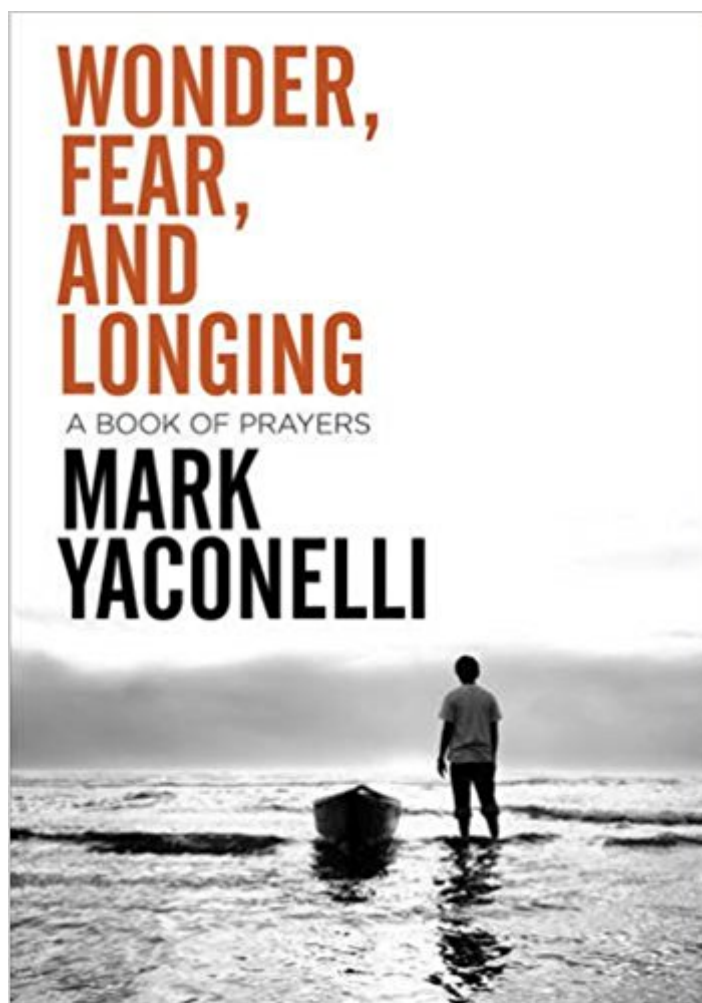


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Wonder, Fear, And Longing, Paperback: A Book Of Prayers



Synopsis

Every heart feels wonder. Every heart knows fear. Every heart aches with longing. Awed, we whisper, "Thank you." Frightened, we cry, "Mercy." Yearning we plead, "Show me the way." Because the truth is, no matter who you are, every heart needs prayer. This is a prayer book. A book to seduce, cajole, entice, and encourage your heart into prayer. More than a book to be read, this is a book to be explored. It is a book of stories, divine poetry, holy verses, mystical inspirations, prayerful imaginings, meditative practices, and spiritual exercises that seek to uncover the hidden communication between you and God. As you read and explore more about love, longing, fear, suffering, compassion, rest, reflection, passion, wonder, and gratitude you will be invited to discover prayer within the various moods, attitudes, and experiences that we human beings often find ourselves in. It is a book to be used, flipped through, tested, experimented with, and then set aside. It is a book that asks you time after time to stop and listen, turn and welcome the silent love of God. The hope of this book is not to teach you anything. The point of this book is to encourage you to give yourself to God—your anger, your fear, your gratitude, your curiosity—your real self to the real God, because then (and only then) will your heart find peace (even in the midst of wonder, fear, and longing). Because every heart needs prayer.

Book Information

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: Zondervan/Youth Specialties; 1 edition (August 31, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0310283604

ISBN-13: 978-0310283607

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.5 x 7.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 24 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #626,005 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Children's & Teens > Teens > Inspirational #97 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Children's & Teens > Teens > Devotionals & Prayer #574 in Books > Teens > Religion & Spirituality

Customer Reviews

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Mark Yaconelli is the co-founder and co-director of Triptykos School of Compassion. The author of *Downtime*, *Contemplative Youth Ministry*, and *Growing Souls*, Mark lives in Oregon with his wife and three children.

I love this book and it was given to me as a gift from my youth minister when I graduated high school! Now, working as a youth minister myself, I order a copy or two every time one of my kids is having a rough time! It's great to have on hand to send home, I've given it to kids struggling in school or at home, friends who've recently lost loved ones, and anyone else looking for a casual modern way of connecting with God.

This book is a written invitation, a guide, a welcome to slow down for awhile and pray. Mark gives permission to his readers to breathe and notice our surroundings and pay attention to how God is permeating all of it. Too many of us live life at 100mph. Walking through *Wonder, Fear, And Longing*, I am encouraged to downshift and to marvel at the wonder of our Creator, the Lover of our souls, and the light that He is shining into and through our lives. I am reminded to sit with Him, to talk with Him, and to step deeper into the relationship we share.

Great book!

Great book! if you need a tool to help you get deeper and closer to God, this is it.

The book came very quickly and it was in perfect shape. The packaging was very protective and I was very pleased as I always am with . I buy all my books from !

very disappointing.

I am so glad I picked up this book. By the end of the introduction, I was choked up and felt like this book had the potential to inspire and guide the reader looking to be led to a deeper level of prayer. This sentiment from page 6 says it all: "The hope of this book isn't to teach you new ideas about prayer, the hope of this book is that you will pray." This book does just that, helping the reader to discover how they want to best approach God in prayer through everything from love to suffering to gratitude and fear. The author sets the tone for the book beautifully right off the bat, asking questions to already get you thinking about your prayers and your ability to express yourself through them to God. He asks the reader to visualize they are in the private company of somebody who has perfect love for you, who is safe and comfortable to be with, who looks at you like no other... Then he asks you to ponder how you'd speak to the person. What would you say? What would you ask? He asks if you'd share hopes and fantasies, pain and suffering, if you'd ask for help, or just enjoy the feelings that being around this person would raise up within you. He presents you with the questions, then the rest of the book presents you with ways to find the answer to those questions in a way that's beautiful and meaningful, not at all preachy or self-serving, yet allows for total personal freedom to truly express oneself. The book is divided into 10 common emotions or situations that are probably among the most common reasons to pray; love, longing, fear, suffering, compassion, rest, reflection, passion, wonder, and gratitude. The chapters each start with a passage from the Bible related to the subject of the chapter, then reflections from the author on the emotion. The reflections are often personal stories that touched him, situations he witnessed, how he saw the emotions manifested in others, the expressed need of others, Biblical expression, so on and so on. His reflections are always powerful but to the point and highly relevant to the chapter without being forced in the slightest. Next is the scripture section, where obviously he presents cited scripture related to the chapter. The prayer section is made up of Bible verses or prayers written by people in similar situations so you can see how they called to God related to the topic of the chapter. Next is

my personal favorite section, the meditation section, which consists of inspirational poems, scripture, testimonies, speeches of other praying Christians. Finally, the contemplation section which generally includes a couple of exercises designed to jog the mind and imagination when sometimes you feel the need to pray but don't know how to take that first step. This book is easily read from cover-to-cover, but also just as easily pulled out and chapters individually explored when it's appropriate for the reader. I personally found the chapters on fear and suffering to be particularly powerful. The thing I will say is that the book does at times (especially in the contemplation section) suggest exercises to encourage prayer in ways probably not fitting to very traditional Christians and frankly may be off-putting or maybe offensive. For example, he encourages people to pray by going outside and hearing God speak to you in nature and the elements, suggests writing a prayer and throwing it in a stream, and in many parts of the book suggests activities which are forms of meditation or creative visualization. I sense some people would find this highly inappropriate... Though I'd hope most people would see the value in the rest of the book in terms of scripture selection and personal spiritual testimonies since most, if not all, of the beauty in the book rests with those particular points. I know this book is, theoretically, a book aimed at young adults, but honestly I think this book is for everybody who's looking to find a way to deepen or inspire prayer. I think this is an absolute must-have for people who are dealing with some sort of trauma or pain that they're looking for spiritual guidance and closure. This book is beautiful and personal, structured enough to guide you to find ways to grow with your prayer, but open enough to allow you to explore within yourself how it's best done. There is nothing preachy or holier-than-thou about the author's tone, which tends to be such a problem with books like this. A beautiful book all-around that I know I will never get tired of diving into.

"Wonder, Fear, and Longing - a Book of Prayers" is an extraordinary Christian text. Mark Yaconelli's book is a book of meditations that entice us to prayer. Yaconelli shows sensitivity, wisdom, and spirituality gained from life experience in this new book of prayer. In this text, Yaconelli presents heartfelt reflections enhanced by quotations from many spiritual writers, such as Richard Rohr, Thomas Merton, Catherine of Siena, and Reinhold Niebuhr. His reflections and meditations are filled with quotations from the Scriptures. Yaconelli organized the book into ten chapters that are each a different "aspect" of our existence. The chapters are Love, Longing, Fear, Suffering, Compassion, Rest, Reflection, Passion, Wonder, and Gratitude. Each chapter presents reflections followed by: scripture, prayer, meditation, and contemplation. Looking at the list above, one may be tempted to wonder if this is an elementary book. It is not. The chapter titles may appear simple, but the wisdom

within each "aspect" is astute and impressive. Yaconelli's work is wonderful spirituality. He clearly understands the message that Jesus taught. He helps us attempt to live as Jesus lived, in compassion and love for our fellow human beings. Yaconelli's meditations on suffering are especially beneficial. He advises that our prayer often begins in suffering and if we give our suffering to God we learn surrender which leads to growth in strength, peace and love. I especially like the following Yaconelli statements. "It is our real selves (not our "spiritual selves) whom God loves and desires most deeply." "Our first struggle is to "receive and return God's love." "Prayer does not allow us to "control life's outcomes." "To pray is to be vulnerable." "Often churches seem "averse to human suffering." I highly recommend this book.

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