

Well Said . . .

Some Wise Words About the Word

In all my perplexities and distresses the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength.

-Robert E. Lee

So anyone who thinks that he has understood the divine Scriptures or any part of them, but cannot, by this understanding, increase his love of God and love of neighbor, has not yet succeeded in understanding them.

-Saint Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*

There's a lovely Hasidic story of a rabbi who always told his people that if they studied the Torah, it would put Scripture on their hearts. One of them asked, "Why on our hearts, and not in them?" The rabbi answered, "Only God can put Scripture inside. But reading sacred text can put it on your heart, and then when your hearts break, the holy words will fall inside."

-Anne Lamott, *Plan B: Further Thoughts On Faith*

We were given the Scriptures to humble us into realizing that God is right, and the rest of us are just guessing.

-Rich Mullins, as quoted in the biography

Rich Mullins: An Arrow Pointing to Heaven (James Bryan Smith)

We are so comfortable with the Bible as a book that it fails to bother us. It fails to shake our understandings of how the world works. We are left in our old patterns of being because we fail to allow the words to penetrate the depths of our hearts. Instead, we use the text to point out the mistakes of others. Or we find the passages that everyone else needs to read. We are comfortable using the Bible to win an argument or stop a conversation, but we are uncomfortable letting the Bible be the Bible...too often, we are seeking to use the text. We are not coming to let the text open and expose us.

-Nate Pyle, online article, "Stop Using the Bible." <http://natepyle.com/stop-using-the-bible/>

Don't fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. *Act* on what you hear! Those who hear and don't act are like those who glance in the mirror, walk away, and two minutes later have no idea who they are, what they look like. But whoever catches a glimpse of the revealed counsel of God—the free life!—even out of the corner of his eye, and sticks with it, is no distracted scatterbrain but a man or woman of action. That person will find delight and affirmation in the action.

-James 1:22-25, *the Message* paraphrase