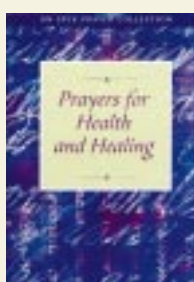


# BOOKS

## Prayers for Health and Healing

*SPCK Prayer Collection*  
*SPCK 2000*  
£12.99 Pb 120pp  
ISBN 0 281 05273 5



Have you ever been prevented from praying with a patient through fear of sounding trite or appearing not to understand their pain and suffering? Or have you ever been

asked as the 'health professional' in your church to contribute to a service? If you have, then you might have found that your years of medical training had not quite prepared you for this demanding role!

Well, never again need you fear being lost for words with this well-edited book of over 140 prayers for health and healing. It is divided into ten well-chosen sections. The first half of the book has general prayers for health and healing; the second half deals with illness categories such as chronic pain or illness in old age. These are all easily browsed through to find the prayer that suits both you and the occasion best.

There is an index of 80 different subjects ranging from babies to bereavement and stress to sleeplessness. There are also specific prayers for doctors, nurses and hospitals.

Prayers are in both old and new style and are suitable for use during church services or formal occasions, at the bedside and in the home. Looking up your favourite author isn't a problem either because there's an index of these too.

Overall I found this book helpful to read and easy to reference. It would make a good Christmas present for any doctor, nurse or church leader.

'Almighty God, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking; set free thy servants

from all anxious thought for the morrow; give us contentment with thy good gifts; and confirm our faith that according as we seek thy kingdom, thou wilt not suffer us to lack any good thing; through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Augustine of Hippo

*Michael Davey is a General Practitioner in Harrow and a former chairman of the CMF Junior Doctors' Committee*

## All the Hours God Sends?

*Peter Curran*  
*Inter-Varsity Press 2000*  
£7.99 Pb 216pp  
ISBN 0 85111 656 6



It is a reflection of the way the health service has changed that this book, whose author has worked in the oil industry for many years, is entirely relevant to health professionals. Concepts such as

work place stress, down sizing, maintaining motivation and seeking excellence are now all part of our day to day world. We all work in teams, and some of us lead teams. Yet, it is all too easy to fail to integrate the way we think and behave at work with the rest of our lives as Christians.

How often do we take time to think and talk with other Christians about the way in which the institutions we work for affect us, and about how we feel and act as an employee, employer or team member? Do we take enough time to think about what our job is doing to us and how we may be affecting others? If the answer is no, then this book is designed to help. The author's style is clear, and if management terms are used, they are explained. He combines a wide knowledge of industry and the pressures of work with a familiarity with scripture that enables him to use the Bible extensively to establish principles and to

explore very modern dilemmas.

There will be times for all of us when the pressures at work feel overwhelming; when we get the balance between family, church and work wrong; when we are bored or frustrated or threatened by redundancy. All these areas are dealt with. The book can be read as a whole, but is designed so that each chapter stands alone, focusing on a specific area such as coping with change, or ambition and wealth. As with all good management documents, there is an action column at the end of each chapter, and these provide a challenge in themselves.

This book is valuable in several ways. It can help us as individuals to think through problems related to our work, and could provide rescue in a crisis. It would also make an excellent tool for a study group. I must get a copy for our practice library.

*Rebecca Torry is a General Practitioner in London*

## The Human Effect in Medicine: Theory, Research and Practice

*Michael Dixon and Kieran Sweeney*  
*Radcliffe Medical Press 2000*  
£17.95 Pb 157pp  
ISBN 1 85775 369 0



The 'human effect' referred to in the title is, in effect, the placebo influence of the physician. The authors, both general practitioners, describe this effect particularly in the category of patient

that makes up the bulk of general practice; those with chronic and incurable disease. Nevertheless, they state that a wide range of disease shows marked placebo response including, for example, peptic ulcer disease.

To maximise the 'human effect', the



authors emphasise the crucial importance of listening carefully to the patient, the actual words the doctor uses (especially his metaphors), the value of humour, and the need for continuity of care. The placebo effect is influenced by the attitude of both the doctor and the patient. The doctor's enthusiasm over a new remedy enhances its effect. The patient's expectations also have a positive influence. The colour and shape of pills is important, and while suppositories and injections have a greater effect than pills, a surgical operation has the most powerful effect of all.

The authors urge doctors to move beyond the idea of the body as a machine. If doctors do, indeed, regard their patients in this way, then this book is timely. One cannot help feeling that what is advocated is really a return to the best practice of family doctors of an earlier generation. Perhaps the authors recognise this in saying, 'What is called for is less of a revolution and more of a revival'.

*David Short is emeritus professor of clinical medicine in the University of Aberdeen, past chairman of the medical ethics committee of the University of Aberdeen and the Grampian Health Board, and Physician to the Queen in Scotland.*

## Managing the Message:

**A tool kit for health service communicators**

*Roy Lilley and Geoffrey Bowden  
Radcliffe Medical Press 2000  
£19.95 Pb 148 pp  
ISBN 1 85775 412 3*



This is a brilliant book. Both authors have spent many years working at the interface of medicine and the media, and their experience overflows onto every page. This is an easy to read manual that not only teaches the reader how to

communicate more effectively, but is also a wonderful example in itself of how to get the message across.

Written in bite-size chunks with plenty of white space, question boxes, illustrations and charts, it is a joy to dip into. The topics covered range from broad issues such as how the media works and how to organise message management, right down to the specifics of how to use a notice board most effectively. (They suggest never leaving a notice on it for more than ten days and moving the board around the place!). Handling radio and TV interviews, managing the media when things go wrong, producing an annual report, advertising, making a promotional video and appointing a communications consultant are all considered in a lively jargon-free style.

The book is very funny and is brimming with memorable quotes and aphorisms. The Harvey Thomas quote, 'If they haven't heard it, you haven't said it' is there, for example, but Lilley and Bowden have plenty of their own: 'You can't look humble in a bow tie! It looks like you spend your life at a party, or behind a glass of gin!' or 'Pioneers get arrows in their backsides'. 'All organisations big and small have communication needs. For some, word of mouth is enough. For others not even the word of God can be heard above the din of day to day.'

Any doctor will benefit from even a 30-minute skim through this book and it is a must for those whose jobs involve regular local or national media contact. Many church leaders would benefit from it too. Jesus was a brilliant communicator who captured the complete attention of his listeners yet the church is often dull and unimaginative in comparison. The word of God might be clearly heard above the din of day to day life if Christian communicators took some tips from this book.

*Trevor Stammers is a Tutor in General Practice, St George's Hospital Medical School and a regular author and broadcaster on sexual health.*

## The CMF Website on CD-ROM £3 (Special Offer)



The CMF website, first launched in July 1997, has so far attracted over 250,000 visitors searching for resources on medical ethics, evangelism and medical mission. It is now available on CD-ROM: over 30 back issues of Nucleus and 10 issues of Triple Helix together with ten years of CMF government submissions on ethics, the full set of CMF Files, a year's supply of daily devotions, the Confident Christianity evangelism training course, 'Cyberdoc' web reviews, a quarterly newsround of issues in medical ethics and much more. Everything is indexed by subject from a revised site index meaning that most specific queries can be answered within two or three mouse-clicks from the homepage. Over 200 external links take the browser directly to helpful Christian and medical sites on the internet.

This new resource enables access to a vast array of CMF literature and resources without having to search old journals, visit the office or wait for pages to download on the internet.