

# SECRETS TO MEANINGFUL PRAYER

## Introduction



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Welcome to a book that I pray will be a new adventure in your life between you and Jesus Christ. *Secrets to Meaningful Prayer* was intended as a catchy title, but what does it mean? Does it mean to imply that there are “secrets” on how to pray that only a few privileged people have discovered; not at all. Does the title mean to imply, that there are “secrets” that once revealed, will instantly unlock power in your prayer life? Although meaningful prayer will unleash God’s power in your life, it’s not meant to be a “magic” formula. What I do hope to convey through the title is that although there are Biblical guidelines throughout the Bible about how to pray; there are also practical thoughts and processes that, depending on one’s background, may not come naturally.

I remember a time that we had family over for a cookout. My lovely wife asked my brother-in-law and me to fire up the gas grill. I did what I always do and grabbed the matches out of the junk drawer. When we got out on the deck, Larry (my brother-in-law) asked me why I didn’t use the little electric push button starter. I told him that it no longer worked. It worked great for the first few months but had evidently worn out or gotten corroded. He reached down and twisted the igniter. With a simple yet educated twist and tug, he revealed a small battery built right into the igniter. “There’s your problem,” he said with a smile, “your battery’s dead.” Now I may not be the smartest guy on the block, but I’m no dummy. I spent several years of my life as a mechanic; I’ve worked on everything from cars and boats to race cars and cranes. I’ve disassembled more motorcycles and repaired more race bikes than I can count. I still get called on as “Mr. Fix-It” on a pretty regular basis, when something quits working. Yet here I stand on my own deck, with an igniter that doesn’t work because of a silly corroded battery. We replaced the battery and fired the grill right up, without the harrowing experience of doing so with a match.

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I stood there with a bewildered look on my face, contemplating the fact that we just fired that ole grill up for the first time in over a year without losing an eyebrow or burning half the hairs off of my arm. It was truly a great day! Not once did Larry make me feel stupid, nor did he gloat over the fact that he had to fix my grill; but I must admit I felt kind of dumb. I asked Larry how he knew about that little hidden battery and without trying to hide a thing he said, “Mine quit working and somebody at the store showed me that there was a battery inside that needed to be replaced.” I felt pretty dumb and found myself asking “why didn't I think of that”?

The question that I have to ask myself is, “How many more years would I have spent endangering myself and trying to replace singed eyelashes before I would have discovered that little battery?” It would probably have been forever, because in my mind it wasn't repairable. Ever since Larry showed me the “secret” about that battery, grilling has been so much easier at my house.

That's the kind of “secret” that I hope that this book holds for you concerning prayer: ideas and things to think about that you may never have considered, different ways that we might approach God when we pray, and new and exciting ways of communicating with the King of Kings (who for some unexplainable reason wants to talk with us). I want to share with people the principles that God and others have shared with me that make prayer meaningful and wonderful. But be forewarned, after learning some of the principles that we'll discover in this book; you might just find yourself asking, “Why didn't I think of that?”

There have been many books written on prayer by folks much more qualified than me; but I have felt a burden for some time now to put into words the simple lessons and principles that have radically changed the way I communicate with my Heavenly

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Father. I've read some great books on prayer, most of whom explained how important prayer was, but didn't give a lot of practical advice on how to do it. If you are reading this today, it's not by accident. I've been asking God, that since it was because of His prompting that I'm writing this book, that He would see to it that it ends up in the hands of the people that need it. Out of the millions of books in print, I doubt it was by accident that you have found yourself reading this book today.

After learning some of the principles in this book; you might just find yourself asking, "Why didn't I think of that?"

The Bible states, *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10*

Are you living an abundant life or has Satan stolen your joy? True joy comes when you have a relationship with your creator. I believe that God desires to have a closer relationship with you! He wants to answer your questions and show you how you can have true peace and joy that can only come from Him. My prayer is that you will find out how meaningful life can be when you truly communicate daily with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He loves you and knows you by name. He says in His word that He wants to adopt you as His son or daughter.

The Bible says in the book of John: *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: John 1:12*

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Paul in his letter to the Romans goes on to say, *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Romans 8:14*

So no matter where you are in life, no matter what your situation; this life is better and more meaningful when we have a relationship with God. I'm not referring to an intellectual or book knowledge of who He is, but a real relationship that includes meaningful and powerful communication with Him.

To some folks this type of communication is a hard concept to understand. Some people go all of their lives praying "at" God, never knowing whether He hears or cares. Some have been taught that they're not worthy to talk directly to God. Still others have prayed so many prayers for so long, with so few results, that they

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have decided in their hearts that it's just not worth it. If any of these thoughts have crossed your mind or you simply want to learn how you can have a meaningful

prayer life, I challenge you to read on. Make a commitment to read the entire book regardless of obstacles that may come. As surely as I believe in God, I believe there is a Devil, (because the Bible says in many passages that there is) and he's intent on keeping you from anything that would help you draw closer to God. But Satan (the devil) doesn't have the last say in your life, you do; and the Bible says that your God is stronger and has overcome the Devil.

*Greater is he that is in you, (the Holy Spirit) than he that is in the world. (Satan) 1 John 4:4b*

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Please understand that Satan will try to distract you and keep you from reading this or any other book that can help you in your walk with the Lord. Make it a priority to finish this book no matter what. Resolve to read this entire book, not because it's a wonderful book, but because the God that it points you to is. God loves you with an unconditional love, at a depth that you cannot even comprehend. Commit yourself to learning how to communicate with Him.

Some have prayed so many prayers for so long, with so few results, that they have decided in their hearts that it's just not worth it.

If you are not sure what I mean when I say that we can have a real relationship with God because of His son Jesus, or you have never asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins; then please skip to the very last chapter (the appendix) in the back of this book titled, "What's the big deal about Jesus?" There you can learn how you can be forgiven of your sins and made a child of God, even adopted into God's family.

Perhaps you are reading this book out of curiosity about prayer, or because a friend recommended it, but you are not sure if you have ever started a relationship with God, or how to begin one. If that's the case you too should skip to the last chapter and find out "what the big deal about Jesus" really is.

This book was written intentionally with an introduction and 12 chapters so that it can also be used by small groups or churches which have studies that last for one quarter, as well as the individual reader. The Scripture verses are included within the text in *italics* in case you are reading this book without access to a Bible.