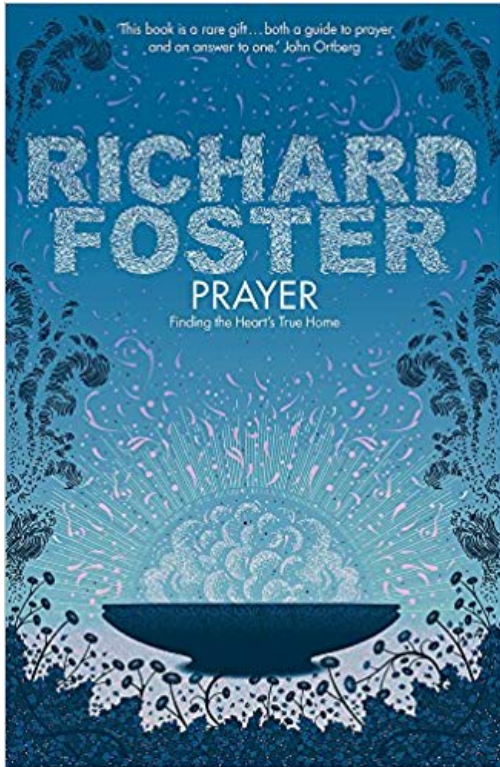


## Prayer *by* Richard Foster



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## Reviews of the *Prayer by* Richard Foster

Mightsinger

I ordered this book based upon the reviews of other readers, but I quickly discovered that it was not everything I had been led to believe.

The book had some good points and nice concepts, but I found a number of instances in which I believe the book was not consistent with Scripture, in my opinion.

This could possibly be attributed to the fact that the author is a Quaker, a group in which many of the followers openly deny the scriptures as our final authority for conduct and doctrine. Please understand that I am not accusing Mr. Foster of such beliefs, nor am I arrogant or ignorant enough to think that my denomination is the only one with correct doctrine.

But I was not comfortable with many things in this book and would therefore be hesitant to give it a positive recommendation.

Oveley

Oh, how I love this book. From start to finish and all points in between it is and has been a joyful companion along the way of my personal prayer journey. My only regret regarding this book is not

finding it sooner.

"Prayer is the inner bath of love into which the soul plunges itself." St. John Vianney

There is almost too much I could say that is good about Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home for a single review article, so I will mention the points that are some of my favorites. First, the form that Foster uses to navigate this journey into prayer is delightfully instructive. He has chosen to outline the book into three major sections he titles Moving Inward: Seeking the Transformation We Need, Moving Upward: Seeking the Intimacy We Need, and Moving Outward: Seeking the Ministry We Need. Each of these sections contains seven chapters respectively, which form the many facets that make prayer the beautiful diamond it is in the relationship between man and God.

Second, regarding these individual chapters, I thoroughly enjoyed the exploration into ancient prayer practices that have helped form disciples into the image of God throughout the history humankind's reconciliation to Him. A few examples of these prayer practices from the first section are The Prayer of Examen, developed by Ignatius of Loyola, The Prayer of Relinquishment, modeled by the self-emptying life of Jesus Christ, and what Foster calls Formation Prayer, which is modeled in the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius, the Rule of Benedict, and the Little Way of Therese of Lisieux. Section two is vertically focused (Love God) and more on the relational facets of prayer as the title Seeking the Intimacy We Need suggests. In this section, we find prayer practices and exercises that lead us into acts of adoration, rest, meditation, and contemplation. The third section, Moving Outward, follows a more horizontal aspect (Love man) and practices prayer exercises that manifest themselves in community relations; for example, Petitionary Prayers, Intercessory Prayers, and Healing Prayers are included in this collection.

When the Spirit has come to reside in someone, that person cannot stop praying; for the Spirit prays without ceasing in him. No matter if he is asleep or awake, prayer is going on in his heart all the time. He may be eating or drinking, he may be resting or working-the incense of prayer will ascend spontaneously from his heart. The slightest stirring of his heart is like a voice which sings in silence and in secret to the Invisible. -Isaac the Syrian

Another point of mention that I enjoyed greatly about this book is the diversity of source material that Foster includes in his teaching. In addition, the great majority of this source material is well annotated in the index section of the book, which includes a bibliographical reference in the notes, a subject index, and a Scripture index as well.

One more very nice feature that brought smiles to my heart was the opening quotes from influential Christians spanning the history of our faith; I loved receiving these words as encouragement, inspiration, and challenge. Additionally, each chapter ends in a prayer or benediction relative to the exercise and practice that was previously described.

In my opinion, this book has been sorely missed in the circles of Evangelical Protestant churches of which I have been a part. The prayer experiences I have encountered and shared with others have been largely one-dimensional and often self-focused and self-directed. Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home is a wonderful and helpful corrective step in the right direction. As I said in my opening statement, my one regret is this book was not known to me sooner. If you are curious about the Christian prayer experience, this is a good place to start.

"May you now, by the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the spirit of prayer. May it become, in the name of Jesus Christ, the most precious occupation of your life. And may the God of all peace strengthen you, bless you, and give you joy. -Amen." (p.256)

DireRaven

I would not recommend this book and find most books on prayer border on legalism which leads to despair. The best book I have ever read on the subject of prayer that transformed my praying life into a joy and not a burden was, "A Praying Life" by Paul E Miller. I have taken young men through this book and watched it transform their lives. Hope this helps you.

Broadraven

I got to the first two chapters of this book before realizing that he's spewing errors. In chapter 1, Foster makes the claim that it's perfectly okay to shake your fist at God which he then repeats in chapter 2 claiming that when we shake our fists at God it'll reverbate back and cause doxology. Anyone who has read the Bible know that when we shake our fists at God, bad things happen. The Sons of Korah shook their fists at God because they wanted priestly stations, God opened up the earth and swallowed them. Job shook his fist at God and God rebuked him.

If anything this is nothing more than Roman Catholic mysticism dressed as Protestant writing. Foster takes the path of a mystic where our experience of God takes precedence over his written Word. He fails to understand that our suffering is given by God, for Christ, and for our joy. The Christian prays not because he's angry at God but because he knows he will forget God's promises so he clings to them and meditates on them (Ps. 119). The foundational error in Foster's book is that he fails to treat God as God. God is both father and king but the picture that the Bible paints is that of a king who loves his people like a father loves his children. Foster makes this critical error in treating God more like a spouse and the first two chapters are strong enough indicators of the glaring errors that I had to stop reading. I would seriously avoid this book as there's no meat to his theology. Foster's theology is in dire need of help.

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