he died."

Have you ever prayed?

If so, how do you pray? What do you pray for?

What are some situations you've prayed for that didn't end the way you'd hoped?



“And so the family all started praying  
and then they took her in  
for another round of tests  
and after that round of tests,  
the doctor said to the family,  
‘I can’t really explain it.  
I mean, I’m an authority on this  
particular rare heart condition  
and I don’t know what else to say,  
but, I can’t find anything wrong with her.  
She’s healed.’  
I mean, what do you do with that?”

Does God answer prayer?

Do you think sometimes he says no?

If God’s gonna do what God’s gonna do, then why pray?

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

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Matthew 26:36-39 (NIV)



“So, in the first prayer, he essentially says, ‘Is there some way out of this? I don’t really want to go through this. Is there some other plan here?’ And then, the second prayer is more like, ‘Well, I guess this is going to happen. Nothing I can do to stop it. So, I’m up for whatever you have in mind.’”

Are there things in your life right now that you wish were different?  
Stuff you’re dealing with? Situations you’re going through?

Are you up for whatever God has in mind?

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.  
Now the earth was formless and empty,  
darkness was over the surface of the deep,  
and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

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Genesis 1:1-2 (NIV)





“Jesus took very seriously the creation poem, Genesis, that the Bible begins with. And in this creation poem God creates. But God creates things that are capable of creating more. And so, God creates trees, but then gives trees the ability to create more. God creates animals and plants and fish, but then empowers them to create more. And then, God creates people and gives them the ability to create more. So everything in creation is essentially unfinished. God leaves the world unfinished and invites people to take part in the ongoing creation of the world.”

Do you believe God has invited you to take part in the ongoing creation of the world?

If so, what does that mean in your day-to-day life?



"For Jesus, prayer was being open to the God who's at work here and now. But to be open to the creative working of God in the world here and now, you have to be honest. So when Jesus is saying things like, 'Is there any way for this cup to be taken so I don't have to drink it?' he's being brutally honest with God. 'God, I don't really want to go through this.'"

Do you feel comfortable being honest with God?

How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?  
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?  
How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Psalm 13:1-2 (TNIV)



"God can handle what you're thinking.  
God can handle how you're feeling.  
God can handle what you're saying.  
Prayer, if it's anything, is truth.  
It's being honest with your maker."

Are you angry with God about something that's happened in your life?

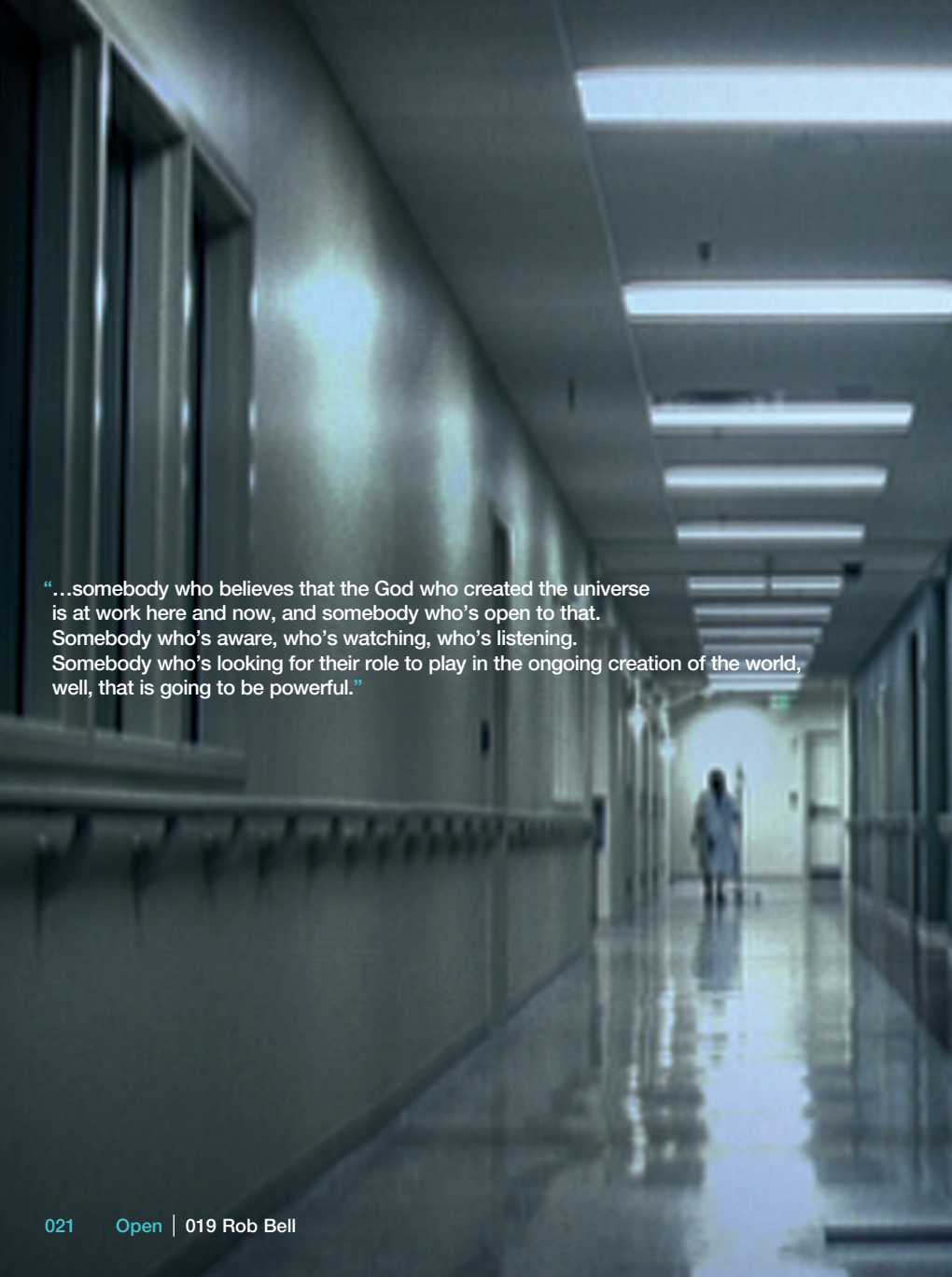
Do you tell friends and family what you're feeling but not God?

Why or why not?

And the prayer offered in faith will make them well; the Lord will raise them up.  
If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.  
Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.  
The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

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James 5:15-16 (TNIV)



“...somebody who believes that the God who created the universe is at work here and now, and somebody who’s open to that. Somebody who’s aware, who’s watching, who’s listening. Somebody who’s looking for their role to play in the ongoing creation of the world, well, that is going to be powerful.”

Is there a role God is calling you to play in a situation you’re struggling with right now?


Have you expected God or someone else to take on that role?



“God’s desire is that the divine energy that made the world would flow between us and in the process draw us closer together. Prayer is tapping in to the same energy that formed the universe. That’s why people say that they can feel prayer. It’s because we can. Praying connects us to the people and things we’re praying for. Prayer enlarges our perspective. Praying gives us a bigger heart. Praying makes us feel things. Praying changes things but prayer changes us.”

Is prayer about changing you or about changing what’s happening?

How could prayer change your perspective right now?

A dimly lit hospital room, possibly an operating room or ICU, viewed through an open doorway. A patient lies in a bed, partially covered by a blue blanket. Medical equipment, including monitors and IV stands, is visible in the background. A person in a white uniform stands by the bedside, looking towards the patient. The lighting is low, with a bright light source above the bed.

May your whole life be a prayer.  
And may you be honest with God as you become more  
and more open to your role in the ongoing creation of the world.”



It took 50 volunteer extras in their cars, 6 police officers, 5 firemen, 4 EMTs, 3 cruisers, 2 ambulances, 2 wrecked cars, and 1 jaws of life to create the accident scene in this film.