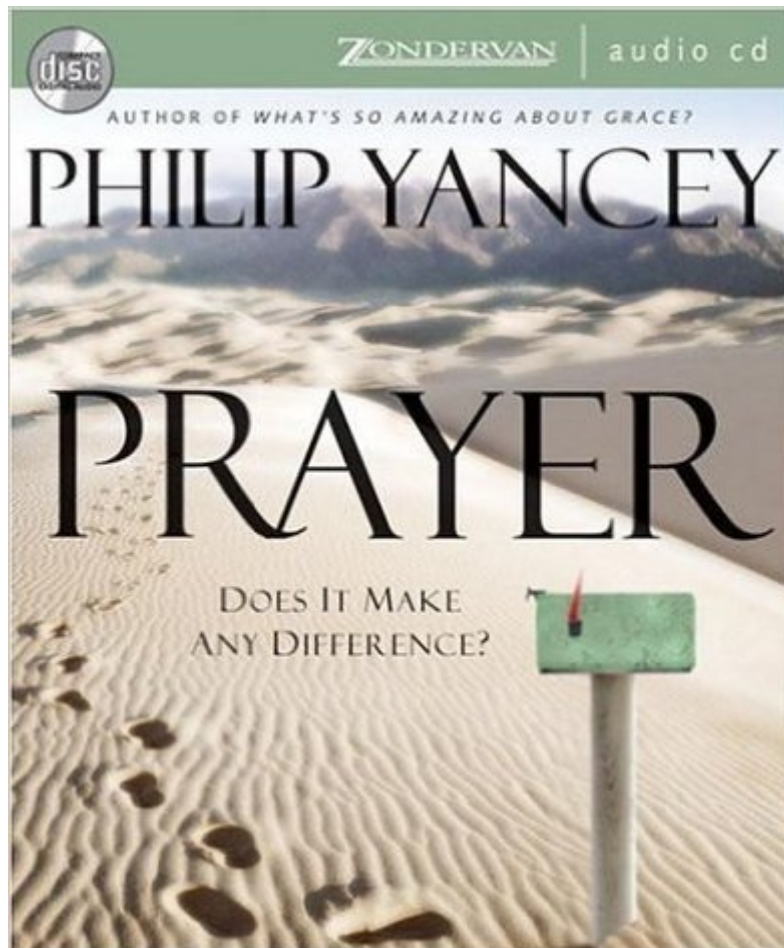


The book was found

Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference?



Synopsis

In his most powerful message since *What's So Amazing About Grace?* and *The Jesus I Never Knew*, Philip Yancey explores the intimate place where God and humans meet in this unabridged audio CD of *Prayer*. Polls reveal that 90 percent of people pray. Yet prayer, which should be the most nourishing and uplifting time of the believer's day, can also be frustrating, confusing, and fraught with mystery. Yancey probes such questions as: *Is God listening? *Why should God care about me? *If God knows everything, what's the point of prayer? *Why do answers to prayer seem so inconsistent? *Why does God sometimes seem close and sometimes seem far away? *How can I make prayer more satisfying? Yancey tackles the tough questions and in the process comes up with a fresh new approach to this timeless topic. 'I have learned to pray as a privilege, not a duty,' he says, and he invites you to join him on this all-important journey.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Yancey, Philip. 2006. *Prayer: Does it make any Difference?* London: Hodder and Stoughton. This review is based on the British edition which was released earlier. Philip Yancey, author of best selling *Disappointment with God* and *Soul Survivor*, is a popular author because he puts in words, what many Christians are feeling but are afraid to articulate. He deals with controversial topics of living a Christian life with brutal honesty. Hence a book on prayer is most welcome. Prayer is the most talked about subject in Christian life yet least practiced. Yancey stated that to him, prayer is the area where two themes of struggle in Christian life meet: "Why God doesn't act the way we want God to and why I don't act the way God wants me to." In Part 1, Yancey developed the theme of

who God is and who we are in relationship to Him. He also highlighted the fact that God wants to keep company with us. It is in this context that, Yancey developed his argument why we should pray. To him, prayer is a partnership with God which he developed in Part 2. God wants to partner with his creatures in His great redemption plan of the present fallen creation. Prayer then is a form of negotiation. Skillfully skirting the theological issue of whether an unchanging God can change His mind, Yancey explored the numerous passages in the Bible that God did change His mind. He concluded that the underlying reason that God does change His mind is because of love. "For God so loved the world..." In Part 3, Yancey explored the 'language of prayer.' Basically, this section is a 'how to pray' section. However I am glad he explored the silence of God in his chapter 'the sound of silence'.

Imagine sitting with David, before he became king of Israel, and hearing his laments and frustrations with God which eventually circled back to an attitude of praise. You might hear some of the same questions and observations in this book. I've always admired Yancey's willingness to wrestle with the tough issues, to share from his own weaknesses, and to engage his brain while also relying on faith. His latest book embraces these same qualities, presenting a theological yet practical look at prayer's place in the lives of Christians. So, does prayer make a difference? That's the central question of the book, and it points poignantly at a relationship with the living God. It does not, however, sugarcoat the harsh realities: those who die despite numerous prayers of faith; those who prosper while living sinful lives; the seeming distance of God when we yearn for his nearness. Throughout the book, sidebars give insight into the joys and turmoils of believers from around the world. These add a nice touch of humanity to the narrative, a reminder that the issue of prayer is not merely an ethereal one, but one that affects each of us to our core. Some never receive the easy answers they hope for, while others rarely pray and find wide paths of apparent blessing. Yancey deals with questions of sickness, prosperity, spiritual destitution, sin, and the ultimate desire to know God and to be known. One particular thought hit home: Why is that God doesn't do the things we want him to, and why is that we don't do the things he wants us to? If you're looking for an easy, 1-2-3 step book on abundant living through prayer, look elsewhere. If you want everything to fit into a nice, tidy box, this isn't the book for you.

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