

Word-Reader, Light-Bringer: Vignettes from the Bible for Shining God's Light

Adelynn Spiecker

FriesenPress

(314pp)

978-1-03-911459-3

Word-Reader, Light-Bringer is a straightforward Christian devotional designed to help contemporary audiences apply biblical principles to their lives.

Adelynn Spiecker's organized Christian devotional *Word-Reader, Light-Bringer* suggests ways to draw meaning from the Bible and apply its lessons to one's life.

This orderly book's first two sections concern who God is and what God does; its following sections are designed in response to this theology, naming ways of understanding people, and saying what they should be doing. Each section is further split into three focused subsections, contributing to a sense of targeted construction.

From the book's perspective: Christians should approach the Bible in a two-pronged manner, remaining conscious of its original contexts and meanings, and also growing from that knowledge to make the content relevant in a contemporary context. Aimed at those who already believe its worldview, the book concentrates on naming Christian principles, sharing examples, and forwarding biblical illustrations that will be relevant to people of faith who wish to convey their beliefs well to others. It draws on both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament to do its work, fleshing its excerpts out with personal anecdotes to further understanding. Its perspective reflects mainstream evangelical notions with very little deviation, resulting in a book that is simultaneously comforting and didactic. It also contains some surprises, though, as with an acknowledgment that medical interventions are sometimes needed to treat people's mental and emotional struggles: "We're foolish not to take needed medications while singing 'Jesus paid it all' ... I love going to counseling. I wish I could go all the time," Spiecker says.

Prayers are included at the end of each section, giving the book a useful, interactive quality. The text also includes discussion questions for small group application, though several of them are awkward or under contextualized, as with "To which aspects of Joseph's life do you most relate?" and "What is your favorite aspect of the Old Testament tabernacle and why?" Further, the book's overabundance of footnotes leads to airiness and distractions; some of their information seems more suited to the text proper. The footnotes also include scriptural references to excess, as with the five different verses used to validate the statement "Talk about empowerment!" Conversely, the online references listed at the end of the book are under supported, and some link to products, rather than backing the book's arguments.

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MATT BENZING (January 18, 2022)

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