

Dear God,  
A Youth Monologue  
By: Chris Stoker

*A young soldier regrets agreeing to pray in the Holiness meeting. This stream-of-consciousness monologue is humorous yet sincere glimpse into self-image, participation anxiety and ultimately taking responsibility to live out faith in uncomfortable ways.*

**(Guy Version)**

Yes, Captain, I'd love to pray in the Holiness Meeting this Sunday.

Why? Why? Why did I agree to do that? I should have told him that I just became a Senior Soldier because it's always too cold in the chapel and I needed the extra layer.

How do I get out of this? I know! I'm fresh out of black socks and the tan argyle ones just clash with the "navy" blue pants. My dog ate my loafers. I walked too close to the garbage disposal and my tie was caught in a hostile situation. I could call in sick, or dead. That should go well.

Yes, Captain, it's me. About praying on Sunday morning...I don't think I'll be able to make it. I seem to have come down with scurvy...and small-pox. The bubonic plague has hit our neighborhood pretty bad. There's this extra-terrestrial virus that reduces the human mind to mush...I can feel it kicking in, right about now. In fact, I am pretty sure that I only have a couple of minutes to live. *(Ad-lib slurring, stuttering, etc on the last line...as if your brain is turning to mush.)*

That will never work. I know he won't believe me. It will be just like the time he asked me to lead that song in Sunday School. I forgot the words...it was a big mess. Ok, fine...it's not fair to say I forgot the words...but it is fair to say that I forgot the letters. I believe it went something like this:

I am a C. I am a C- ache, I am a C – ache – o – I – wish – that – I – were – dead.

And that was just Sunday School. This is the Holiness Meeting. It's mass in polyester. The Holy of Holies of Salvation Army meetings. Other people bow to the east five times a day, we get the Songsters and the Band geared up so that everybody can fire a cartridge, fire a volley, run around in a Hallelujah wind-up and then spend a minute at the penitent form. The penitent form. That sounds like something you'd get from the IRS.

Why did I agree to pray this Sunday? There must be something wrong with me...like in my head. I hate getting up in front of people. I get stressed out when it's my turn to order at Burger King and there's a line behind me. I don't know if I can handle this kind of commitment. There's going to be 30 or 40 people there, including my parents.

Oh no. Oh no! **She's** going to be there. I can't pray in front of **her**. There is just no way. I gotta get out of this. She's the timbrel of my dreams. You should see this girl do a figure-eight. There is just no way I can pray in front of, next to, behind or even in the same building as **her**.

I have no idea what to do. My name is already on the program. If I skip out, everybody will know. Eventually, I will have to come back from my run-in with the garbage disposal or the alien flu. And what would **she** think about me if I chickened out?

Self, you cannot chicken out. You've been praying for years. You got this. Just don't start with "Now I lay me down to sleep."

You're a senior soldier now and this is your church. This is your faith. If you bail out over something as simple as a prayer, what does that say?

Good chat, self. I know exactly what I have to do.

I have to practice.

Dear God... Now I lay me down to sleep...

**EXITS laughing**

Dear God,  
A Youth Monologue  
By: Chris Stoker

*A young soldier regrets agreeing to pray in the Holiness meeting. This stream-of-consciousness monologue is humorous yet sincere glimpse into self-image, participation anxiety and ultimately taking responsibility to live out faith in uncomfortable ways.*

**(Girl version)**

Yes, Captain, I'd love to pray in the Holiness Meeting this Sunday.

Why? Why? Why did I agree to do that? I should have told him that I just became a Senior Soldier because it's always too cold in the chapel and I needed the extra layer. Better yet, I'll tell him it's because I hate deciding what to wear every morning. At least here, in this denomination, you know what you're going to wear every Sunday. And the little sweaters are so stylish.

How do I get out of this? I know! I could get a run in my nylons. My dog ate my skirt. I walked too close to the stove and the starch on my blouse caught on fire. It was at least a 2-alarm. I could call in sick, or dead. That should go well.

Yes, Captain, it's me. About praying on Sunday morning...I don't think I'll be able to make it. I seem to have come down with scurvy...and small-pox. The bubonic plague has hit our neighborhood pretty bad. There's this extra-terrestrial virus that reduces the human mind to mush...I can feel it kicking in, right about now. In fact, I am pretty sure that I only have a couple of minutes to live. *(Ad-lib shurring, stuttering, etc on the last line...as if your brain is turning to mush.)*

That will never work. I know he won't believe me. It will be just like the time he asked me to lead that song in Sunday School. I forgot the words...it was a big mess. Ok, fine...it's not fair to say I forgot the words...but it is fair to say that I forgot the letters. I believe it went something like this:

I am a C. I am a C- ache, I am a C – ache – o – I – wish – that – I – were – dead.

And that was just Sunday School. This is the Holiness Meeting. It's mass in polyester. The Holy of Holies of Salvation Army meetings. Other people bow to the east five times a day, we get the Songsters and the Band geared up so that everybody can fire a cartridge, fire a volley, run around in a Hallelujah wind-up and then spend a minute at the penitent form. The penitent form. That sounds like something you'd get from the IRS.

Why did I agree to pray this Sunday? There must be something wrong with me...like in my head. I hate getting up in front of people. I get stressed out when it's my turn to order at Burger King and there's a line behind me. I don't know if I can handle this kind of commitment. There's going to be 30 or 40 people there, including my parents.

Oh no. Oh no! **He's** going to be there. I can't pray in front of **him**. There is just no way. I gotta get out of this. **He's** the second cornet player I've always dreamed about. You wouldn't believe how good **he** is at syncopating. There is just no way I can pray in front of, next to, behind or even in the same building as **him**. What am I going to do?

I have no idea what to do. My name is already on the program. If I skip out, everybody will know. Eventually, I will have to come back from my run-in with the fire department or the alien flu. And what would **he** think about me if I chickened out?

Self, you cannot chicken out. You've been praying for years. You got this. Just don't start with "Now I lay me down to sleep."

You're a senior soldier now and this is your church. This is your faith. If you bail out over something as simple as a prayer, what does that say?

Good chat, self. I know exactly what I have to do.

I have to practice.

Dear God... Now I lay me down to sleep...

**EXITS laughing**