



Prayer Cleats

Cdr B.C. Bolt

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It seems ironic that one of the most foundational elements of Christianity—prayer—also tends to present a good deal of struggle for believers. Christians often feel their prayers are ineffective or that their prayer time is too erratic and unfocused. Others may feel as if they are drifting aimlessly in the seas of life. In *Prayer Cleats*, retired Navy Commander B.C. Bolt offers insights into securing the reader's prayer life to solid moorings.

As a former submarine officer, Bolt uses the nautical imagery of cleats to emphasize security in a vital prayer life. Cleats are the metal fittings located on submarines (as well as other watercraft) and piers that anchor the lines which keep the vessel from drifting away from the pier. Bolt likens these fixtures to the security that prayer offers the Christian to maintain a strong connection with God.

Bolt offers seven principles to vibrant prayer, beginning appropriately with Patience. In our fast-paced world, everybody wants immediate answers and actions. But learning to wait on God's timing is a foundational aspect of effective and fulfilling prayer.

A Pure Heart and Submission dovetail together to emphasize that the proper reverent approach is necessary in communicating with God. Trying to pray while not in a right relationship with Him—or other people—will only lead to frustration and feelings of ineffectual praying.

Bolt then addresses Acknowledging Adversity and Listening. Every Christian will encounter hard times, but he or she must see these as opportunities to draw closer to God and not as a time to move away from Him. Silently listening for His voice leads to contentment even while life's struggles may be all around.

The final two topics are Believing and Asking Amiss. By demonstrating total trust in His word and seeking to live according to His plans for their lives, Christians keep the lines of communication open and flowing freely in both directions.

Bolt does an admirable job of using very brief chapters (usually only one or two pages) to quickly make his points without getting bogged down in drawn-out theological ramblings. His biblical illustrations and personal stories fit perfectly into his warm, conversational writing style. *Prayer Cleats* is short in length but long in sage advice for those looking to find strong anchors in establishing a rich prayer life.

JEFF FRIEND (July 29, 2011)

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