

## Introduction

This small book offers you a wonderful opportunity to reflect each day on the nature of God, drawing you to him in worship, wonder and praise.

As you begin your journey through the year, talk to God about your motives for reading this book. Thank him that you don't have to earn his approval. Tell him about your desire to grow, and thank him for promising to meet you.

At the bottom of each page, a suggested activity gives you a place to start in responding to the Scripture and accompanying thoughts. That activity may be to reflect, pray or journal. Because reading without response has little effect, responding to what God has said to you in the daily meditation is important. These suggestions are just a place to start, since meditation and prayer naturally intertwine—one leading to the other.

Beyond that, you may choose to journal. If the reflection raises confusion, you will find it helpful to write your thoughts on paper. Also, some prayers are better written in a journal. A written prayer is just as worshipful as a prayer thought or spoken, and the process of writing gives you a chance to carefully phrase what you say to God—and then come back to it later. And sometimes God will speak to you through reflection and meditation in a way that's so downright stunning that these thoughts should be recorded and read for several days.

These devotions are not dated; you can start anywhere and move around as you please. Most of the reading is condensed and adapted for devotional use from J. I. Packer's *Knowing God*, though not necessarily in the sequence or context of the original book. In addition, several entries dealing with biblical characters come from *Never Beyond Hope* (by J. I. Packer and Carolyn Nystrom). Scattered throughout this devotional guide are quotes from hymns. At the back, you'll find a list of these hymn sources if you want further information on these rich texts of worship and praise.

You'll find a year's worth of devotions here, designed to fill six days a week. We choose to offer six rather than seven, assuming that you will use at least one day a week for worshipping God with his gathered people

in your church—and also for a built-in bit of grace as circumstances do sometimes infringe on our devotional time. You can use the seventh day to go back to some of the “pray,” “journal” and “reflect” suggestions at the end of each devotional entry.

May you know God more deeply and fully as you focus on his character through this year.

*Carolyn Nystrom*



W E E K O N E



MONDAY

## God's Palms

*See, I have engraved you on  
the palms of my hands.*

ISAIAH 49:16

What matters supremely is not the fact that I know God but the larger fact that underlies it—the fact that he knows me. I am graven on the palms of his hands. I am never out of his mind. All my knowledge of him depends on his sustained initiative in knowing me. I know him because he first knew me and continues to know me.

He knows me as a friend, one who loves me. There is no moment when his eye is off me or his attention distracted from me, and no moment, therefore, when his care falters. This is momentous knowledge. There is unspeakable comfort—the sort of comfort that energizes, be it said, not enervates—in knowing that God is constantly taking knowledge of me in love and watching over me for my good.

### REFLECT

*What comfort do you take from knowing that your  
name is engraved on the hand of God?*

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