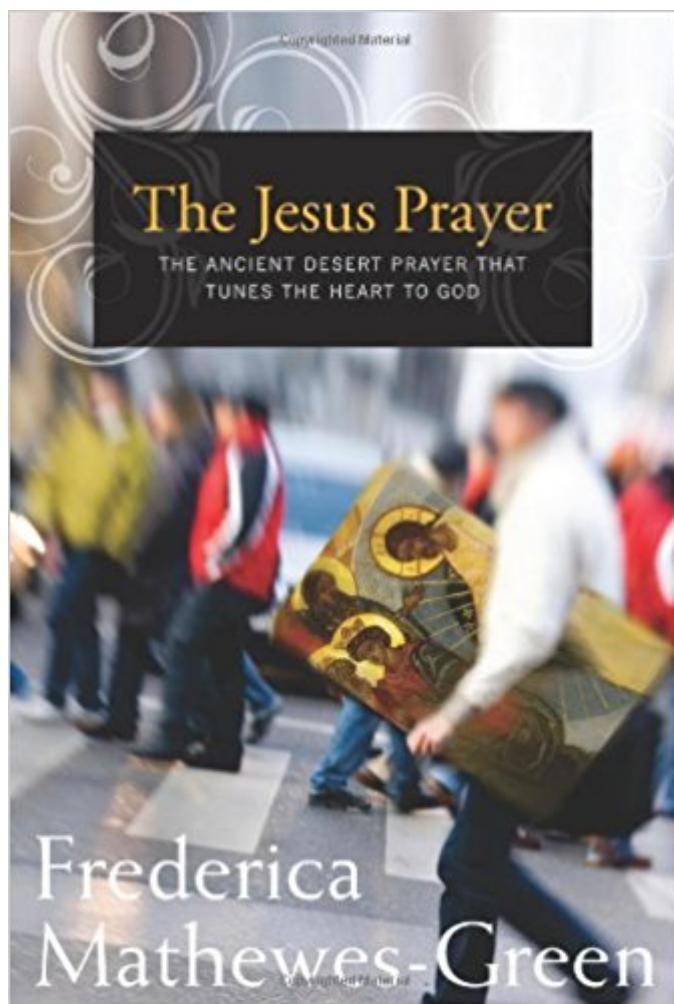


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# The Jesus Prayer: The Ancient Desert Prayer That Tunes The Heart To God



## **Synopsis**

Â In the earliest centuries of faith, Christians in the deserts of Palestine and Africa sought a short prayer that could be easily repeated, in order to acquire the habit of a prayer without ceasing.Â The result was The Jesus Prayer:Â Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.Â This jewel of Eastern Christianity aims at enabling a person to be in God's presence, rather than to focus on feelings or thoughts about God.Â The first section of The Jesus Prayer offers a concise overview of the history, theology, and spirituality of Orthodoxy, so that the Prayer can be understood in its native context. Following, is a conversational question-and-answer format that takes the reader through practical steps for adopting this profound practice in everyday life.Â

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Even if you don't believe that Paul's admonition to "pray without ceasing" or "pray constantly" was meant to be taken literally, you'll find much to ponder in this lucid account of the history, the meaning, and - especially - the practice of the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me." Most of the exposition is in a reader-friendly question-and-answer format.,Christianity Today,October 2009,

Fredrica Mathewes-Green is a wide-ranging author whose work has appeared in the Washington Post, Christianity Today, the Los Angeles Times, First Things, Books & Culture, Sojourners, and the Wall Street Journal. She is the author of eight books, including The Illumined Heart, The Open Door, and The Lost Gospel of Mary, and is the Khouria (spiritual mother) of Holy Cross Orthodox Church

nea Baltimore. Visit her at [www.fredrica.com](http://www.fredrica.com).

Like other books by Frederica, it has a LOT of really good information and it feels like she is personally talking to you. It just feels like she writes these books without planning it out (like making a basic outline) or reading it after she's done, so it is written like she's having a conversation with you rather than writing a book. This book is also a bit too big for the Jesus Prayer that is only a few words long, but her personal accounts and the research she did on it is awesome and well worth the read, it just gets a bit too much after you get to the question and answers in the back. I got a lot out of it however and glad I read it!

The authoress, a dear child of God, is not aware of Prelest and is thus severely suffering its consequences. Begins well rationally (soul) and one is expecting a thoughtful transition towards Spirit (irrational), but it doesn't and can't occur because of her attempting to continuously rationalize her limited understanding of doctrine and/or The Patristic Fathers. Consult the Desert Fathers, Nicodemus or the Patristic Fathers regarding this beautiful and extremely useful prayer/practice. Read in the Philokalia the Homily of St. Nikephoros, the discourses of St. Gregory of Palamas in defense of the Hesychasts, and the hundred chapters of Kallistos and Ignatios Xanthopoulos, and well as the writings of St. Gregory Sinaite.....Trust ONLY them. What this dear woman is flailing to describe is demonic and detrimental; poster-child and candidate for this: "If anyone causes one of these little ones--those who believe in me--to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea". Attempting to write and explain theology with barely a brief encounter with Orthodoxy. Prelest. Forgive me; but I'll take one for the team.....

A very good introduction to this ancient practice. The author does a superb job of explaining the depth of the prayer how such a simple prayer -- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me -- can be so powerful. She also does a good job of explaining the theology of the prayer and how it ties into the Orthodox Church. But clearly, she wants to open this beautiful prayer to all Christians. I would say this book would be perfect for anyone looking for a way to deepen their prayer life. C. Lewis

Frederica is a bridge author between E. Orthodoxy and other faith streams the way Henri Nouwen was for the RCC and evangelicalism. I sat under her workshops at Oxford CS Lewis Institute and

have read all her books and dozens of others on the Jesus Prayer. Eastern Orthodox spirituality and theology and music has deeply impacted my own journey as a pastor. This book is direct, clear, and accessible for any Christian and even those seeking more understanding. She has chosen to have half the book be in a Q and A format which works well because of the many nuances and viewpoints even among the Orthodox on the practice of the prayer and the related principles of spiritual discipline. I believe this will be the modern standard to introduce millions of Christians to prayer that moves beyond shallow self-expressed prayers and formal written prayers to a place of constant presence with God so needed in our self-addicted world of miss-placed passions. I encourage you to read the book and more importantly, make the Jesus Prayer and similar scripture prayers the core of your prayer-practice.

This book has been very formative in my life. It's both a good historical primer and current overview of how the prayer came to be and can be applied. I'm a protestant, but found this book to be a comfortable explanation of an Orthodox discipline. The Jesus Prayer, at different times and in different ways, has become an important part of my life.

Communion and union with God are issues at the core of our existence. Our search eventually leads us to unceasing prayer and prayer of the heart. The questions arising in our minds and hearts on the path to unceasing prayer are illuminated within this book. The wisdom is taken from those experienced on the path of unceasing prayer along with practical day to day use of the Jesus prayer for intercession, praise, and most important worship. For the individual who is curious, and for the individual that is serious in learning to pray unceasingly, this book is invaluable and a unique treasure. The path of the heart and the role of the Jesus prayer in bringing us to union with God are explained in a simple yet profound manner. This book will unravel a spiritual path and depth unknown to many, but will guide them to the interior life in Christ.

I would like to say that I am not Orthodox. I am not all that familiar with Orthodox theology or spirituality. However, I found this to be a very good book on the Jesus Prayer. It is evident that the author really knows her stuff and yet is able to explain it in such a way that those who are unfamiliar with the Orthodox faith can understand. I believe that any sincere and committed Christian who wants to deepen his/her relationship with The Lord can benefit from reading this book carefully and perhaps reading it more than once. Matthewes-Green was very good when she pointed out typical difficulties with the Jesus Prayer. Her emphasis on humility and love of neighbor was very good and

in my mind supremely important. I would recommend this book to anyone with a sincere desire for a deeper life with the Lord.

Matthews Green gives a good overview of the Jesus Prayer. Those who are not Orthodox may feel a bit lost, and those who shy away from mysticism may be baffled. While there is nothing other worldly about the Prayer, it will probably take some getting use to. Green gives good advice on making the Prayer a part of one's spiritual life.

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