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Give Me The Bible

*Give me the Bible, star of gladness gleaming,
To cheer the wand'rer lone and tempest tossed;
No storm can hide that radiance peaceful beaming,
Since Jesus came to seek and save the lost.*

*Give me the Bible when my heart is broken,
When sin and grief have filled my soul with fear;
Give me the precious words by Jesus spoken,
Hold up faith's lamp to show my Savior near.*

*Give me the Bible, lamp of life immortal,
Hold up that splendor by the open grave;
Show me the light from heaven's shining portal,
Show me the glory gilding Jordan's wave.*

Refrain:

*Give me the Bible, Holy message shining;
Thy light shall guide me in the narrow way;
Precept and promise, law and love combining,
Till night shall vanish in eternal day.*

WORDS: Priscilla J. Owens, 1883
MUSIC: Edmund S. Lorenz, 1883



Priscilla Owens composed "Give me the Bible" at age 54. She was an educator in Baltimore for some 50 years and a regular Sunday School teacher. Many youngsters arrived in her environment with troubles, and the Bible was the best place to find hope, a message she communicated in the classroom and with her poetic pen. Many of her poems were published in the *Methodist*, *Protestant*, and *Christian Standard*. She wrote some 230 hymns and four or five lesson-poems for her students per year over the 50 years that Priscilla occupied a classroom. Many have lasted well beyond her lifetime.

Via Song Scoops, Internet



Mama's Words

There she sat on the sofa, snugly wrapped in her bathrobe. Raising her coffee cup, taking a sip, she gently, but without hesitation, spoke. "We have so many things for which to be thankful." **Many** was heavily emphasized.

My mind was rather a swirl at the time. I don't recall the specific circumstances, except I know I was certainly NOT focused on being thankful. In fact, when Mama made her morning declaration about so many thankful things, my thought was, "Yes, I know that's the way it's supposed to be, but I am not feeling it." At that moment I could not think of one thing for which to be thankful. Period.

Yes, I knew there were many things I could have chosen on which to focus, for which I could be grateful. My health, the love of my dear husband, his health, our children, my salvation, the awesome God I serve, His love for me, His perfect timing...but somehow I felt like I'd just been given a research paper assignment and was clueless about where to begin. I could not be thankful because I was worried. There was no time to reflect on being thankful because I needed to worry.



I remember Mama quoting Philippians 4:6 as she sat regally on the sofa, queen in her own majestic and loving way. (I guess queens can have towel swathed heads from freshly shampooed hair.) She would say, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication **with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God." Mama would put a big

emphasis on the “with thanksgiving” phrase. I have reflected on this memory many times. It has helped me to be thankful.

Sometimes in my conversations with Mama, I would veer off the positive path and launch into some negative report about something. I know my speech was definitely not of the edifying sort. Mama would pick up in Philippians again with, “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely (she emphasized **lovely**)...dwell on these things.” That was a great way to turn the tide from darkness to light, from ugliness to beauty.

I am grateful for Mama’s words. She used the precious Word of God, and she held it up as a light for me. May the Lord give me the strength and courage to do likewise for my children, grandchildren, friends and others along the way.

By Jenna Frank
Labadie, MO



“The Book”

She was a Christian and tried to instill those values in her son, William. When he left home, she gave him a Bible, but eventually he began to spend time with the wrong crowd. One day, drunk and in need of cash, he pawned the Bible for money to buy more liquor.

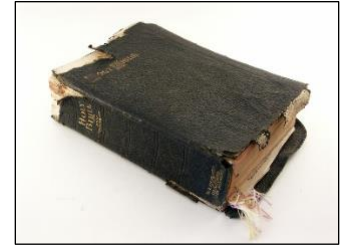
Yet William became a very successful medical doctor. A seriously injured laborer was brought to the hospital where he practiced. The case was hopeless, and William was honest with the man. William asked if he had relatives that could be notified. He said no, but he did wish to see his landlady, because he owed her a small sum of money, he wanted to tell her goodbye, and he wanted her to bring “the book.”

William saw the patient every day. He was struck by the man’s peace and contentment in his dire circumstances.

The man died, and some of his affairs were taken care of in the presence of William. The nurse held up a book asking William what should be done with it. When William asked about the book, wondering if it was a bank book or a date book, he was told that it was the Bible of a poor man. He read this Bible as long as

he could, and when he was unable to continue reading, kept it under his bed cover.

William took the Bible and was astounded that he recognized it. It was the Bible his mother had given him when he left home, which later he had pawned for a small amount of cash. On the inside cover, he saw his name, his mother’s name, and the Bible verse she inscribed.



Overwhelmed with sorrow he realized his Bible, the precious book he had pawned for a ridiculous price, had given much comfort to the poor man in his last hours. It had been his guide in life and gave him peace and happiness as he passed from death to eternal life.

With the Bible in his hands, William returned to his private office, fell on his knees, and asked for God’s mercy and forgiveness. The Bible led to his conversion. William P. Mackay, world renowned doctor, went on to become a preacher, well-known author, and song writer. It is from his pen we sing the beautiful hymn, “Revive Us Again.”

By Sally Shank
Oklahoma City, OK



Favorite Verses from the Wisdom of Solomon

Solomon’s writings in Proverbs 3:5-10 have always been one of my favorite scripture passages. We see these verses on T-shirts and coffee mugs, but do we truly take these verses to heart? These verses have become favorite passages because of many reasons, but one reason stands out to me. The quiet, seemingly insignificant event that makes this passage stand out comes from a young boy who was always with our boys and nephews. They would swim, and then run all over the hayfield, the pasture, and the barn. They had the best time when they were all together.

One Saturday evening someone from the congregation was having a hayride. All the boys, including Ryan, went along. The difference for Ryan was that he had an issue with his eyes. He became blind at night. In darkness (even though at the time he was pushing six feet in height) he became almost helpless in strange surroundings. All four of the other

boys knew about Ryan's issue, and they would unselfishly help him through the night.

We took Ryan home after the hayride, and the sky was pitch black. The other four boys ran in to see Ryan's mom and say hi, as she was one of their schoolteachers. Ryan was left with my wife and me. Remember, Ryan was pushing six feet, and my wife is five feet two. Ryan quietly asked my wife, "May I put my hand on your shoulder?" Bev knew exactly why. They quietly went into the house. It was an odd sight, a strong, tall boy trusting my somewhat smaller wife's eyes to get him home, to get him back into the light.

Ryan has to trust people. He has to hand over his full trust that they will lead him correctly. When I saw him



trusting my wife's eyes, the first thing I thought of was Proverbs 3. "Trust in the Lord ... and he will direct your paths." Why don't we have that kind of trust in God? Why are we not humble enough to follow Him all the time? We

know He has much better eyes than we in finding the light. Sometimes it takes small things in life to give us a more complete understanding of the scripture.

Watch for good things to happen. You might have a new favorite verse and a very good memory of how it became your favorite.

Eric Derrickson, Bolivar, MO



Light in the Darkness

I was a small girl, and I walked with my family as we walked into the Carlsbad Caverns located in New Mexico. In those days it was a guided tour, and a park ranger walked along with our group, describing how the stalagmites and stalactites had been formed in that large cavern so far beneath the earth's surface.

We wore jackets, as the temperature is a constant 68 degrees underground. We walked down and down that narrow path, marveling at all the strange formations that were all around us. We eventually reached a level path, which made walking a little easier for us.

At one point several groups, as well as park rangers, sat on benches in one of the largest rooms in the very presence of the formation known as the Rock of Ages. At that time it was still active, and the lights in the room caused that large stalagmite to glisten. We were told to

stay very still and quiet and to cover our wristwatches, which had luminous dials.

One by one, starting with the farthest ones away, the lights began to go out. It was no longer possible to see where the trail ended because of the darkness. As the lights continued to go out, softly we could hear the song, "Rock of Ages," being sung. Before long we were sitting in total darkness. We could not even see our hands in front of our faces.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee," went the song. It was such an awe-inspiring moment that it has stayed with me. As the song faded out, the lights slowly began to come back on until the room was light enough for us to continue our journey.

Without God's light, the world is as dark with sin as that cavern was to me as a child. Even a light as small as a wristwatch's luminous dial made a difference in the totality of that darkness.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my way." I am so thankful that God sent His "Sun" into this world and gave me a light for my pathway. I do not want to spend my eternity in total darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. I do want to spend eternity in a land where there is no night.

Lorna Smith, Lubbock, TX



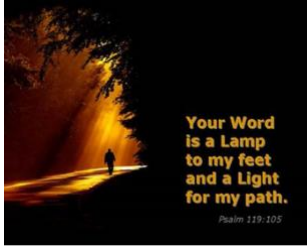
A Few of My Favorite Scriptures

"My Favorite Things," the song that Julie Andrews sang in "The Sound of Music," makes me think of my favorite scriptures. Below are seven categories, in no particular order, of my favorites.

What I think about is crucial: Paul encouraged the church at Philippi to think about right things in the "whatevers" of Philippians 4:8: *"Finally, brothers, whatever is true... honorable.... just... pure... lovely... commendable. If there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."* Too many times too many people think about the wrong things. Sometimes I am one of those people, so this "whatever" verse helps me get back on track.

Daily living: Romans 12:9-21 is somewhat lengthy, but it is high on my list of favorite scriptures. *"Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be*

patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one



another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'" To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.'" Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Keeping these principles in mind every day helps keep my heart in the right place.

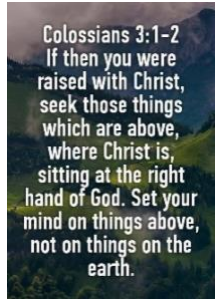
Sometimes I need to be reminded, usually when I know what I should do but don't necessarily want to do it. James 4:17 says, "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." Two other needed reminders are in Paul's writings to the church in Galatia. Galatians 6:2 reminds me, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:9 says, "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." Obeying these two scriptures helps two parties—the other person(s) and me. An additional reminder is found in James 4:8a, 10: "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you... Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you." These scriptures remind me to work on *both* parts of that equation, to do the good things God wants me to do, to be sensitive to the cares and burdens of those around me, and to always do good to others, which will lead to the other things being done.

Assurance and/or comfort: John 14:1-3 is the scripture I always go to when grieving or concerned or just in need of comfort and God's assurance.

Love and joy scriptures remind me of the joy of being a Christian. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice" (Philippians 4:4) and "rejoice always," (1

Thessalonians 5:16) remind me to be joyful every day and in all circumstances. This can best be done when I am "imitating" God (Ephesians 5:1) and thinking as He wants me to think.

Focus on the right things: Sometimes I am tempted to look in the wrong places or go in the wrong directions. When that happens, I go to Colossians 3:1-2: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth." If my mind is continually focused on "things above," it will not stray to the wrong places.



Looking back and regretting things said or done leads me to Philippians 4:13b-14: "...forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Constantly looking back at mistakes can cripple my walk with God. Pressing upward toward Him is much more positive and encouraging.

What It's All About: Revelation 21:4 gives us a little glimpse of what heaven will be like. "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Revelation 21:22-23 gives us even further insight into heaven where I want to be for eternity!

By Evelyn Waite, Rolla, MO



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