

# A Remedy for Jordan Peterson

Dear Dr. Peterson,

Word has got about that you have been [seriously ill](#) lately, even in danger of death, and that your present struggle goes back several years, involving an auto-immune disorder and medication for anxiety.

It seems hardly surprising that a demanding life as a public intellectual and controversialist in recent years has damaged your health. Even a highly competent person must suffer stress from a non-stop round of talks, debates and interviews – some of the latter quite aggressive. Under such circumstances your wife's illness must have been a particularly heavy blow. A huge number of people will be sorry to hear of your troubles.

Without being a close follower, I have admired your courageous defense of free speech, exposure of nonsense like gender ideology, and particularly your efforts to help young people understand the importance of meaning, free will and virtue in their lives.

With your videos and [12 Rules for Life](#), among other things, I believe you have done a lot of good to many people. You come across as a man committed to finding the truth of things. This all adds up to a great corrective to the ills of 21<sup>st</sup> century society.

At the same time there is a vital ingredient missing from your message – and perhaps from the range of remedies available to you personally at present.

Although you respect the Judaeo-Christian tradition and frequently refer to it in your writing, your approach to life's big questions has more in common with pagan philosophers and heroes.

Like the Stoics you are strong on virtue but seem to think we can attain the heights of virtue simply by our own efforts, by wisdom and willpower alone. Like the legendary Beowulf, you come across as duty driven, but duty is not enough; it makes a man somber, grim, fatalistic. Like the author of that saga, you draw on the Bible but don't go far enough.

What you have missed in Christianity is something absolutely central: grace. We cannot be good all by ourselves, we cannot save ourselves. We need divine help – actually, more than help; radically weakened by original sin, we need redemption. That is why Christ came among us and died for us: to save us from our sins and give divine impetus to our human efforts at virtue – above all, love.

I know it's hard to talk about love, since we all struggle to love well and are afraid of being hypocritical, but without it we cannot get our bearings in the world. And we will never get our ideas about love right – let alone its practice – without contemplating the love of Christ, who is divine love incarnate.

Because thousands, perhaps millions of people, especially young men, need your advice and encouragement, I urge you to revisit the Christian Scriptures and find there the remedy for all that ails us today, as ever.

In any case I wish you a speedy and full recovery.

—

*This [article](#) has been republished from MercatorNet under a Creative Commons license.*

[Image Credit: Flickr-Gage Skidmore, [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)]