



INSPIRATIONAL GOLD

Thought-provoking meditations
from Great Christian authors



edited by
Mary Werner



CHRISTIAN FOCUS





© Copyright Mary Werner 2005

ISBN 1-84550-060-1

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Published in 2005

by

Christian Focus Publications, Ltd.
Geanies House, Fearn, Tain,
Ross-shire, IV20 1TW, Great Britain.

www.christianfocus.com

Cover Design by Jonny Sherlock

Printed and bound by
WS Bookwell, Finland

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher or a license permitting restricted copying. In the U.K. such licenses are issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE.





Biography

Mary Werner and her husband were career missionaries in Bolivia, Cuba, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and Canada. Their work included evangelism, church planting, pastoral training, and administration, although their primary interest was in seminary teaching that equipped indigenous leadership. She is also an author, a lover of handwork and old books, and a grandmother who now lives in Calgary, Canada.





Introduction

David devoted himself to God's two great books – nature and Scripture. And we can truly say, "Our Father wrote them both." In summarizing the merits of Scripture, he says, "the law of the Lord is perfect... the testimony of the Lord is sure... the statutes of the Lord are right... the commandment of the Lord is pure... the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold." The Scripture is pure gold, and through the ages authors have drawn their inspirational truth from it.

The idea for this collection arose during my husband's last lengthy illness. Our practice was to read out loud from various books, and I began copying selections that inspired faith and encouraged reflection. The collection grew, and this provided an initial source from which to edit inspirational quotations. The result is this book.

Nearly 900 quotes are included from about 425 writers spanning every one of the centuries from the first to the twentieth, although the majority are from the past 400 years. Here is Clement of Rome (30-100), a contemporary of the Apostles, followed by two millennia of great words from letters, sermons, commentaries, poems, prayers, hymns, and creeds. Some belong to well-known letter writers the likes of Francois Fenelon (1651-1715) or the Abbess Hildegarde (1090-1179), great preachers such as C.H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) and Jerome (340-420), or writers of mystical verse like Jeanne Marie Guyon (1648-1717) and Catherine of Siena (1349-1370). Many others are anonymous or little known. But all speak from a common Hope that transcends their own time and place, and so continue to

5





inspire. Though a number of Christian traditions are represented, no attempt was made to be inclusive. The largesse of the universal church cannot be fitted within one small volume. I regret that the devotional richness of Eastern Orthodoxy's long literary history is barely represented, and references from non-Western countries are largely absent. I could only select from that narrow place that I know best.

For each day quotations are arranged around a theme announced by a Scriptural phrase rather than an entire verse. Most themes point us to God's attributes, and remind us that access to Him comes through His invitation and His work on our behalf. Their primary purpose is devotional rather than doctrinal, brief words to encourage praise and contemplation rather than provide systematic instruction. An obvious shortcoming of the selections is that they are shorn of original contexts and purposes, but it is hoped that this new context and the juxtaposition of words from different centuries, gives them opportunity to speak in fresh ways and stir reflection. Not all of the sentiments expressed will meet the approval of every reader; I trust this will not distract from the broader themes shared by God's people across time and place.

Each era has idiomatic turns of phrase and uses of punctuation that are foreign to modern sensibilities. This makes some quotations difficult to read quickly. But sometimes reading slowly is worth the effort. I edited for clarity of meaning, ease of readability, and sensitivity to gender inclusive language. Thanks to those who helped with the many tasks involved.

