

Laugh Like a Kid Again by Phil Callaway, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR (2020). (38 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols.)

1. We Need to Laugh as We Age.

Laughter is good medicine for the depressed and anxious. The science on this is airtight. But in time I discovered firsthand that as great a gift as laughter is, the more we age, the more elusive it becomes. [Page 9]

2. Laughter Keeps Us Going.

Laughter is a windshield wiper. It hadn't stopped the rain, but it allowed her to keep going. [Page 10]

3. No Male Pallbearers.

I told a joke on the radio about a single lady who specified that at her funeral there be no male pallbearers. "They wouldn't take me out when I was alive," she said, "I don't want them taking me out when I'm dead." [Page 15]

4. Joy from the Lord.

Our mouths were filled with laughter,
our tongues with songs of joy.
Then it was said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them." (Psalm 126:2 NIV) [Page 16]

5. Speed Bumps.

I have a fear of speed bumps. But I'm getting over it. [Page 29]

6. Exchanging Fear for Peace.

One week after Nelson and Linda Reed faced their greatest fear head on, Linda wrote these words to me: "God is so good, and all his ways are good--yes, even in this! God is taking me through my deepest fear--the sudden, violent death of my child one day before his thirtieth birthday. But we are seeing God's sweetness in all the details. Christ is walking with me through it. He did not leave me to go it alone. He is exchanging my fear for acceptance, peace, even joy!" [Page 31]

7. Bringing People Together.

Nothing brings people together nowadays quite like a broken elevator. [Page 37]

8. Seeing Miracles Performed.

Those who have not yet seen a miracle need to open their eyes and go looking. I live on the Canadian prairies. One happens each spring.--James Enns [Page 37]

9. Women and Weight.

A new study is out. Women who are just a little bit overweight live longer ...than the men who point it out to them. [Page 41]

10. Hiding from Parents, Police, and Firemen.

I love this story of a small boy who picked up the phone when it rang. “Hello?”

“May I speak to your parents?” a voice said.

“They’re busy,” the boy whispered.

“Oh. Is there anyone else there?”

“Yes. The police.”

“May I speak to one of the police officers, please?”

They’re busy.”

“Oh. Well, is anyone else there?”

“Yes. The firemen.”

“May I speak to one of the firemen then?”

They’re busy.

“So let me get this straight--your parents, the police, and the firemen are there, but they're all busy? What are they doing?”

“They're looking for me.”

I wonder how long that guy laughed after hanging up. Maybe he needed a good laugh. If you do, too, consider this your phone call. [Pages 41-42]

11. Erroneous Bulletin Announcement.

“Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.” [Page 42]

12. Looking for Blessings, Telling Others.

The single greatest act we can engage in if our life is to be stamped by joy is to go looking for blessings. And when we find them, we tell others: our neighbors, the guy on the phone. Maybe the police and firemen too. [Page 44]

13. The Gift of Grumbling.

Those complain first...who have the least to do. The gift of grumbling is largely dispensed among those who have no other talents, or who keep what they have wrapped up in a napkin. -- Charles Spurgeon [Page 45]

14. A View of Life.

The best customer complaint of all time was tweeted to Domino's: "Yoooo, I ordered a pizza and [it] came with no toppings on it or anything, it's just bread." Domino's responded that they were sorry and asked the complainant to indicate where it happened so they could set things right. Not much later, the customer tweeted again: "Never mind I opened the pizza upside down." [Page 46]

15. Social Networking.

When I was a kid, my mom made sure I was part of the social networking. She said, "Go outside and play." [Page 49]

16. Forgetting Our Blessings.

Human beings, being what they are, somehow feel entitled to question the reasons for everything that happens to them...We are often quick to forget our blessings, slow to forget our misfortunes.--W. Phillip Keller [Page 49]

17. Christian Happiness.

When the great preacher Jonathan Edwards was just 18, he delivered what was likely his first sermon. It was on Christian happiness. He had three main points, summarized well by Justin Buzzard.

1. "Our bad things turn out for good." Romans 8:28 says, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (NIV). We are promised that bad things will happen. Yet God is performing miracles in the messes on this fallen planet. He is even doing this among annoying fourth and fifth grade boys. God is a redemptive God. He is at work in the seemingly impossible.

2. "Our good things can never be taken." When my brother-in-law Bill was nursing his wife through the final stages of Huntington's, these were life-giving words. Whatever came, he was assured of God's presence, God's purpose, and God's peace. He knew that the truly good things were permanent things.

3. "The best things are yet to come." As believers, we cling tenaciously to the truth that love has the final move. That nothing, no matter how mysterious or painful, can ever separate us from God's love. A friend smiles whenever someone says, "It's all good." He has walked through too many valleys to say this. But sometimes he tells himself, "Everything will be alright in the end. If it's not alright, it's not the end." [Page 50-51]

18. Joy.

The major mark of justified believers is joy.--John Stott [Page 53]

19. Speakers: Nervous or Lying.

There are two types of speakers: those who are nervous and those who are liars.--Mark Twain [Page 61]

20. Fear.

Have you heard this one? One summer night during a severe thunderstorm, a mother tucked her small son into bed. She was about to turn off the light when he asked in a trembling voice, "Mommy, will you stay with me all night?"

Smiling, the mother gave him a warm, reassuring hug. "I can't, dear. I have to sleep in Daddy's room."

There was silence. Then little guy said, "The big baby!"

Fear. Do you have some? [Page 65]

21. Fruit of the Loom.

One Saturday when my son was small, he had his jammies on inside out. I called him Fruit of the Loom for two days. [Page 75]

22. Count Your Blessings.

Years ago in Sacramento, California, a ticket agent inadvertently oversold a Women of Faith weekend event by 1,500 seats. It was a wee bit of a problem. So they exchanged the chairs on the main floor for smaller, plastic ones. The setup looked a bit like a boxing match, chairs right up to the stage. Many would have to crane their necks like those in the front row at the movies. Organizers phoned *all* the ladies beforehand to alert them, then reseated them Friday night, apologizing profusely.

But before long the complaints arrived. Some were uncomfortable. Some were angry. So organizers asked the next speaker if she would mind apologizing again on behalf of the organizers. She agreed.

Her name is Joni Erickson Tada. She is a quadriplegic, paralyzed as a teenager from a diving accident. Her story is one of triumph--even joy--amid the trials of paralysis.

Wheeled onto the platform, this is what Joni said:

"I understand some of you are not sitting in the chairs you expected to be sitting in tonight. Well neither am I. And I've been in mine for more than thirty years. Then she added softly, "I have at least a thousand friends who would give anything to be sitting in the chair you are in if only for tonight."

A hush fell over the room. No one complained after that. In fact, many said it was one of the most memorable events of their life.

So it is when we overflow with gratitude. This is *the* great secret of the joy-filled life.
[Page 88-89]

23. Failures.

One day my daughter showed me a picture she drew of me. “I was trying to draw Mommy,” she said, “but I messed up.” [Page 91]

24. Edison’s Failures.

I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that it won't work.--Thomas A. Edison
[Page 91]

25. Our Phones, a Distraction.

In Costco I overheard a boy say to his mother, “You like your phone more than me.”
Our phones have replaced our alarm clock, camera, CD player, and calendar. May they
never replace our family. [Page 98]

26. First Children.

Ever drop a pacifier on the floor? With our first child, I sterilized the thing. With our
third child, I blew on it and wiped it on my sleeve. [Page 99]

27. Loving Children.

I don't remember who said this, but there really are places in the heart you don't even
know exist until you love a child.--Anne Lamott [Page 99]

28. Shutting TV Off.

Shut off the TV every chance you get. Television is called a medium because it's rare
seldom rare or well done. [Page 101]

29. Paying Attention to Children.

One of the most powerful gifts you can give is your attention. Every child is loved.
Every child is more important than your phone. [Page 101]

30. Childhood Boredom.

Your children don't need to watch movies while you drive. Allow them to be bored
sometimes. Thriving brain cells develop this way. [Page 101]

31. Reflecting on Your Present Blessings.

Reflect upon your present blessings--of which every man has many--not on your past
misfortunes, of which all men have some.--Charles Dickens [Page 103]

32. Gratitude.

It is only with gratitude that life becomes rich.--Dietrich Bonhoeffer [Page 107]

33. Be Interested in Others.

Proverbs 20:19 says, “Avoid anyone who talks too much (NIV). Dale Carnegie wrote, “You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.” [Page 112]

34. Children’s Art Work.

Did you ever throw out a picture your child painted then think, *Oh no! What if she becomes the next great artist? I’ll have to throw out about a billion dollars’ worth of paintings!* [Page 119]

36. Bitterness.

When the root is bitterness, imagine what the fruit might be.--Woodrow Kroll [Page 119]

37. Age Ties One Up.

My dad once told me that he thought of running away, but by the time he got his teeth in, found his glasses, and located his car keys, he forgot where he was going. [Page 183]

38. Perspective.

I was sitting on a plane when the guy beside me said, “Look at those people down there. They look like ants.” I said, “They are ants. We haven’t taken off yet.” [Page 187]