



## **Treasuring Christ When Your Hands Are Full: Gospel Meditations for Busy Moms**

*Gloria Furman (Foreword), Carolyn Mahaney (Foreword)*

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Grocery shopping. Soccer practice. Dirty dishes.

Motherhood is tough, and it often feels like the to-do list just gets longer and longer every day--making it hard to experience true joy in God, our children, and the gospel.

In this encouraging book for frazzled moms, Gloria Furman helps us reorient our vision of motherhood around what the Bible teaches. Showing how to pursue a vibrant relationship with God--even when discouragement sets in and the laundry still needs to be washed--this book will help you treasure Christ more deeply no matter how busy you are.

## **Treasuring Christ When Your Hands Are Full: Gospel Meditations for Busy Moms Details**

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## **From Reader Review Treasuring Christ When Your Hands Are Full: Gospel Meditations for Busy Moms for online ebook**

### **Esther Hsieh says**

Great, succinct, short read that reminds mothers everywhere of their purpose. You can drag this book on for as long as you want as there are a ton of verses to reference and meditate on. Or you can read through the book fairly quickly as there are lots of great points and reminders for the calling of motherhood. I especially liked how she was very abrupt with moms being competitive and self-centered with unrealistic goals (things i see in lots of moms including myself) and how that needs to be replaced with honest weaknesses so that we can boast in Christ. Lots of great points to reflect on and that I often found myself thinking about as I went about my day.

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### **Claire Koepf says**

LOVED this book! I recommend it to all moms and is a book I will read through many times again.

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### **Chantel says**

This book took me a very long time to read. Not because it was dry or uninteresting. But because with every sentence Gloria uttered my heart was sent into a tail spin of love for our Savior and this divine calling of motherhood. This book is subtitled "gospel meditations for busy moms" and it's just that. Every section must be thought on, prayed on, meditated on. You could just plow through it and miss the point, or you can stay and savor the biblical truths. The only thing missing in this book for me was suggestions for application. The book made me want to view motherhood in the way she suggests the Lord wants us to, but she gave very little 'here's a mindshift point'. Instead the whimsical thoughts just made you long for something you didn't quite know how to acquire other than pray and be in the Word and hope the Lord supplies you with the answer. I did notice there was a study guide you could download with the purchase of the book - after the fact - so I may travel through the book again with this as my guide at a later date to see if I can get the answers I'm looking for and give it the 5 stars I truly wanted to be able to give this book. Current is 4.5/5... Highly recommend regardless.

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### **Rebekah Johnson says**

An excellent book for all moms to have on their nightstand! As the title indicates, this is a book containing gospel \*meditations\* of short chapters packed with God's Word for moms who need to be reminded of our ultimate purpose and hope in this life. Gloria Furman's humorous, honest, and relatable writing style makes for an easy read while leaving you deeply enriched in the gospel truths.

#### **A Few Favorite Quotes:**

"Motherhood is physically exhausting, emotionally draining work. Where can a mother find the strength she

needs to serve her family? From God, who is "able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work." (2 Cor. 9:8). Even when our back gives out and our body is tired, God can strengthen mothers "with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy" (Col. 1:11). Thanksgiving is the proper response to God as he extends to us all the inheritance of grace we have in Christ (Col. 1:12)."

"...Without God's work of sanctification in my life, I would be left in my sinful thinking that both idolizes and despises motherhood. I can easily turn motherhood into something that's all about me or even downplay it to the degree that it is pitiable.

The Bible describes motherhood as neither a diminishing of a woman's personhood nor the sum of her personhood. Womanhood, ultimately, is about a different Person altogether. Likewise, motherhood is about a different Person all together. The highest aim of womanhood is not motherhood; the highest aim of womanhood is being conformed to the image of Christ. The multifaceted goal of motherhood points us in the same direction. One of the gifts of motherhood is that God uses it to trace the image of his Son into our lives.

When we make motherhood (or anything else) all about us, we eventually get bored. And of course we get bored with motherhood when we obsess over it, because motherhood was never meant to fully satisfy us. When we get bored we get cynical: "Motherhood--a gift? Right." Some women lament that if God ever gives them children, they will be devastated. Some women lament that if God never gives them children, they will be devastated. Should we be seeking a middle ground? Should Christian women just take a dose of cynicism and chase it down with a glass half full of gratitude as the world might suggest? I think the Bible gives us the answer to that question."

"Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace." Jerry Bridges

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### **Rebecca Ray says**

Sometimes mothering can be exhausting. Sometimes, I can view it as an interruption to what I should be doing. I'll see other moms doing great volunteer work, having important jobs and accomplishing work for Christ or in the world that I'm not accomplishing. I feel discouraged by seeing what these great and talented women do. However, when I attempt to duplicate these works and make an effect, even in God's kingdom that I see these other moms making, all I receive is pain, usually in the form of the Lord's discipline, and in the reminders of what an awful job I tend to do with the job that God has given me as a wife and mother.

So, that's when I need someone to come along and give a slap in the face and a slap with the gospel. Forman's book has been that for me. After all, she says, *"By God's grace I can resist the temptation to treat my children as interruptions to my will for my life. Instead, God enables me to treat my children as precious gifts he is using to shape me into his image according to his will for my life."*

She takes me to the cross and reminds me that the reason that I reject the work that God has given me to do is, *"This is because the greatest problem a mother has is not a lack of creativity, accomplishment, or skill, but her inability to love God and others as Jesus loves her (John 13:34)."*

She reminds me of why I struggle to love others the way that I should is *I had a deep craving to satisfy my own needs before the needs of others.* I get the feeling like the author struggles with many of the same issues

that I struggle with as I read her writing.

Throughout this book there are many excellent nuggets on dealing with your children (and the other people in your life) in a Christlike manner. She constantly takes you back to the scripture and back to how God has worked in her own life. As I need a constant reminder not to grow weary in the job that God has given me to do, I found this book to be a valuable resource and a reminder of the things that I already knew were important.

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### **Kelley says**

My husband wanted to read this book when he saw the title. But then he noticed the subtitle “Gospel Meditations for Busy Moms,” and said it was probably not for him. In fact, it is! It’s for every believer, in that it is drenched with the gospel and urges us to turn from self and cling to the hope Jesus offers in every moment, ordinary or extraordinary, of every single day.

Yes, Furman writes as a mom. And her examples are based in mothering. But this isn’t a manual for Bible reading when you’re busy or disciplining your children or processing the endless shifts that come in a typical day. It’s simply the gospel. Furman doesn’t let herself – or you – off the hook with excuses. She identifies the basis of all our struggles in sins such as focus on self, desire for approval, and pride. But she also doesn’t let herself – or you – wallow in hopelessness. Every struggle is a fresh opportunity to look to Christ with relief, joy and deep gratitude, all of which are then lived out by modeling His love to others.

“We mothers, like everyone else who struggles under the weight of sin, tend to forget the gospel, and our ignorance of the hope we have in Christ spawns rotten fruit such as identity crises and discontent. We need to remember that God is no less good to us when we find ourselves in a battle of wills with a preschooler in the checkout line at the grocery store than he was as his Son dragged a cross up a hill that Friday two thousand years ago.”

When we despair over our lack of consistency, she reminds us that we never will be consistent.

“Jesus is our consistency; he fulfilled God’s highest expectations of perfection … In him we find mercy in our time of need – which is always.”

When we find our worth in how the world views our children, we put an impossible burden on fellow sinners.

“… [W]hen I treasure Jesus, they are freed from the burden of being the center of my world. No child should have to shoulder the weight of her mother’s glory and reputation.”

We have to make daily choices for our children, but when we let those decisions become our driving urgency, we have lost sight of the most important thing.

“More relevant than our mothering choices or strategies is whether we are walking in a manner worthy of him, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God (Col. 1:9-10).”

And – this one cut deep for me – when I grit my teeth in the morning, make the longest list yet and decide

that by sheer determination, I will get through the day ahead, I am rejecting grace in favor of my own strength.

“My biggest problem is that I live under the illusion that I can do anything I put my mind to while I give lip service to needing God’s wisdom. I need to know at the heart level that I cannot do anything gracefully to God’s glory without the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit. … ‘There are no perfect moms,’ we quip, but we’ll die trying to prove we might be the exception.”

I could not stop marking ideas and passages. You should read for yourself to enjoy them in context and with the scripture from which Furman draws them. But I’ll close with one that, to me, seemed to capture much of the book.

“We can sing with Charles Wesley, ‘Arise, my soul, arise; shake off your guilty fears and rise!’ As we rise, we rise with fear and trembling that God – the God who threw the stars into place – is able to work in us and is pleased to do so.”

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### **Niki Shirkman says**

One of my most favorite books on motherhood. It is a quick and easy read. It gets to the heart of motherhood in light of the gospel and refocuses you when life in this season feels crazy and unpredictable. I've gifted this book several times. Highly recommend.

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### **Elizabeth says**

I feel a little like a heretic giving only 2 stars to a book that is about applying the gospel to motherhood, but I just found this book to be dry. I really wanted to love it but I just could not connect to this author. I ended up skimming the last several pages. For a similarly themed book with a bit more "oompf" (that I have read multiple times), go read Kimm Crandall's Christ in the Chaos.

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### **Claire Johnson says**

Yes!! One of 2 books I permanently keep on my nightstand.

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### **Megan Noble says**

Very encouraging! Continually pointed me back to the gospel and gave me peace and vision as a new Mom!

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### **Elsa K says**

This was a profound little book. I enjoyed that it wasn't flowery or trying too hard to be funny. I think a lot of

modern Christian literature tries too hard to relate with you instead of speaking the truth. Gloria Furman presented the truth simply and practically. She was relatable, but you could tell that wasn't her purpose. Her purpose was to point moms to Jesus and the Gospel. I appreciated that and would recommend this to other moms as well.

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### **Heidi says**

Let me tell you what this book is not. It is not a practical guide to spiritual motherhood. I mean, the author does throw out a suggestion here and there (I don't know a mother who can avoid sharing when something works, this journey is so tough), but this book is by and large all about how the Gospel fits into motherhood and how motherhood fits into the Gospel. There's no guilt tripping, a lot of grace, and a lot of room for improvement...but she leaves it up to you, the reader, to determine what that looks like for you. Her personal anecdotes are heartwarming and relatable; her message is simple and encouraging. Each chapter leaves the reader with what the title promises: something to meditate on.

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### **Jillian Vincent says**

The purpose of motherhood is to experience, enjoy, and conform to the image of Jesus. So rich in Scripture. I'm so thankful for Gloria and her perspective.

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### **Melissa Eikenaar Lear says**

#### **BOOK REVIEW:**

#### **TREASURING CHRIST WHEN YOUR HANDS ARE FULL**

#### **A GOSPEL MEDITATION FOR BUSY MUMS**

#### **WHAT THE BOOK IS ABOUT:**

In the words of Gloria: "TCWYHAF is not a to-do list on how to be a good mother. It's about our good God and what He has done." Pg.20 and that is the essence of this book.

She poses the question in the opening stages of her introduction: "A mother's hands are always full; but what are they full with?" And seeks to urge the reader that although mum's hands are full, we need to seek our strength and anchorage, guidance and comfort, wisdom and joy from the God of glory and from the gospel of Jesus Christ. She reminds us of the beauty and brilliance and God-given dignity of a mother's work and that day and night, moment by moment, we must choose to rest in Jesus.

Gloria makes a comment that perhaps a lot of moms, myself included, do not stop to think about nor believe: "A mother's work is holy unto the Lord. ... He is our power to love God and our children". We are reminded that with God's power at work in us "we can humble ourselves in our work as mothers, because no one ever displayed more humility than our Redeemer as He abandoned His right to stay in heaven and died the death we deserve (Phil.2:3-8). With His power we can pursue our family with sacrificial love, because the Son gladly submitted to the Father's will. ... He is our righteousness." Pg.19

Gloria also points out that the flip side of this "gift of motherhood" and "holy work unto the Lord" is that motherhood is sometimes thankless work, seemingly futile and that mothers "feel that their hands are full of inconvenience." However, in those moments, Gloria reminds the reader, "Because of the gospel I am rescued from having to respond to those troubles in the way my sinful flesh would prefer – I am strengthened by grace because I've been given the righteousness of Jesus Christ when I do respond sinfully." Pg.29

And in a short summary of her entire book, Gloria tells the reader the gist of her book, understanding that a lot of moms may not be able to read much of the book: Because of the gospel – the news about what Jesus did on the cross to save sinners – mothers who make Christ their treasure can rejoice in their work as God works in them. Pg.32

The sub-title of the book, “Gospel meditations for busy mums”, is not what most perceive Gospel meditations to be. Rather than a portion of Scripture with a short comment following, it is an explanation of aspects of the Gospel; such as – “the gospel is not a matter of personal preference, it is news that is a matter of spiritual life and death. The gospel can shape our home as we mothers realise that we will not always meet the standards of excellence that we desire. If we want to give grace to our children, then we must be willing to receive it first from God.” “The gospel reminds me that a mother’s plans are not ultimate, God is.” “Only the gospel can persevere your faith through a spiritual blow-out.” “The gospel changes how we view our failures, and we see how God redeems our flaws for his own glory.” “The gospel of grace says that God accepts you in Christ. Through the gospel, God does something better for us than merely denying our guilt. God removes from us our filthy rags and clothes us in the righteousness of Christ.” “The gospel has relevance to your day today no matter how strong you feel at this moment. The response we should have to this news is overflowing praise so that others can see how God the Lord is to you.”

And after all these considerations, perhaps the summary could be: “It’s hard to complain when your heart is filled with praise. ... “my mouth is filled with your praise, and with your glory all the day.” (Ps.71:8)”

#### IS IT ANY GOOD?

I adore the cover photo and the title of the book and I was so excited to read it and to be encouraged to treasure Christ in those difficult, mundane moments when my hands are extremely full and as a result I was disappointed that the book did not live up to its cover. I am a mum of three children born in a space of 24 months and 25 days. Yes, that is 3 children, 3 pregnancies, in 2 years. The first 5 years with my children were like a whirlwind and I too, as Gloria briefly touched on, found my usual, daily quiet time with the Lord vanish like mist as soon as the kids arose. I was sleep deprived and extremely sensitive to the screams of 3 babies. A lot of the time I was on my own as my husband is a pilot and I had no help. If I had been given a copy of this book then I would have received it with joy and elation, hoping for some help to lift my chin above the nappies and chaos of three young children so that I might see Jesus. However, my honest opinion is that I would not have gotten past probably the third page in this book. I found it a particularly difficult read. I loved the small sections where the stories were personal and I could relate. Other than that, it was a very wordy, theological read – and when you are scrambling between bottles, pacifiers, tantrums and dirty nappies... this book would have just been too much to get through.

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#### **Bluerose's Heart says**

Mercy, this was just the friendly, gentle slap in my face needed to knock me out of the dreary pity party of selfishness I'd created. There is so much wisdom packed in this little book, and it finally lifted my eyes where they needed to be...on Christ.

"The gospel stands above and beyond all the most practical, family-friendly, or cost-effective philosophies of mothering. The good news of Jesus Christ is superior to our to-do lists and metaphorical mother-of-the-year trophies. This is because the greatest problem a mother has is not a lack of creativity, accomplishment, or skill, but her inability to love God and others as Jesus loves her(John 13:34)."

It's easy to say I depend on the Lord, and I'm thankful for His blessings and His grace, but reading this book

made me realize how little I actually live that out. I try too often to live in "me-ville".

"When I view motherhood not as a gift from God to make me holy but rather a role with tasks that get in my way, I am missing out on one of God's ordained means of spiritual growth in my life. Not only that, but I am missing out on enjoying God. No amount of mommy angst can compare to the misery that comes from a life devoid of the comforting, encouraging, guarding, providing, satisfying presence of our holy God."

Gloria writes this book with honesty and passion. I'm grateful she gets the message across with humility and gentleness. I'm the type of person that turns to anger and excuses if a person "disciplines" me with arrogance. Yes, a short browse through the book of Proverbs lets me know how wrong my attitude is there. I'm far from perfect! ;) A "holier than thou" attitude never works with me, though. I'm grateful that Gloria's attitude throughout this book was the perfect "discipline" method for me.

I really can't imagine a mother out there that couldn't benefit from this book! It covers the moms, like me, that struggle with feeling unimportant and "not good enough" to the moms who think they have the fictitious "mother of the year" award on its way to them(Ha! So not me!). Judging other mothers is covered, too, which I appreciate. I've been on both sides of that train, and I don't like either side!

"By God's grace we are to put off the old self, which instinctively prefers to lord over other mothers, and we put on the new self, which loves holiness(Eph. 4:20-24). We put away falsehoods, and we speak truth to other mothers, for we are members of one another. We don't angrily sin against each other and hold grudges for the Devil to use in his wicked work of causing division. We speak words to one another that are good for building up and giving grace to our hearers. We throw away all bitterness, slander, and malice that we feel toward other moms. Instead, we are kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven us(Eph. 4:25-32)."

"Perhaps the most pertinent correction I've received in light of this temptation is what Jesus told Paul about boasting: "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." (2 Cor. 12:9) Do I want the power of Christ to rest on me as I mother my children? Yes, please! Then I need Jesus to free me from my craving to be worshiped for my mothering. I need to own up to my weaknesses so that I can prize Christ's power."

There are \*lots\* of Bible verses used throughout this book! As I got to the end(on my kindle), I flipped through page after page of Bible verses listed in the "Scripture Index". I turned to Jonathan, while showing him the pages, and said, "THIS is what I expect!" While there are many references to what other people have said, there are more Bible verses. Though others' thoughts are important for encouragement and reproof, God's Word is ALWAYS more important, and I appreciate this book. I appreciate the friendly reminder that my eyes were focused on myself and worldly things.

"I want to hope in God when my kids wake me up before my alarm. I want to love God's Word all day when I'm entrenched in the mundane work around my house. I want to meditate on God's promises and praise him and remember him when I'm up with the baby at midnight and at 3 a.m.(and 10 p.m., 2 a.m., and 5 a.m. during growth spurts). According to Psalm 119, there is no time of the day or night when God's Word is not relevant to our lives. Even as we're more preoccupied with getting school lunches made and outfits chosen for family pictures, God's Word can raise our gaze to the horizon of eternity."

I read this book on my kindle, but it's definitely a book I'd love to eventually get in paper form, so I can highlight and mark up, and turn to when I need a "friend" to lift my eyes back where they belong. There's no filler in this book. It's all good stuff! I highly, highly, highly recommend it to all of you mommies out there!

\*I was provided an e-copy in exchange for my honest opinion.

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