

The Value of a Good Prayer Resource

I became a believer in Christ when I was fairly young—six years old. As a pastor's kid, I had a great upbringing in the faith, filled with lots of opportunities for spiritual growth.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



But it was not until I was 30 years of age that I began a meaningful prayer life. All those intervening years, I knew how to pray, but it was not a part of my daily walk. I was what I call a “crisis pray-er.” I prayed when I, or someone I cared about, had a need.

When I was 30, the Holy Spirit changed my prayer life dramatically through a powerful resource—A.W. Tozer's book *The Pursuit of God*. That book gave me a deep hunger for God, which transformed my prayer life.

As people of prayer, we should not underestimate the value of a good resource to stimulate, inspire, challenge, or equip us—and those we are leading.

I recently heard of a church that started praying through a prayer guide, *Pray the Word for Your Church: 31 Prayers That Seek God's Purposes and Power*. After the people of this small church (with fewer than 100 people) started praying through the guide, they began seeing, among other blessings, an unusual number of new salvations.

In Issue 10 of *Prayer Connect*: “Living in the Upper Room,” author-pastor Fred Leonard wrote about the importance of providing the people in our churches with what he calls “on ramps” to prayer—continual opportunities to get involved in prayer. The church he pastors (Mountainview Community in Fresno, CA) offers two prayer initiatives each year. And they

provide a prayer guide/resource for 21–40 days of prayer that helps everyone pray together according to the same theme.

Every prayer initiative births a passion for prayer in another handful of people. Each prayer elective in a Sunday school class or small group gives opportunity for more people to grow deeper in their prayer lives. Whenever a church puts a Scripture-based guide into the hands of its people—encouraging them and reminding them to use it—people grow in prayer. Kingdom things happen.

One time I had the opportunity to speak at the same church two years in a row—on almost exactly the same weekend. The second time, a young woman came up to me before the service began and thanked me for what I had shared the previous year. She also thanked me for my book, *The Power of Personal Prayer*, that she had purchased. She said one of the truths I had shared in my message the previous year (a truth developed further in the book) had revolutionized her prayer life. She was now praying more specifically, and she told me how much that has meant to her.

Don't ever forget the power of a well-placed and well-used prayer resource. It will bring dividends!

—Jonathan Graf