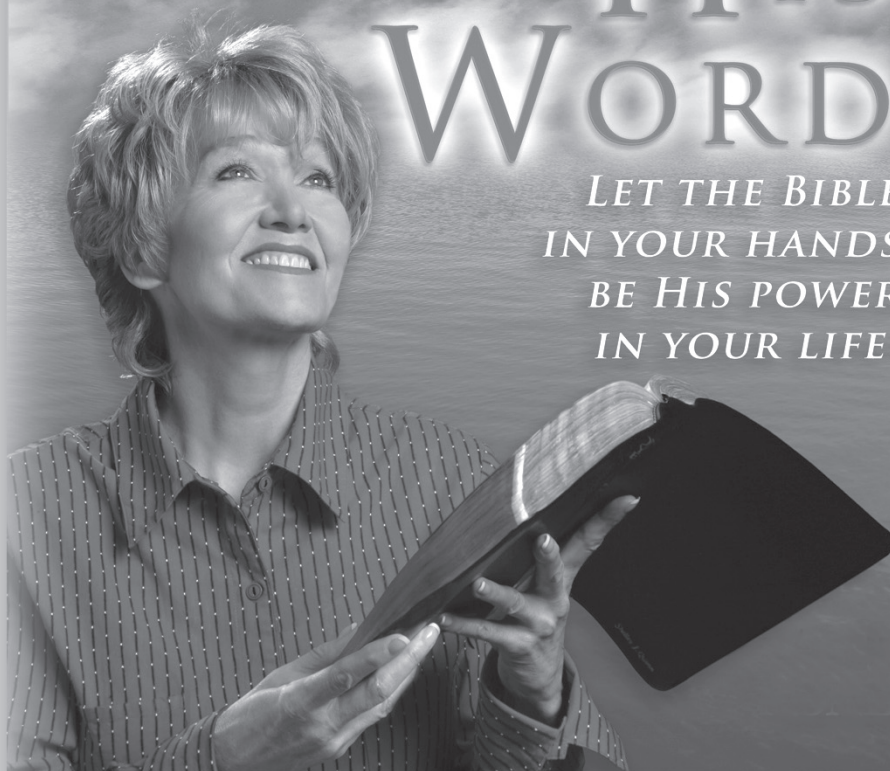


EXALTING HIS WORD

*LET THE BIBLE
IN YOUR HANDS
BE HIS POWER
IN YOUR LIFE!*



SHELLEY QUINN



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Glory to God for drawing me out of darkness and into the marvelous light of His Word. Glory to Him for revealing that which was previously fenced in and hidden from me. All praise to Jesus Christ, who paid my penalty at the cruel cross of Calvary. All praise to Him who causes me to be all that He has called me to be.

To my husband, JD—thank you for loving me as Christ loves the church. You make it easy for me to submit to your leadership, because you always have my best interests in mind and encourage my growth. In becoming your wife, I was blessed; in sharing your life, I am privileged. I'm so glad we have eternity to spend together.

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About the Author

Shelley Quinn is speaker and co-director for Word Warrior Ministries. As a Christian author and Bible teacher, she travels the United States and abroad preaching the gospel of Christ at revivals, retreats, and camp meetings. Her teaching revolves around knowing who we are “in Christ,” expanding our vision of who God is, and understanding how to develop an intimate personal relationship with the Lord.

Shelley is the New Program Development Manager at Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN). She also hosts *Exalting His Word* and other programs seen around the world on 3ABN. With Danny Shelton, the network’s president, Shelley co-authored the best-selling books *The Antichrist Agenda* and *Ten Commandments Twice Removed*.

Shelley and her husband, JD, work side-by-side in full-time ministry.

Chapter One

A New Beginning

I

I'll never forget an overnight stay with a dear friend. For years, phone wires had been our only thread of connection. We were eager to meet face to face again (if for nothing else than to see how the ravages of time had taken their toll on us). My hectic travel schedule had foiled our frequently proposed reunion plans, but now I was in her area on ministry business, and we were finally together again.

The comfort of our close relationship rapidly erased the time we had been apart. We chatted and chirped for hours. After catching up on recent events, the conversation took a turn I had hoped to avoid. "Remember when . . . ?" As soon as those words escaped her mouth, I knew I was in trouble. Remembering our past escapades, her face lighted with enthusiasm. Mine flushed hot with shame.

Our friendship had sprouted in our late twenties, during an interval when I had left the church. I was knee-deep in the ways of the world, and my behavior then fell far short of God's approval. Now I interrupted her, saying, "Those were my B.C. (Before Christ) days; let's not talk about them."

Shocked, she insisted I had always been a Christian. After I tried to explain the difference between knowing *about* God and living *for* Him, she said, "Well, at least you have to agree those early years were fun." I couldn't agree. What she considered fond memories, I regarded as a time of reckless folly.

In the past, it seemed to me that God's "Highway of Holiness"¹ was poorly paved and marked. I stumbled into potholes. I took several wrong exits that ended in roadblocks. After each hair-raising episode, my loving Lord reached out and guided me back to His path of life. Hand in hand, I walked happily with my Savior for long stretches of the way. Then, incredibly, I would again withdraw my hand from His.

When I started wandering around under my own direction again, confusion soon clouded my mind. I couldn't see the narrow path that Christ asked me to follow. It baffled me when my passion for Christ as my "first love"² faded. Why did the joy drain from my times of Bible study? Why did prayer become stiff and mechanical? No one else in my church spoke of this awkward condition, so I mastered the cover-up of verbal camouflage—I gave God lip service without yielding daily control to Him.



I've finally learned the secret of keeping my hand in God's hand and walking so near to Him that I sense His heartbeat. I recognize that I'm absolutely dependent upon the transforming power of His Spirit and His Word working within me.

Finally, disregard for His direction caused me to follow a destructive path. I slammed into a barricade, and then, stunned and ashamed, I limped away—away from Christ. This is embarrassing to admit, but if I had been on trial, accused of being a believer in Christ during that time in my life, I doubt anyone could have produced sufficient evidence to convict me.

Even now, shame strikes at my heart if I visit the gallery of my past. But thankfully, the Lord has taught me to return my focus rapidly to Him. As my Savior's voice reassures me, "You

are forgiven," He keeps me from falling into the pit of condemnation. A quick sidestep gets me past that snare of the devil.

God's grace equips me to press forward in assurance of His power to keep my feet from slipping off track again. And my grateful heart overflows with a constant offering of thanksgiving and praise to the God of new beginnings.

I've finally learned the secret of keeping my hand in God's hand and walking so near to Him that I sense His heartbeat. I recognize that I'm absolutely dependent upon the transforming power of His Spirit and His Word working within me. Without His Spirit, I cannot understand His Word. Without His Word operating in my heart, I can't follow in His footsteps.

God has revealed to me the central mystery of Christian life—the triumphant entry of His Word. The miracle-working power of God's Word is His way of transforming me into His image. Knowing this, I've learned to exalt His Word above all things. God's Word is my most special treasure in life.

It pays to know this: The secret of success for all humanity is **exalting His Word**.

Exalting His Word

In Psalm 138:2, the Bible says that God exalts His name and His word above all else. It continues to say that God magnifies His word even above His name. The bottom line is this—**God exalts His Word above everything**. That means nothing is more important to Him. As Commander-in-Chief, God has promoted His Word

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to the highest rank of importance. He empowers His Word with greater force than anything else. God has granted creative, life-giving power to His Word—power to accomplish all of His will.

Almighty God has assigned the highest position of praise to His Word. Just as our Creator glorifies His Word, so should we.

Why? The Bible explains it to us. Because “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In Him was life; and the life was the light of men [humanity]. . . . The Word became flesh and dwelt among us”,³ and sacrificed His lifeblood for us. Jesus Christ was, is, and ever will be, the living Word of God. Even at Christ’s return, at the Second Coming, the Bible declares He is the Word of God.

He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood,
and His name is called **the Word of God**. . . .

And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

(Revelation 19:13, 16, NKJV).

Christ is the Word of Life.⁴ Everything He is, the Word of the Bible is also. He is love, light, life, truth, and power. The Bible is love, light, life, truth, and power. How privileged we are to hold a Bible in our hands—we are grasping the hand of God, and He will lead us.

God exalts His Word to the greatest place of importance. Would you agree with me that His Word should be our top priority also?

I’m writing this book to help you grasp the true meaning of “exalting His Word.” I hope to help you better understand why God has elevated His Word to the place of highest rank and honor. Equally important, the purpose of this study is to reveal why and how you can please God by giving His Word the highest place in your life.

This is a life-changing study. We have this assurance based on the authority of God’s Word. Do you want a closer walk with Jesus? Do you want the joy of your salvation restored to you? Are you ready to overcome a powerless spiritual



*“You have exalted
above all else Your name
and Your word, and You have
magnified Your word above all
Your name”*

(Psalm 138:2, AMP).



Either I walk in the power of God's Word and His Spirit, or I limp through the day staggering under the weight of my earthly burdens.

condition? If you will take to heart the lessons in this book, God will do a great work in you.

I first began sharing these concepts in 1996 and marveled at the power of God's Word to transform lives as I witnessed hundreds of Christians develop a closer walk with God. Since *Exalting His Word* began airing on the Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN) in 2002,

thousands of Christians have eagerly embraced this teaching. Their testimonies confirm the power of exalting His Word. I also testify to this truth by my own changed life. God gave me a new beginning by leading me through this study and opening my understanding.

Pressing forward

Reflecting on my Christian walk, I recognize that I daily live in one of two conditions. I'm either powerful or pitiful. Either I walk in the power of God's Word and His Spirit, or I limp through the day staggering under the weight of my earthly burdens.

Life is a messy affair. If I try to live for Christ in my limited human strength and understanding, I'm to be pitied. I've forgotten my Lord's advice: "Without Me you can do nothing."⁵ The pitiful condition of my earlier Christian experience was the result of self-propelled performance. Not knowing how to achieve and sustain maturity in Christ, I found myself in the old routine of "three steps forward—two steps back."

I felt like a child trying to walk up the "down" escalator. Have you ever seen one at play like this? With great enthusiasm, he meets the challenge of the mechanical stairs flowing downward. Usually, he scrambles halfway up the moving staircase. Then, resting for a moment, he is carried back in the opposite direction. As he nears the bottom, the upward scramble begins again.

Watching children do this, I've noted something interesting. Rarely do they press forward all the way to the top and step off the escalator. Most often, they perform the upward effort, stop their advancement, and ride the downward flow. Then they struggle up a similar distance and backslide again. When they finally weary of the game, they stop.

Can you see a comparison between our Christian walk and this escalator scene? Christians struggle against the downward trend of the world system. It's just like trying to walk up a "down" escalator. If we stop advancing, we start backsliding. If we're startled into awareness of lost ground, we start pressing forward—unless we've grown exhausted by the effort.

Oh, how we must guard our hearts so that we don't weary of the upward race! Unchecked backsliding can cost us our relationship with Christ. It doesn't have to be this way. He will give us the victory, if we will just let Him. We must press forward in determination to make it to the top in Christlike maturity—depending on His power to overcome all of our obstacles.

Jesus said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in your weakness."⁶ He never intended for us to rely on limited human strength. We can't press forward without His power. Backsliding can't be prevented without His power. "Apart from me, you can do nothing."⁷ Remember the Savior's words? Only the power of Christ overcomes our weakness. Only by His power are we able to do what He asks us to do. Our hope is found in absolute dependence upon God.

God is the God of new beginnings

It's true, God is the God of new beginnings. His love and compassion never fail, and His mercies are new every morning.⁸

Have you grown weary and realized you're backsliding? He will renew your strength, exchanging His strength for yours.⁹ Have you made a wrong turn and find yourself on a crooked road? Cry out for direction. He will guide you back to His path of life.¹⁰ Is there an obstacle preventing you from drawing near to the Lord? He desires to remove it—and He will, if you give Him permission.

God has a plan for our lives, and it's better than the one we've been living.¹¹ In reality, His plan is dramatically different from the one most of us follow. In His unconditional love and infinite wisdom, He designed a plan so simple that anyone can share in it.



Our hope is found in absolute dependence upon God.

The Word of God reveals the plan and actually brings to life God's purposes for us. Jesus Christ is the mediator of this plan.¹² He brings us into agreement with God and reconciles our differences.¹³

To understand reconciliation in its simplest terms, let's compare it to our bank account. Because of sin, our account with God has been overdrawn. There is no way we can pay the debt. Christ paid our debt at the cross of Calvary—He deposited His righteousness into our account to cover our deficit. Then God sent the Holy Spirit to be our helper. By the Spirit's power operating within us, God can work out His plan for our lives.

In Christ, God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. God wants to work out His will in us. He wants to transform us by the infused power of His Word and His Spirit. He plans to *cause* us to be all He has *called* us to be.¹⁴

Our part in this plan is to receive His power and surrender to His leading. The Bible tells us the true children of God are those led by His Spirit.¹⁵ But how do we follow His leading? What God asks of you and me is that we be teachable, cooperating and relying completely on Him.

“So then . . . make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”¹⁶ Participation in God's plan does require us to exert energy. Still it's an effort empowered by the Word and the Holy Spirit. God knows that we can't perfect our walk with Him by human effort.¹⁷ It has to be a “faith walk” and not a “flesh walk.”



In Christ, God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

Daily we choose whom we will serve—self or God.¹⁸ I have discovered that even when we dedicate our lives to God, we may still suffer days dedicated to self-interest. How much more joyful we would be if we surrendered each day to His marvelous love and plan for our lives!

Each day is a new beginning with God. We cannot base our future on previous failures or successes.

When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity,
he shall die because of it.

But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is lawful
and right, he shall live because of it

(Ezekiel 33:18, 19, NKJV).

Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the desert
and streams in the wasteland
(*Isaiah 43:18, 19, NIV*).

God wants to give you the gift of a new beginning.
Will you receive it?

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