

## ***Give Me That Book: A Treasury of Truth for Troubled Times***

By Gary Rieben, Winepress Publishing, 2013 (36 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

**1. Strength Not Ease** – Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks! Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle. But you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder...at the richness of a life which has come in you by the grace of God. [Phillips Brooks, “Going up to Jerusalem,” from *Twenty Sermons*. (New York, NY: R.P. Dutton, 1886), 330.] (Page ix)

**2. What Satan Plans for Evil, God Uses for Good** – If you are a Christian, you are also a soldier. That is because, as a member of God’s family, you are an enemy of the Devil. Although his dominance has been broken by your faith in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross, he is still able to roam “around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). He seeks to devour your faith and so destroy your joy in the Lord. But you need to know that our God uses his evil schemes. He permits painful pressures so that when we turn to Him in faith, His salvation creates a deeper joy *in Him* and a higher praise *for Him*. That is why God said, “Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me” (Ps. 50:15). (Page xii)

**3. Jesus is All** – Someone has said, “You will never know that Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have.” (Page xii)

**4. Writers Must be Readers** – Samuel Johnson once remarked, “The greatest part of a writer’s time is spent in reading, in order to write: a man will turn over half a library to make one book.” [Quoted in George Grant, *The Micah Mandate: Balancing the Christian Life* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), 9.] (Page xiii)

**5. Christians Who Study the Bible Are Effective** – T.B. Maston once remarked, “The Christians who turned the world upside down have been men and women with a vision in their hearts and a Bible in their hands. [Quoted in Wood Kroll, *Back to the Bible: Turning Your Life Around with God’s Word* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2000), 195.] (Page xiv)

**6. John Bunyan’s Love for God’s Word** – Spurgeon described Bunyan like this: “Prick him anywhere; and you will find that his blood is Bibline, the very essence of the Bible flows from him. He cannot speak without quoting a text, for his soul is full of the

Word of God.” [Quoted in John Piper, “To Live Upon God that Is Invisible: Suffering and Service in the Life of John Bunyan.” Sermon: 1999 Bethlehem Conference for Pastors. ©2012 Desiring God Foundation, Website: <http://www.desiringgod.org/>] (Page 3)

**7. George Mueller and the Bible** – George Müller put his finger on the source of Wesley’s energy when he wrote, “The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts.” All of Wesley’s unflappable enthusiasm, all of his unbelievable effectiveness, and all of his incredible determination can be traced back to one truth: he was *homo unius libri*, “a man of one Book.” [Quoted in Wood Kroll, *Back to the Bible: Turning Your Life Around with God’s Word* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2000), 195.] (Page 3)

**8. Church Needs to Speak God’s Word** – A famine of hearing the words of the Lord has produced a people who “stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east” (Amos 8:12). The church should be speaking with clarity, confidence, and courage, but in the words of J.I. Packer: “Preaching is hazy; heads are muddled; hearts fret; doubts drain strength; uncertainty paralyzes action.” [Quoted in Ravi Zacharias, *Deliver Us From Evil: Restoring the Soul in a Disintegrating Culture* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1996), 163.] (Page 6)

**9. Standing Firm in the Storms** – If you are wise, you will win. If you practice in the calm, you will be prepared for calamity. When the darkness descends, when the storm blows, and when the floods rise, your house will not move. You will not panic. You will not fall. You will simply do what you were trained to do. Because the words of Christ rule in your heart you will stand firm. You will not pull back nor opt out. Instead you will stay put, “like a rock in a mountain stream, like a rose blooming in mid-winter, like a lily growing in a manure heap.” [John Stott, *The Contemporary Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 263.] (Page 9)

**10. Three Things Jesus Promised His Disciples** – F.R. Maltby said that Jesus promised his disciples three things: that they would be absurdly happy, completely fearless, and in constant trouble. [David Watson, *Called and Committed* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw 1982), 189.] (Page 10)

**11. Purpose of this Book** – Every declaration, every illustration, and every application found on the pages of *Give Me That Book* have one single and solitary

purpose: To display “the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6). *God’s Book is purposeful*. (Page 12)

**12. Israel’s Relationship with God** – Old Testament scholar A.W. Argyle once observed that the thing that made Israel unique in the Gentile world was not the belief that God exists, or that He is one, or even that God is powerful, omnipresent, and wise. Rather, what set Israel apart from the rest of the world was her conviction that “God is personal and moral, intimately involved with Israel in a moral relationship.” [Bruce Ware, *God’s Greater Glory: The Exalted God of Scripture and the Christian Faith* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 51.] (Page 14)

**13. Sufficiency of Scripture** – When we turn away from a full reliance upon the Bible, we turn away from Christ. Not only are we weakened, but God’s glory is diminished. That is where the battle for the Bible rages today. The church is in danger of losing her confidence in the sufficiency of the Scriptures. The influences that have pushed the Word aside are so central to the church today that anyone who challenges their authority is likely to be greeted with disdain and even anger. (Page 20)

**14. Scripture is Adequate and Sufficient** – Theologian John Murray has written, “There is no situation in which we (as men of God) are placed, no demand that arises for which Scripture as the deposit of the manifold wisdom of God is not adequate and sufficient.” [Quoted in Ed Hindson and Howard Eyrich eds., *Totally Sufficient* (Ross-shire, England: Christian Focus, 2004), 47, 48.] (Page 24)

**15. God’s Grace is Sufficient** – God’s grace is sufficient. No attempt by man to make it “complex” will alter God’s promise or stifle God’s power to all who would believe. According to God’s own Word, no problem in our lives is too difficult or too deep for His empowering grace (2 Cor. 9:8). (Page 28)

**16. Jesus’ Promises Hold Us in Storms** – In this world we will have affliction (John 16:33). Tough times will come that will shake us to the core of our beings. News that we have cancer, news that our kids are involved in destructive activities, or news that our husbands have been unfaithful will bring great quaking to our hearts. But the foundation will not shake. Jesus, working through His precious promises, will hold us fast in any storm (Matt. 7:24-25). Hearing and doing His Word will enable us to stand in the midst of the pains and pressures of our day. There is no situation where the Word of God will not bring ballast to our storm-tossed boat. We can always turn to the

Word and find help and hope. “The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul” (Ps. 19:7a). (Page 30)

**17. Human Heart** – Dietrich Bonhoeffer said it like this: “The most experienced psychologist or observer of human nature knows infinitely less of the human heart than the simplest Christian who lives beneath the cross of Jesus.” [Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954), 118-119.] (Page 34)

**18. Obeying All God’s Verdicts** – God’s verdicts are always just and lead to healthiness. What we think and what we feel is not what is essential. We can be passionate and compassionate and be absolutely wrong! What really matters is not what I think but what God has said. God’s commands are altogether righteous. Some seem easier than others. Some we like and some we do not. Some seem impossible to obey. But if they are found in the Word, they are to be obeyed. God never gives a command that He does not give the grace to obey. If we trust Him and do what He has ordered, we will be blessed. “The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous” (Ps. 19:9b). (Page 37)

**19. God’s Word is Sufficient** – God’s Word is fully sufficient. He speaks and always accomplishes His purposes (Isa. 55:11). God’s Word is our life-sustaining food (Matt. 4:4). It is irresistible power (Jer. 23:29). God has spoken the words that are written down in our Bible (2 Tim. 3:16). When it is believed and received, it creates eternal life (John 20:31). Its truth sets apart the people of God (John 17:17). It opens the eyes of the blind (2 Cor. 4:4-6). It gives life to the dead (John 5:24). It grows the church (Acts 12:24). It frees the captive (John 8:31-32). It gives hope to the weary (Rom. 15:4). It brings joy to the heart (John 15:11). It brings glory to God (John 15:7-8). Nothing needs to be added to it and nothing needs to be taken from it (Deut. 4:2). Nothing can be set alongside it (Ps. 119:89). God’s Word is sufficient! If we will believe it, obey it, and proclaim it, God will grow His church, draw the seeker to His beauty, make godly shepherds who lead, feed, and care for the church, and heal the hopeless and helpless through His promises and His presence. He will bring joy to our souls and glory to His awesome name. (Page 40)

**20. Bible’s Sufficiency for Church’s Life and Work** – I think that is part of what Dr. James Boice was referring to when he wrote, “Our problem is in deciding whether the Bible is sufficient for the church’s life and work. We confess its authority, but we discount its ability to do what is necessary to draw unbelievers to Christ, enable us to

grow in godliness, provide direction for our lives, and transform and revitalize society.” The battle over the inerrancy of Scriptures has receded as biblical scholars have effectively defended and even strengthened our confidence in the accuracy and reliability of our Scriptures. But now we face another onslaught, subtly disguised in terms like “science,” “relevance,” “balance,” and “tolerance.” As our culture has increasingly become secular and pluralistic, church leaders, facing practical questions such as how to increase church attendance, heal the hurting masses, shape successful church leadership, and do effective evangelism, have increasingly turned to the world’s systems for help. Consequently, the Bible is still the “basis” of all we do, but what we actually are doing more and more resembles the world of business and the social sciences. [James Montgomery Boice, *Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Grace?: Rediscovering the Doctrines That Shook the World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 66.] (Page 54)

**21. The Word of God is a Weapon** – This weapon is good at all points, good for defense and for attack, to guard our whole person or to strike through the joints and marrow of the foe. Like the seraph’s sword at Eden’s gate, it turns every way. You cannot be in a condition that the Word of God has not provided. The Word has as many faces and eyes as providence itself. You will find it unailing in all periods of your life, in all circumstances, in all companies, in all trials, and under all difficulties. Were it fallible, it would be useless in emergencies, but its unerring truth renders it precious beyond all price to the soldiers of the cross. [Charles H. Spurgeon, *Infallibility – Where to Find It and Use It*, Sermon 1208 (Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, December 20, 1874), <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols19-21/chs1208.pdf>.] (Page 55)

**22. Joining the Marines** – When he informed me of his decision to join the Corps, I was a little taken aback. I decided to contact an old college buddy of mine, who had risen to the position of Chief of Naval Operations. I told him of my concerns and asked him if he had any insight. He responded: “Your son will give you plenty of reason for nervousness. The Marines take the point. But, he will become a man with a lot of reasons to be proud.”

Neither my son nor I had any idea how much it would cost him to become an officer in the Marines. When he enlisted, the Corps provided a video for the family that showed the kind of experiences he would go through in basic training. I saw it first and seriously considered not showing it to my wife. I did not want her to see what they were going to do to her baby. It was that grueling. After Chad survived those 12 weeks, he

told us that the video was really a “PR job.” What he went through was far more painful and tortuous than that which was depicted.

He was stripped of all his personal belongings. He was called “every name in the book.” He was deprived of sleep and food. He took twelve-hour hikes with a heavy pack on his back in rain and mud. He was pushed to give everything he had, and when he thought he could not take one more step, he was pushed to go on. In his training he has scaled cliffs, rappelled from cliffs, jumped from helicopters, lived off the land, and engaged in hand-to-hand conflict with fellow trainees. He was beaten, ridiculed, and stretched. It was the most challenging and stressful time of his life.

And you know what? Nobody apologized. Nobody in the Marine Corps felt sorry for him. There were two reasons for that. First, becoming a Marine is not a sacrifice, it is a privilege. Only “the few” have what it takes to be a Marine. One post explains, “Marines are made not born. Sixteen weeks of the toughest training in the world transforms civilians into members of the United States’ most noble brotherhood.” They are given the privilege of being admitted into a brotherhood that lasts a lifetime.

[[http://www.marines.com/main/index/making\\_marines](http://www.marines.com/main/index/making_marines)] (Page 122)

**23. 2 Timothy and 2 Peter Similarities** – The similarities between 2 Timothy and 2 Peter are striking. Peter, like Paul, is writing to encourage people who are facing troubling times. Like Timothy, the recipients of Peter’s second letter face counterfeit Christians in the church and fierce persecution outside it. Also, like Paul, Peter senses that he does not have many days left on this earth and these may be his final words to people he loves (2 Pet. 1:14). So, like Paul, he reminds these people of the resources they have in Christ. Finally, when he wants to point them to their greatest resource for victory in troubling times, he does what Paul did. He directs them to Scripture. “Above all,” (2 Pet. 1:20) Peter writes, they must know and be convinced that the Scriptures are God’s powerful, inerrant, personal word to them. (Page 129)

**24. We Can Trust the Bible Because We Can Trust God** – Ultimately, we believe the Bible to be inerrant because it comes from God Himself. It is unthinkable to contemplate that God might be capable of error. Therefore, His Word cannot possibly contain errors. This is our faith – we can trust the Bible because we can trust God. [R.C. Sproul, *Can I Trust the Bible?* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2009), xii.] (Page 134)

**25. Rebuking Another** – Nobody likes to be rebuked and nobody should like to rebuke, but love demands it. In my many years of ministry, I have had to rebuke on numerous occasions. When the rebuke was received by a person who loved the Lord and was committed to growing, they received it with humility and thanked me for it, if not at the moment, at a later time. But the one who was deluded in their sin and hardened by it would more often than not be defensive, angry, and outraged. The words of Proverbs are true: “Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you. Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning” (Prov. 9:8-9).

In the end, our job is not to please people but the Lord. Our calling is to love them and speak the truth, even though they do not like to hear it. But in every case when truth is administered in love, hearts are turned, one way or the other, the church is strengthened, and the name of the Lord is honored. (Page 138)

**26. Equipped for Every Good Work** – The end result of applying the Scriptures to our lives is that we are ready for anything. God provides the resources and the strength to fight and win every battle. That is what we mean when we say the Bible is sufficient. To be thoroughly equipped is to be capable, proficient, and complete. Every “good work” God has prepared for us can be accomplished in the wisdom and grace He supplies. (Page 140)

**27. The Holy Spirit Bears Witness to the Word of God** – Our personal conviction of the truth of Scripture rests not on the external evidences to the Scriptures truthfulness in and of themselves, but those evidences are confirmed in our hearts by the special work of God the Holy Spirit. The Spirit Himself bears witness to our human spirit that the Scriptures are indeed the Word of God. Here God himself confirms the truthfulness of his own Word. [R.C. Sproul, *Scripture Alone: The Evangelical Doctrine* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005), 169.] (Page 143)

**28. Seminary Professor’s Journey to God** – Dr. James Boice tells the story of a former professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. Emile Cailliet, who wrote a book entitled *Journey Into Light*. [James Montgomery Boice, *Standing on the Rock* (Wheaton, IL: Baker Books, 1994, 24.) In it he gave the testimony of his conversion. He had been brought up with a naturalistic education and had never seen a Bible. In the trenches of WWI, he began to reflect upon the inadequacies of his view of life. What was the meaning of life? What good were theories in the face of the realities he saw?

During the long nights, he began to long for what he called “a book that would understand me.”

He knew of no such book, so he determined to write one for his own personal use. After his release from the army he resumed his studies, making use of them to gather passages that spoke to his life. He then copied them into a leather-bound book, hoping that the accumulated wisdom he had discovered would free him from the fears and frustrations of his life. One day, he felt that he had completed his task and sat down under a tree to reflect upon what he had compiled. But as he read his crucial work, he felt a growing sense of disillusionment. It was, after all, a human work; one of his own hands. It really was not the answer he had hoped it would be. Dejected, he closed it and returned it to his pocket.

At that very moment, his wife came by and told him of walking in their small French village and stumbling upon a Huguenot chapel. Surprising herself, she walked into it and asked for a Bible. The elderly pastor gave her one. Cailliet’s wife apologized to her husband when she told of the incident, because she knew his feelings about Christianity. He did not hear it and blurted out, “A Bible you say? Where is it? Show me.” When she handed it to him, he took it and rushed to his study and devoured its pages. He recorded what happened next:

I opened it and “chanced” upon the Beatitudes! I read, and read and read—now aloud with an indescribable warmth surging within.... I could not find words to express my awe and wonder. And suddenly the realization dawned upon me: This was the Book that would understand me! I continued to read deeply into the night, mostly from the gospels. And lo and behold, as I looked through them, the One of whom they spoke, the One who spoke and acted in them, became alive to me... The providential circumstances amid which the Book had found me now made it clear that while it seemed absurd to speak of a book understanding a man, this could be said of the Bible because its pages were animated by the presence of the living God and the power of his mighty acts. To this God I prayed that night, and the God who answered was the same God of whom it was spoken in the Book. [[James Montgomery Boice, *Standing on the Rock* (Wheaton, IL: Baker Books, 1994, 120.)]

Here was an educated man who could read and reason and understand what the Bible said. But, as important as understanding the content was, it was not just the words in

themselves that radiated the warmth and the wonder that won his heart. It was the pages “animated by the presence of the living God” that made them come alive to him. He read the Word of God and he saw the Son of God by the Spirit of God. God opened the eyes of his heart so that he saw and savored the beauty of Christ and was changed forever.

Dr. Cailliet experienced in that glorious moment what theologians call illumination. Illumination may be defined as “the present work of the Holy Spirit by which He enables the believer to discern the spiritual import of Scripture and how it is applicable to his or her present situation.” [James T. Draper and Kenneth Keathley, *Biblical Authority: The Critical Issue for the Body of Christ* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 108.] The Holy Spirit who authored the Bible made it come alive to the mind and heart of this man. The Bible became more than a book, more than a record of what Jesus said, but a book alive with the breath of God. It was Jesus speaking to him! (Pages 144-145)

**29. The Scriptures Can be Understood** – Contrary to Rome, the Reformers believed that the Scriptures are clear in and of themselves. That means that no human interpreter need come between the Scriptures and the reader. The Westminster Catechism summarizes the doctrine of perspicuity (clarity of Scripture) like this:

Those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them. [Quoted in David T. King, *Holy Scriptures: The Ground and Pillar of Our Faith, Volume 1: A Biblical Defense of the Reformation Principle of Sola Scriptura* (Battle Ground, WA: Christian Resources, Inc., 2001), 195.]

This position does not ignore the fact that there are mysteries and hard teachings in the Scriptures. There are difficulties, and not all passages are equally clear, but, as D.A. Carson has reminded us, “Christians will insist that the sovereign/personal God is a talking God; that he has left a record of his words in Scripture; that we can understand those words truly, if not wholly or flawlessly.” [D.A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 544.] (Page 147)

**30. Spirit Opens Our Eyes and Convinces Our Minds** – John Calvin wrote, “It is foolish to attempt to prove to infidels that the Scripture is the Word of God. This cannot be known to be, except by faith.” [Quoted in R.C. Sproul, *Knowing Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 101.] The real barrier is not an intellectual problem but a moral and spiritual one. The same Spirit that opens our eyes to see the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor. 4:6) must convince our minds that the Bible is in fact God’s inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word. (Page 172)

**31. Building on Both Christ and the Scriptures** – Men talk about building upon Christ, and not upon the Scriptures; but they know not what they say; for our Lord continually established his own claims by appealing to Moses and the prophets. They would be Christo-centric, they say: I only wish they would. But if they take Christ for a center, they will inevitably have the Scriptures for a center too; and these men neither want the one nor the other. – Charles Spurgeon [*The Private Thoughts and Words of Jesus*, Sermon 2212 (Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, March 26, 1891) <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/2212.htm>.] (Page 173)

**32. Some Scriptures Are Not Fully Understood** – That is not to say that there are not issues within the Scriptures that have not been fully understood. Given the divine nature of the book and our own finiteness and sinfulness, that should not be a surprise. But no unresolved difficulty or lingering question has ever cast a shadow on the authenticity, truth, and divine origin of the sacred pages that we love. With J.C. Ryle we can boldly declare, “Give me the plenary, verbal theory of biblical inspiration with all of its difficulties, rather than the doubt. I accept the difficulties and I humbly wait for their solution. But while I wait, I am standing on the Rock.” [James Montgomery Boice, *Standing on the Rock* (Wheaton, IL: Baker Books, 1994, 26.)] (Page 174)

**33. We will Prevail** – As a colonel in World War II, David M. Shoup earned the nation’s highest award, the Medal of Honor, while leading the Second Marines, 2nd Marine Division, at Betio, a bitterly contested island of Tarawa Atoll. Although severely shocked by an exploding shell and suffering from a serious, painful leg wound that had become infected, Colonel Shoup fearlessly led his troops to victory over the heavily fortified and fanatically defended Japanese positions.

In the midst of the battle, he communicated with his superiors words that would become part of the Marine Corps lore. He declared, “Casualties: many; Percentage

dead: not known; Combat efficiency: *We are winning.*”

[[http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online\\_books/npswapa/extcontent/usmc/pcn-190-003120-00/sec5.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/npswapa/extcontent/usmc/pcn-190-003120-00/sec5.htm).]

When the Word of God is in our hands, we can maintain the same bold and brash confidence. “No weapon forged against [us] will prevail” (Isa. 54:17). We are better trained and better equipped. We will take enemy fire and will take some hits, but the bottom line is this: we will stand firm! Combat readiness: *We are confident!* (Page 175)

**34. Every Christian Needs the Sword, the Word of God** – Every Marine is a rifleman. There is nothing more important to a Marine than his rifle. In basic training he carries it wherever he goes and whatever he is doing. When he does not have it with him, he knows where it is and that it is secure. He is required to take it apart and put it back together and know how each part works within the weapon. He keeps it clean at all times, and woe to the recruit whose weapon is not shiny at inspection. The rifle becomes his best friend. He spends hours at the shooting range seeking to become an expert marksman. That weapon will save his life in time of battle.

Every Christian is a swordsman. There is nothing more important to the Christian than his sword, the Word of God. It is designed to defeat the Devil in spiritual warfare. It is our closest friend in battle. We must carry it with us at all times. We never know when we will be ambushed. We must understand it and know how each of its parts work. We must not only know how it works, but we must also become skilled in its use. Nothing is more important than becoming “one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). (Page 177-178)

**35. Scripture Has a Fixed Meaning** – Each text of Scripture has a fixed meaning. The goal of biblical hermeneutics is to combine human effort with divine enablement in order to understand and apply Holy Scripture rightly. Because the Bible was written by men it must be studied like any other book. But, because it is of divine origin it must be studied unlike any other book.

Because the Bible was written thousands of years ago, in another language and another culture, we lack the background to fully understand with our head. And, because it is holy and we are not, we lack the spiritual ability to grasp its truth with our heart. (Page 183)

**36. Character Is More Important than Giftedness** – I think one of the best explanations I heard concerned a young Christian singer who had fallen into an adulterous relationship. Her talent was unmatched. Her music was inspirational and devotional. Her albums sold millions and she was featured on TV and at the largest evangelistic gatherings. Everyone knew her name and recognized her face. When asked how somebody so blessed and seemingly effective could fail so miserably one astute observer explained, “She did not have the character to match her giftedness.” (Page 222)