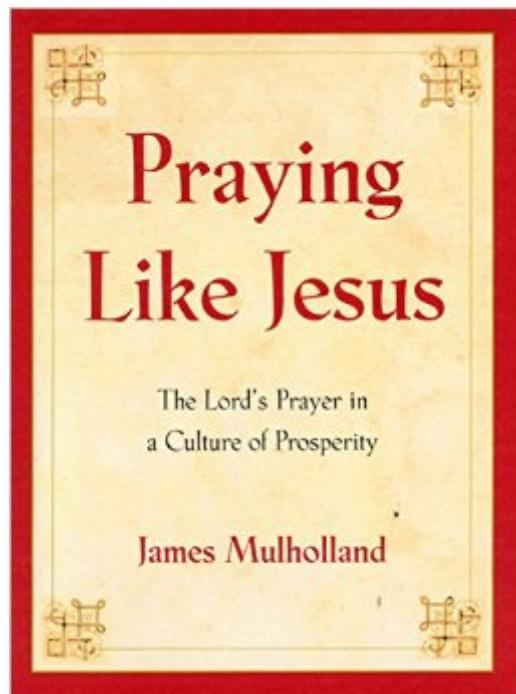


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Praying Like Jesus: The Lord's Prayer In A Culture Of Prosperity



Synopsis

Jabez got it wrong. Praying is a central practice of spiritual life. Through prayer we turn our hearts and minds from our limited perspectives and concerns and begin to discern the divine will for the world. James Mulholland believes the self-correcting nature of prayer is being distorted by a culture of prosperity, which has refashioned prayer in its own image, making books such as *The Prayer of Jabez* huge bestsellers. Prayer today bears little resemblance to the kind Jesus taught. For many, it has become a means of personal success and material gain, taking the form of a shopping list rather than a transforming spiritual discipline. Mulholland warns that we have forgotten the true purpose of prayer: He believes, "The point of prayer is not to tell God what you want, but to hear what you need. It is not approaching God with our demands, but listening for God's commands. It is not seeking our will, but learning to discern God's will. This is so important to understand in a culture that caters to our every whim. Prayer isn't about me. It is about God." Jesus understood the nature of prayer and taught his disciples to pray the beloved Lord's Prayer. Offering a fresh and compelling reading of this "Prayer of Jesus," Mulholland calls us back to the true essence of prayer. He shows how authentic prayer will lead us away from the self-interest of the prevailing culture of greed and move us toward the compassion, sacrifice, and love that are the hallmarks of the kingdom of God. Praying Like Jesus is an invitation to rediscover the life we are called to as Christians'a vow to transform our culture and world. The early Christians prayed like Jesus and were legendary for their acts of compassion and service. Mulholland believes this can and should be the commitment of Christians today. Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Book Information

Hardcover: 144 pages

Publisher: HarperOne; 1 edition (September 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060011564

ISBN-13: 978-0060011567

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 7.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.3 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (24 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #323,899 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #88 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Meditations > New Testament #740 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Worship & Devotion > Prayer #986 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Meditations

Customer Reviews

Recently I wrote a review on the book 'The Prayer of Jabez.' I outlined in that review some of the things I appreciated about that book, but also recounted the many things that made me uneasy with both the development and the intention most seem to pick up from the practice of the prayer. There are few things in our lives that are as personal and touch us as deeply as prayer, particularly our own prayer life. We each feel we are an expert at praying in our own ways, and to a large extent, each of us is. For this deep part of our lives to be co-opted by a feeling of selfish intention for personal gain is tragic. This is why I considered 'The Prayer of Jabez' problematic - the author's intent might not be selfishness, but the message being heard is precisely that. In searching for an alternative to hold up as a model more in keeping with my own prayer temperament, Charles Allen, a theology professor at my seminary, directed me to James Mulholland's 'Praying Like Jesus: The Lord's Prayer in a Culture of Prosperity.' The book begins where the disciples of Jesus began -- Thomas asks Jesus to teach them how to pray. In an interesting, fictional conversation, the disciples recount their experience of praying another prayer that seems to work better for them (of course, this is the prayer of Jabez). Many followers of Jesus seem to slink away after hearing Jesus tell people that they should stop asking for an increase in territory, but rather ask God to provide for their needs; that they should stop asking for a blessing in earthly terms, but rather be willing to follow the will of God even to death, to 'take up their crosses and follow'. This teaching is too hard to follow! This is not what happened two thousand years ago.

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