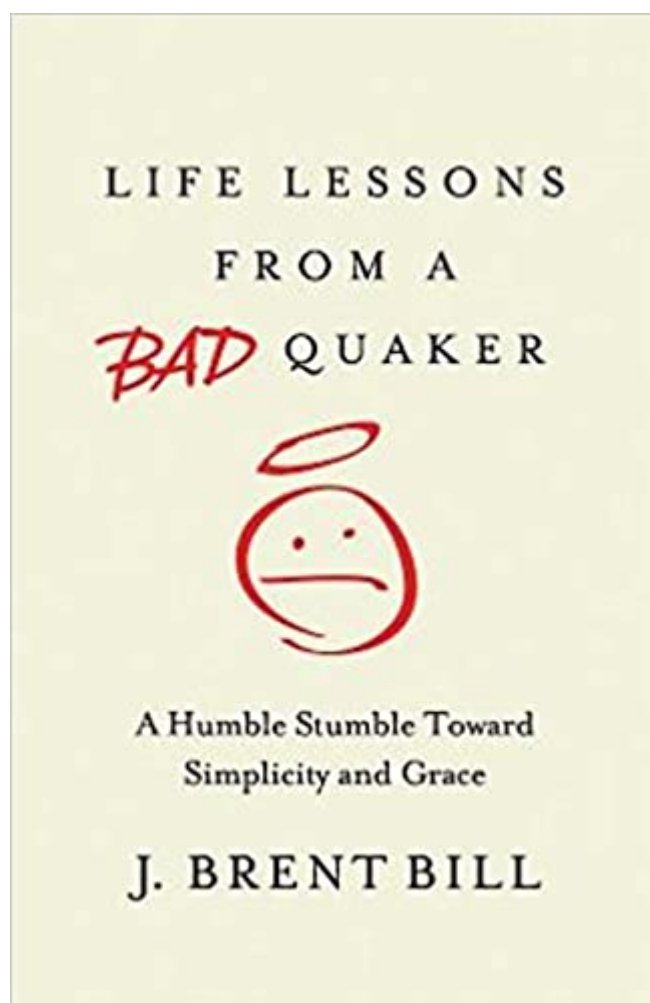


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# Life Lessons From A Bad Quaker: A Humble Stumble Toward Simplicity And Grace



## Synopsis

“When someone asks me what kind of Christian I am,” says author and Quaker, J. Brent Bill, “I say I’m a bad one.” His book, *Life Lessons from a Bad Quaker*, is an invitation to a more meaningful and satisfying life to all who are bad at being good. Although the Quaker lifestyle is characterized by the qualities of peace, solitude, and simplicity, Bill explains that, while he’s got the belief part down, it’s in the practice of it in his everyday life where he runs into trouble—and he knows he’s not alone. Use the complementary and downloadable study guide to help the members of your small group joyfully explore the idea that perfection is not required as they stumble along the path of their faith journey.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

J. Brent Bill is a Quaker minister, photographer, retreat leader, and author. He holds an MA in Quaker Studies from Earlham School of Religion (a Quaker seminary) and has been a recorded (ordained to non-Quakers) Friends minister for thirty years. He has also served as pastor in Friends meetings (churches) large and small, rural and urban. After more than eleven years as executive vice president of the Indianapolis Center for Congregations, Bill is the associate secretary for communications, publications, and outreach for Friends General Conference. Bill resides on Ploughshaes Farm outside Mooresville, Indiana.

I thoroughly enjoyed "Life Lessons From A Bad Quaker". J. Brent Bill is hilarious. He is witty. He is honest. He is raw. He is not afraid to tell it like it is. "Which is one reason I'm a Quaker

today. I need to be. It challenges me. It rubs up against the parts of me that need smoothed out." Let me share a few lessons that J. Brent Bill learned that resonated with me. "I have learned that growing deep in the life of the Spirit doesn't take me out of the life I'm living." Yes. This is so true. In order to truly live, one needs to go deep in the life of the Spirit. The outer life is only as good as the inner life. This will take time! We need to keep at it. "Busy outwardly, centered and silently inwardly. Speaking from experience, it's not gonna happen overnight." "So even though God speaks to me constantly, I'm just not listening. That's why I need silence." If we want to hear God speaking, we need to shut up. I think J. Brent Bill would agree with me saying it so bluntly. "We believe that God always has something to teach us about being people of faith in our current times. So we ask lots of questions hoping to find out how to live godly lives." Quakers ask lots of questions. I loved all of the questions that were sprinkled throughout each chapter. I often found myself reading a question and then taking five minutes to meditate on my answers to this question. I jotted down multiple one sentence answers to each question. Questions help us grow. I grew as I read this book. "Cumbered is how early Quakers referred to the way the things we own (or think we own) weigh us down and steal attention away from the life of the Spirit." I found myself wondering the same thing. What is taking me away from the life of the Spirit? Is it my iPhone or iPad? Is it Facebook and or Twitter? Perhaps it is being annoyed at others, the traffic jam I am stuck in or being bogged down with the never ending household chores that seem to always pop up? "My good friend Connie taught me what she calls the SOB prayer. I use it a lot: "God, give that SOB everything I would hope for myself to be made happy, whole, and free." It is a fact. We are not going to like everybody we come across. I am sure there are plenty of people that do not like me. However, that person is still a child of God. God loves them just as much as God loves me. I still need to pray for them. I still need to love them. "God loves everybody as much as God loves me? If that's true, I'd better start treating people better." "There are plenty of things I could do. The issue is what is God calling me to do." I pulled this out of the chapter, "Gods Good Green Earth". If I get quiet, I just might hear what it is that God is calling me to do to take better care of mother earth. We and this includes me, forget and take for granted that God has blessed us with this beautiful earth. We and this means me, need to take better care of it. What is God calling me to do? Read "Life Lessons From A Bad Quaker". Take the time to meditate on the questions sprinkled throughout each chapter. Is your faith challenging you and rubbing up against the parts of you that need to be smoothed out? Quiet yourself! What actions is God calling you to take? Rich Lewis SilenceTeaches.com

If you have a friend who needs to remember how to laugh, is graduating from high school, retiring, taking himself too seriously or not seriously enough, give him Life Lessons from a Bad Quaker. And read it yourself. Do you know any bigots? J. Brent Bill will gently but firmly admonish them while he makes them look in the mirror at their faults in a cheerful way. Give yourself this book if you'd like to learn more about the history and practice of the Friends without being scolded for what you don't know. The worst feature of the little Life Lessons book is that it comes to an end. I listened to it on my Kindle and I wanted the voice to keep talking to me about how to live. I promise you the book will help you make it through each day or give you a pleasant thought before you sleep at night. For about 200 pages it's a bit costly, but it's worth it. Get your hands on this one and pass it to a friend.

I'm new to the Quaker faith and this book was a GREAT read! It's funny and lighthearted while giving very practical insight into how to live out the Quaker faith. I have SO many notes and highlights because there was something I wanted to remember on practically every page. Great read if you're interested in what Quakers believe and do, or if you're just interested in exploring your spiritual side and how to live out spirituality.

Brent Bill shares wonderful lessons on life, faith, peace-making, non-violence and good humor as he looks at his own life. Almost makes me want to be a "Bad Quaker"....and in some ways maybe I am!

I really liked this book because it gave me a different way to view things. In the meeting I go to up until reading this book I thought of it kind of like other churches I've been to where u gotta b perfect. Reading this book helped me a lot in the way I see the difference between Quakers and other churches.

This dialogue with Brent Bill is a pretty easy read with a generous share of wit and wisdom as well as information about being Quaker. However, the repetitive formula at the end of each section became tiresome and quickly lost its appeal and effectiveness. I began to skip those sections. I think the Bad Boy Quaker got lazy and settled... But then, what is one to expect from a "Bad Quaker"? I guess I expected a bit more creativity.

I have been interested in Quaker-ism & enjoyed this summary of those following. I'll definitely continue reading & learning more

While it would not have been as good a title. "Life Lessons for a Bad Whatever-You-Are" would be very accurate. I am not a Quaker, but the questions randomly put through the book are thought provoking.

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