

---

## *Letters to a Young Episcopalian: Creation*

*This letter is part of a series of fictional letters by Canon George Maxwell intended for Episcopalians young and old who wonder what it means to be faithful in the world today.*

---

**Last Week's Letter:** [Spirituality](#)

[Back to All Letters](#)

**Next Week's Letter:** [Witness](#)

---

Dear Anna,

What a story!

The bus broke down just after your youth group left the ski resort. A truck driver came out of a nearby diner and insisted that you go home by a different road. He said the route your driver had chosen was treacherous, and often beyond help or cell coverage. He wanted you to follow a safer way, since the storm was coming.

You took his advice – though he was a little intense!

The bus broke down again fifteen minutes later. The owners of the tire store across the street called a local Baptist church, who fed you, gave you a place to stay, and helped you make alternate arrangements for the night.

I sense some ambiguity in your question about the truck driver. It feels like the truck driver was a messenger from God telling you what to do. But, you don't really think that the world works that way.

Many people resolve this ambiguity by declaring that God is like a watchmaker. He made the world and then put it down to work on its own while he took up another task.

Our felt experience should not be dismissed so quickly.

God is not a puppeteer, who controls everything making sure that it all goes as planned. There is too much innocent suffering in the world for that model to make sense. And, of course, it ignores the role we play with the choices we make.

Similarly, we don't believe that God intervenes to help some people, but not others. God is concerned with the good of all of creation, and all of the creatures and other things in it. The best way to get left behind is to convince yourself that you're way ahead!

We believe that God is more like the electricity that powers a light bulb. The light that we see depends on the generative source that we don't see. All of life constantly draws from its source, whether any one knows it or not.

Unfortunately, this doesn't prevent innocent victims. The universe grows in ways that cause earthquakes and tsunamis; people in the wrong place at the wrong time get hurt. And, of course, people hurt other people – often intentionally.

The truck driver was a messenger from God in the sense that he cared enough about you to recognize the danger you were in and do something about it. His compassion for you, in all of its intensity, might be described as a burning flame generated by the divine current.

The current is always there, but when the light switches on, we are opened up by the unexpected love that we see and experience.

Thank God!

Your affectionate uncle,  
Ames

---

© *The Cathedral of St. Philip. All rights reserved.*