



The Power of a Mother's Prayer: The Life Story of D. Ralph Young

D. Ralph Young

Trafford Publishing (Aug 14, 2012)

Softcover \$13.70 (160pp)

978-1-4669-4456-5

In *The Power of a Mother's Prayer*, D. Ralph Young shares the heartfelt story of his life. It is both an ordinary and extraordinary tale that readers will relate to and find inspiration in.

Young is the last of eleven children. He shares his life from his first memory—receiving a life-saving serum for a childhood disease—to his years in the Navy and his engineering career on multiple continents. He also recounts the death of Charlotte, his wife of almost sixty years, and shares his present life as a remarried grandfather and great-grandfather. Readers will be intrigued with the way Young's story touches many corners of the globe, from his boyhood in Kentucky to his service in the Pacific during World War II to his work as an educator in Thailand. Though Young's life has had much variety, it has had many constants as well—faith, love, family, and devotion to helping others—that will help readers identify with him.

The book's pages are filled with Young's humility and character, and he focuses on the people who have made his life fulfilling. He speaks to readers with openness, honesty, and eagerness, as if he is inviting them into his home. The simple fact that Young is a man who has retired from work three separate times shows readers that he is someone of many accomplishments who is always ready to take on challenges.

Young traces the joy and success of his life to his mother's influence as he helped her with the housework when she was ill, but he especially credits her prayers for him while he was in the Navy. "I have no other answer to the fantastic life that followed my navy career except that through her constant prayer God has done what He has done before in ancient times and said, 'I will take him under my care.'"

The chapter "Final Thoughts" is quite moving. In it, Young lists a series of ten life-altering moments, each beginning with "This I know..." These experiences tell of God's saving interventions and feats accomplished through the love of family.

Young's writing is generally clean and simple with the built-in richness of a grandfather's storytelling, but occasionally sentences are a bit unclear. The photographs included in the text are interesting and quaint, but the print quality does not render them well. The recipes in the back material heighten, perhaps too much, the family feel of the book, though the "Index of People" is a unique and useful feature. Focusing more on developing key incidents rather than narrating a whole life in under 150 pages would give the memoir a better pace.

Young's freely shared life will guide readers to look at the story of their own lives and see what threads of love and integrity they find.

MELISSA WUSKE (November 7, 2012)

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