

50 Truths I Didn't Get From Google

Joshua 1:6-9 (text)

People come up with all kinds of catchy phrases and lessons that may be good advice. They are easy to remember (“a penny saved is a penny earned.”) They make good logical sense (“the early bird gets the worm.”) They give direction for keeping our attitudes in check (que sera, sera) They remind us of the need to put good things into our lives if we want to succeed (“garbage in, garbage out.”)

I believe such catch phrases and quips and quotations are important because of their simplicity in remembering. But I believe we need to make sure that we let the source of our guiding influences be the Bible. Here is a list of some popular phrases ... read them and make a mental tab on your fingers of which ones of these quotes you think are taken from the Bible:

Moderation in all things.
Once saved, always saved.
Spare the rod and spoil the child.
To thine own self be true.
Do unto others before they do unto you.
God helps those who help themselves.
Money is the root of all evil.
Cleanliness is next to godliness.
This too shall pass.
God works in mysterious ways.
The eye is the window to the soul.
The lion shall lay down with the lamb.
Pride goeth before a fall.
A fool and his money are soon parted
Three wise men from the east came to Jerusalem
Charity begins at home

The answer? NONE of them!

If human wisdom can come up with so many helpful quips, don't you think that the creator of mankind has some helpful advice to share with those who would hear it? The only way we will stock our spiritual pantries with food for true life is if we actually get our nose into the book and read it.

Have you ever read the Bible all the way through? Many of us have. I have friends that do so every year. Part of every day is devoted to a couple of chapters of the Bible. It is as much a part of their daily fabric as a shower or their cup of coffee in the morning. Even if they don't totally understand everything, they do it just to keep pumping information into the brain. It eventually gets to be that you add to your knowledge more understanding and build on what was there already.

Many people have nothing spiritual to build on. Maybe a few snippets from the preacher on the Sundays they happen to attend worship, but no additional input from spiritual sources.

But they have nothing in their spiritual fiber to address all of the various circumstances that come their way. When we face storms like Jesus was talking about in Matthew 7 (the guy who built his house on the rock) will we be able to withstand? Have we anchored our lives to the bedrock of God's word? In times when we need to help someone in a counseling situation or talk to someone about their spiritual life, will we have a pool of resources that keep us from throwing out our own human opinions? We need to have an understanding of what God's Word says on the matter.

We live in what people refer to as a post-modern society. What does that mean? Postmodernism is a rejection of the notion that any one person has the corner on the market of truth. What you want to believe is just as valid as what I might chose to believe. It is a rejection of the idea that there can be an absolute truth that should guide the hearts and lives of people. Given the influence of the internet, and the incredible way we can have access to so much knowledge with just a few keystrokes, it is tempting for people to buy into the notion that we don't need the Bible anymore. But simple knowledge of earthly facts does not make for a wise person.

Proverbs 1:7 says, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."* But notice, this is not simply knowledge about God. Proverbs 9:10 qualifies this, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."* We can know all kinds of things ABOUT God but that does not mean we have knowledge OF God. In the early days of the church some of the believers in the city of Corinth had been given a miraculous gift of knowledge. Yet by the way they chose to use that knowledge, they proved they didn't know what they should have known. In I Corinthians 8:1 Paul reminds them that, *"knowledge puffs up, but love builds up."*

For all the knowledge that they had, they didn't know enough about the will of God to be on guard about the danger of church division, or the wrongness of sexual immorality, or what commitment to a marriage partners meant, or how to keep from offending the consciences of other Christians.

Where do we get that kind of knowledge? NOT from GOOGLE. What are you going to do if a life issue comes up and you need some help to try to sort things out. Google it? Sure, just type in, *"I need help with facing life"* Ha! What kinds of answers do you think will pop up?

So we need to do what we can to lay a foundation of truth in our lives so that when something comes up we can have that spiritual knowledge there to give us guidance. It's not like we have to memorize all the scriptures. For instance, say I come across a situation where someone in the church is trying to lay down legalistic rules and is being mean and unforgiving in the process. In my reading I know that there is a passage somewhere in James that talks about how mercy being more important than judgment.

So I Google and type in "Mercy Judgment James." Up it pops. And there is my scripture, James 2:13, *"Mercy triumphs over judgment."* I may have used technology to get the exact passage,

but where did I get that original understanding in the back of my head that there was even a passage that dealt with the issue? Where did I even come up with those words, “Mercy, Judgment, and James?”

Over the span of my life I have categorized in my brain a number of important passages. Deteriorating brain cells make these passages harder and harder to access, so I am thankful for tools that help me find them easily. But those words are still there. That list was compiled in many ways. Some came from my childhood of hearing the same phrases repeated over and over, which I would not have had if I had not been raised in a home where my parents brought me to Bible School and made me sit still and listen during the sermons.

Have you ever been walking on a path and the path gradually dwindles and fades and you find yourself walking in what seems to be virgin woods. As you walk you pick up the path again and it feels good to know you are back on the path? Because of constant exposure to God’s Word, I have beaten down a path to walk through this life. Along the way I have added guardrails and warning signs. At some places I have built steps to help me walk easier. Whether or not I choose to stay on the path is a choice I must make daily. How does your path look? Is there even a path?

I took some time to flip my way through the scriptures and develop a list of 50 passages that have helped me in my walk, in my counsel with others, that have established and marked my path. Scriptures that have knocked away the lower branches and made a clear area for me to walk. Verses that have provided me with guardrails and steps. Use them if you want, but my advice would be for you to establish your own list.

Some of these passages help me remember that I am not my own. I am part of a body, a community that hurts and rejoices together.

Genesis 4:9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?"

Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

I Corinthians 6:19-20 You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.

Many of these verses help me understand how I should feel about others:

I Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

Genesis 50:19 But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?”

James 2:13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Romans 14:4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

There are passages that solidify my commitment and loyalty to God and confirm the decision I made to make Christ my Lord forever:

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Joshua 24:15 And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Acts 26:28 And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?"

1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him."

Daniel 3:17-18 our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.

The Bible assures me of God's sovereignty. He is worth following simply because he is God and I don't need to understand all the reasons why things are the way they are in life. God's got it under control:

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason?"

Job 1:21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Esther 4:14 For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Some passages remind me that what I think is not nearly as important as what God thinks:

Isaiah 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

I am reminded through scripture about my personal responsibility. No matter what my upbringing, whatever happened in my childhood, I am responsible for the way I live my life today:

Ezekiel 18:2 "What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of

Israel, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'?

And where does arrogance or pride fit in?

I Kings 20:11 And the king of Israel answered, "Tell him, 'Let not him who straps on his armor boast himself as he who takes it off.'

Isaiah 57:15 For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity and whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit."

And many verses have formed the borders of my path, so I know what steps are holy and what I should avoid. So I never rationalize my behavior simply because I am saved. So I know what fruit will be showing in my life if I am healthy:

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

I Samuel 15:22 And Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.

Jeremiah 10:23 I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.

Isaiah 1:11 What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.

Galatians 5:22-23 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Of course there are many scriptures that remind me of the fact that I have sin in my life that needs to be dealt with, and remind me of how great the salvation is that we have in Jesus Christ:

Isaiah 59:1-2 Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Romans 1:16-17 I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

II Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Lamentations 3:22-24 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

How about the way I should treat others. Help that guides me to love and serve others:

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another:
Philippians 2:5-7 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

There are times I need reminders about how God feels about me:

I John 3:19-20 By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.

There are rough days that test my endurance and patience. Days I need to reaffirm my trust and hope in the one who can help when no other source can:

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Ezekiel 37:3 And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know."

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

II Chronicles 20:12 O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

II Corinthians 4:17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

II Corinthians 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Philippians 4:13 I can (endure) all things through him who strengthens me.

II Chronicles 7:14 If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Joel 2:25 I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten.

My attitude toward God's Word is so important. Any intellect I have, any knowledge, must be the knowledge of God, not my own feeble thoughts. And I need to be constantly growing in my understanding of God's Word:

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

II Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Job 38:2 Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

Luke 5:37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.

My final few verses include some passages that remind me of the battle I face against Satan and sin:

II Corinthians 10:5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

Galatians 5:1 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

In reading all of these gems from God's Word, I need to say a couple of things as we finish up today. First of all, this list isn't comprehensive. There are so many tidbits from Psalms, Proverbs and from the mouth of Jesus that I haven't even included. This list might change if I compiled it next month. But they are passages that have molded me into the person I am and have developed my thinking to think the way I do.

I would encourage you to take a colored pen or highlighter and go through your Bible. If you have never read it start with something like Genesis and Exodus or the Gospels or Acts. Start getting into a habit that will bless your life abundantly, and give you tools that will bless you not only in your personal life but in your relationships with others!

Leland