

A Sermon on Modernizing Mythology

Sermon by Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE for July 11th, 2021 (and beyond)

This sermon is in dialogue format and open to interpretation. It started as a strange linguistic equation on a piece of notebook paper. Below is what came of it.

Moon: Some people call me Cancer. Some say witches or aliens or ancient civilizations live on my surface. People only notice me when the sun does, and when I block out the sun. Sometimes they are so dehydrated they think an eclipse lasts forever or like 3 days. Could be something they ate or ergot poisoning, I'm not a doctor.

Sun: Some people call me Leo. Some people worship me. Some people bathe in me even if Jupiter gets the credit. I'm a bit tired of Jupiter getting credit for my work.

Mercury: Not yet.

Venus: Some people call me Aphrodite. Some call me Taurus. Some call me Libra. Some think Taurus is my feminine side and Libra is my masculine side. Some people just call me Venus and some associate that with a Goddess and some think of me as the morning star, which is also a reference to what some call the devil or Lucifer. I believe it has to do with the golden calf, paganism, crime, and punishment. Libra is the scales of Justice to some and the county farm is where criminals pay their debts to society in some circles to serve Justice. So, that's the symbolism. Taurus is farming and Libra is Justice. Very funny. I can be cardinal and fixed. I'm associated with the elements of air and earth.

Mercury: Not yet, be patient.

Earth: I am just a volatile canvas. Please continue.

Moon: People started believing in the power of heavenly bodies after noticing my influence on bodies of water. Just saying. I'm cardinal. I'm associated with the element of water.

Sun: No one would've even known you existed without my shining a light on you. They'd think an eclipse was punishment of some sort. Read much? I'm fixed. I'm associated with the element of fire. Did you really need that added?

Saturn: Some people call me Aquarius though that one was later attributed to Uranus after Uranus was discovered. I still claim Aquarius. I like the old ways. Some people call me Capricorn. People associate me with partying and depression. Ever been to a Saturnalia? Did you wake up with a hangover or other issue you found depressing? Maybe just that the party was over? Yeah, that's what I'm associated with for the most part. Oh, and some idiots think because Aquarius is the water-bearer that Aquarius is carrying water for everyone else and therefore a slave and being punished for something given the association with Uranus. Wrong! Aquarius is the guy responsible for the ice

bucket, that's it. Aquarius is cool and you should really get your facts straight before attacking people for having a good time. We're all consenting adults! Oh, and Aquarius helps with clean up after the party. Water is life. I'm a bit cardinal and a bit fixed. I'm associated with the elements of air and earth.

Mercury: Seriously, still not ready. Okay, fine. Some call me Gemini. Some call me Virgo. Gemini is "the twins" and some say I'm responsible for science, language and logic. My feminine nature is supposedly Virgo. I'm also known as a messenger, which is another name for angel. Gemini is the side that always faces the sun and Virgo the side that never does. Is that right? I'm mutable and subject to change. I'm associated with the elements of air and earth.

Jupiter: You may know me as Zeus. Some call me Sagittarius, which is supposed to be my masculine side and the Hunter in me. Pisces is my feminine side. I am the original archetype for divinity regardless of gender. I'm the largest planet in the solar system. Heard of me? Saturn either has the same amount of moons or three more moons than me. I want to believe it is the same or less because to me that makes sense. But, whether it is the same or not, I'm still bigger. I'm totally mutable and subject to change. #TaoFu. I'm associated with the elements of fire and water.

Mars: I'm called War sometimes. Some call me Aries. Some call me Scorpio. Aries would be my masculine side and Scorpio my feminine. I'm mostly associated with change and particularly changing seasons like Spring and Autumn. At the end of Winter and beginning of Spring, sometimes historically resources have been scarce so people fought to survive. That's my theory on why Mars is associated with War. And, in Autumn the harvest is in so Scorpio is associated with reaping and abundance. So, people celebrate when there's plenty to last until the next growth cycle. And, when people don't budget accordingly or run out of supplies, you can almost guarantee war will break out. I don't think I should be blamed for something that is clearly out of my hands with too many variables to count. I claim Scorpio, and Pluto was downgraded so is no longer a planet. Scorpio and Aries are still associated with me. I'm a bit cardinal and a bit fixed too. I'm also associated with the elements of fire and water and do not care for being associated with rust regardless of my appearance.

Earth: Some say I am Mother Nature or the mother of all. Some say I'm a stage. Some people have made up some great stories watching the stars and then acted them out while attributing the stories told to the heavenly bodies that inspired them. Some have suspended disbelief indefinitely to the point they believe a story is so true that others act it out to test the veracity of it out of concern for those lost in said suspension hoping it is hysterical blindness rather than willful blindness or a permanent condition. All while I know the truth and wonder whether people are unwilling to learn, unable to learn, reasonably skeptical, unreasonably skeptical, conscientiously curious, or something completely different. I can tell you nearly all living beings inhabiting me in some way are mostly peaceful unless threatened in some way and then even the plants kill each other. Knowing the difference between what you need and what you want is the place to start. Understanding that charity addresses need not want is the second task. Accepting

who is legally responsible to meet your needs and/or legally obtain what you want is third and with that knowledge you should be ready for anything.

Superstitious Person: I wonder if I pray to Venus for love and Pluto for money, what will happen?

Religious Person: I think you will marry a prison warden, prisoner, or farmer. But, Pluto isn't a thing. You'd likely get a response from Mars. I'm not superstitious but do believe the Placebo Effect is a thing. "Placebos won't lower your cholesterol or shrink a tumor. Instead, placebos work on symptoms modulated by the brain, like the perception of pain. "Placebos may make you feel better, but they will not cure you," says Kaptchuk. "They have been shown to be most effective for conditions like pain management, stress-related insomnia, and cancer treatment side effects like fatigue and nausea."'" Source: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mental-health/the-power-of-the-placebo-effect> If you are into astrology too, you are asking to marry a prison warden, prisoner, or farmer with that combo.

Superstitious Person: If Mars, wouldn't I marry someone in the military or who is a war profiteer of some sort?

Religious Person: No, arguably on a bad day you'd marry an enemy and on a good day humor may see you marry a prison warden, prisoner, or farmer. 28% of the global human population is employed in agriculture. Source: <https://blog.resourcewatch.org/2019/05/30/map-of-the-month-how-many-people-work-in-agriculture/>. That's a little more than 1 in 4. So, the idea you might marry someone who is in agriculture is a 1 in 4 proposition unless you limit your gender options and then potentially 1 in 2. So, a 50/50 likelihood you may marry a farmer. That's science.

Superstitious Person: What if I just pray for money?

Religious Person: Have you tried working for money? Are you praying to Jupiter or the Sun for money?

Superstitious Person: What if I just pray for love?

Religious Person: Are you praying for the sake of love or money or more as a wish for yourself? Is it like you are wishing for love and/or money? Or, is it like you are thinking of love and money as abstract intangibles that you are sending comforting support to in some way?

Superstitious Person: Wishing for myself.

Religious Person: Pardon the expression, my grandfather used to say these words of wisdom, "Shit in one hand, wish in the other, and see which fills up first."

Earth: Is that a fertilizer joke? Human poop is similar to dog or cat poop, it can't be used as fertilizer unless treated first. It can go on things you don't plan to eat and just want to look at like flowers.

Superstitious Person: I don't want to marry a prison warden, prisoner, nor farmer. Stop trying to put that in my head. I just want love and money because I'm worth it.

Religious Person: The Free Market decides what is worth it objectively. So, a popular product that is demanded more than produced often gets more money than a product that is more produced than demanded. Subjectively, some people have paid over \$600,000 for an original work by someone who died in poverty. That explains money. Love is a gift you may have, may give away, and may recognize upon receipt.

Superstitious Person: I like gifts.

Religious Person: Well, if you wait long enough you may find yourself surrounded by like-minded people, segregated from society, and without a care in the world. But, your only way out may be working in agriculture.

Superstitious Person: Why on earth would I want to leave that situation?

Religious Person: For love or money. An estimated 155,100,000 Americans filed federal income tax returns in 2020 for fiscal year 2019. Source: <https://www.treasury.gov/tigta/auditreports/2020reports/202045024fr.pdf> There are 328,200,000 Americans total. 74,100,000 are under 18 or of age of minority. Assuming they are in school and not gainfully employed, that leaves 254,100,000 adults or people of age of majority. Source: <https://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables/pop1.asp> 61,000,000 Americans are disabled. Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html#:~:text=61%20million%20adults%20in%20the,have%20some%20type%20of%20disability>. 52,000,000 Americans are over age 65 or were in 2018. Source: <https://www.prb.org/resources/fact-sheet-aging-in-the-united-states/> 2 in 5 Americans over age 65 are disabled. So, 20,800,000 elderly make up part of the 61,000,000 disabled. 3,000,000 minors make up part of that 61,000,000 as well. So, subtracting 23,800,000 from 61,000,000 we get 37,200,000. So, adding that reduced disabled number, since the children and elderly are included in the overall number for their age demographics, to the number of children under 18 and elderly, we get 163,300,000 people one may reasonably expect not to be in the work force even though that may vary. So, then we subtract the 163,300,000 from the total population in the US of 328,200,000 and get 164,900,000 people one would expect to be working. 8% of the population is made up of convicted felons. Source: <https://news.uga.edu/total-us-population-with-felony-convictions/> That amounts to 26,256,000 that may find finding gainful employment difficult as a result of their record and/or reputation. But, it would appear by income tax filings that 9,800,000 able-bodied and of age of majority Americans are unemployed. This would appear to be a 3.04% unemployment rate. But, that's a rough estimate. If you just eliminate minors from consideration, you might expect 254,100,000

to be working or self-sustaining adults. In such a case, 99,000,000 adults including elderly and disabled are unemployed or not filing income tax returns. And, that would make the rate of unemployed adults regardless of age or infirmity amount to 30.16% of the population. So, if we go with that number, you have about a 58% chance of marrying someone who is unemployed or who works in agriculture or being unemployed or working in agriculture. You have what appears to be a 42% chance of something else. In 1991, 44% of the global human population worked in agriculture. So, at that time you'd reduce the 42% chance of something else to 26%.

Superstitious Person: If I pray to Jupiter will that help? I want to be showered with gold.

Religious Person: Zeus only reportedly does that out of lust and it often results in bastard offspring punished for their arguable misfortune of birth. If that's what you want, there are very few jurisdictions in the US where prostitution is legal and you'll have to do more than pray to get paid in gold coins or any currency. There are approximately 1 million prostitutes in the US and 42 million prostitutes around the globe. Source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/there-are-42-million-prostitutes-in-the-world-and-heres-where-they-live-2012-1>

Superstitious Person: Where's the love?

Religious Person: I guess you missed last week's sermon. How old are you? Have you been diagnosed and do you require supervised care?

Superstitious Person: You aren't very helpful. I'm an adult and over 21 too. I can take care of myself. I'm a very spiritual person. You don't get it.

Religious Person: Religion is a practice, superstition is idolatry in disguise more often than not. Superstition is rarely well disguised too. Religion is manifesting evidence and superstition is waiting on evidence to manifest.

Superstitious Person: I read about a breathing technique that connects me with the Akashic Records that contain all there is to know about the past, present, and future. I'm going to try that.

Religious Person: Have you heard of Google.com? What will you do with access to such information?

Superstitious Person: Revel in knowing what no one else knows.

Religious Person: Will that knowledge bring you love or money? I know love and money.

Superstitious Person: If the fates smile upon me, I believe so.

Religious Person: Will you know so?

Superstitious Person: It's worth trying and I'm an expert at breathing since I've been doing it since birth so should be easy enough.

Religious Person: You've actually been breathing since about 10 to 11 weeks after you were conceived. Source: <https://www.healthline.com/health/pregnancy/how-babies-breathe-in-the-womb#how-babies-breathe-in-the-womb> I found that on Google.com too.

Superstitious Person: Do you know everything?

Religious Person: God only knows and for the rest I tend to run a search at Google.com.

Superstitious Person: What line of work are you in?

Religious Person: Charity mostly.

Superstition Person: How much does it pay?

Religious Person: I do it out of love and free of charge.

Superstitious Person: What do you get out of it?

Religious Person: Always something that helps with strengthening my virtues.

Superstitious Person: Like what?

Religious Person: Patience, diligence, and tolerance.

Superstitious Person: But, I want love and money. I'm going to keep praying. I have a 2 in 5 shot according to you, that's about 1 in 2.5 or so. Say 1 in 3. I like those odds. I have a ritual book too. I'm going to will my future into existence.

Religious Person: Where there's a will, there's a way.

Superstitious Person: Was that so hard?

Abstract Intangible Perfect Masochist: I enjoyed this sermon. I might read it again.

For those interested in starting #TaoFu Self-Defense Exercises, please see <https://www.cope.church/taofu.htm> and begin at any time.

There are opportunities to send messages, receive mystery bonus blessings, and more with or without donating available now on our "Pass the Basket" page at <https://www.cope.church/basket.htm>. Thank You.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www cope church/feedback.htm>. For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www cope church> and <https://www heal online org>