

explore

Prayer Diary

Boldly approach the throne of grace

Hebrews 4 v 16

Being a Christian isn't a skill you learn, like carpentry or flower arranging. Nor is it a lifestyle choice, like the kind of clothes you wear, or the people you choose to hang around with. It's about having a living relationship with the living God through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us that this relationship is like a marriage.

Where there is no communication, there is no relationship. When we read the Bible we hear God speaking to us, opening His mind to us on how He thinks, what He wants for us and what His plans are for the world. It's not a manual. It's a love letter addressed to you personally by the God who loves you and sent his Son to rescue you for a glorious future!

Prayer – talking to God – is the other side of the communication that makes for a living relationship with the Lord. But for many Christians, just the mention of the the word “prayer” is enough to arouse feelings of guilt, failure and confusion.

- ▶ *We worry about how we should pray—out loud, in the quietness of our minds and hearts, kneeling or standing, morning or evening, at set times or all the time.*
- ▶ *We worry that we are doing it right. Should I feel close to God, should I feel elated, or at peace when I pray? Are my prayers “working” if I don't feel these things?*
- ▶ *We worry about how prayer works. If God knows everything and is sovereign, why does He need me to pray at all? What difference do my prayers really make to what happens in the future?*

But at its heart, prayer is not a technique, a frame of mind, a feeling or an intellectual conundrum. It is just you talking to your Dad—your heavenly Father. Sharing with Him the things that concern you, responding to the things you have heard Him say through the Bible,

talking through your anxieties, hopes and dreams with Him, and expressing your gratitude and praise to Him for the gifts of grace He has showered on you in Christ.

But prayer is also work. We will never quite understand how, but the Lord has ordered things in this world so that our prayers really do matter! Jesus promised that our Father would “*give good gifts to those who ask*” (Matthew 7 v 11); and warned that we do not receive things because we fail to ask (James 4 v 2). So praying for your church, your friends or your family really *does* make a difference. And for that reason, it helps to have structure to our praying, rather than just ramble on about whatever comes to mind.

That’s where this prayer diary could be so useful. Making lists of people helps you to pray for them regularly. As true Christians we have experienced the generous, forgiving grace of God in our lives. So our hearts should be full of thanksgiving and praise to the God who gives good things to us every day.

Each page has a section where you can record and remind yourself of things to give thanks for. And as you write down both your prayers and how the Lord has answered you over time, you will be encouraged to grow and trust God more in your daily life.

Just as married couples will try to spend time together talking every day, many people put aside a specific time to read the Bible and pray each day. Reading the Scriptures with *Explore* Bible-reading notes is one way that many people around the world find stimulating and engaging. Using this prayer diary in conjunction with *Explore* will make your “quiet times” more ordered and productive for yourself and others. And the printed verses on each page will spur you on to pray in a way that pleases God our Father.

We have been called into a living relationship with the living God. Our prayer for you is that this prayer diary will help you live out that relationship more joyfully day by day.

The Good Book Company



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