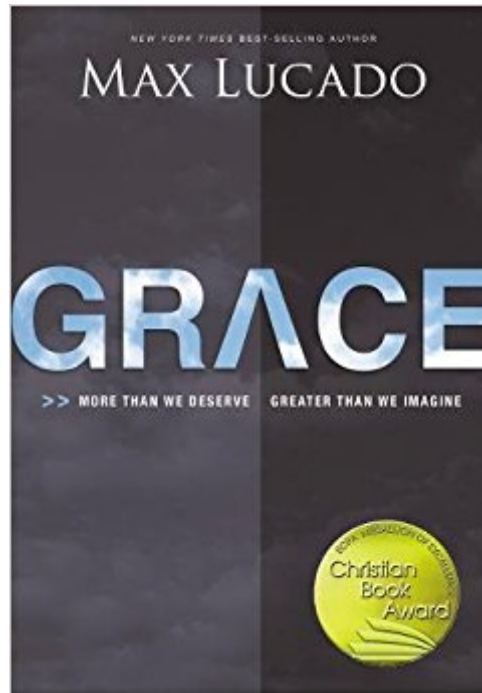




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# Grace: More Than We Deserve, Greater Than We Imagine



## Synopsis

Grace. We talk as though we understand the term. The bank gives us a grace period. The seedy politician falls from grace. Musicians speak of a grace note. We describe an actress as gracious, a dancer as graceful. We use the word for hospitals, baby girls, kings, and premeal prayers. We talk as though we know what grace means. But bestselling author Max Lucado says we've settled for a wimpy grace, a goldfish grace that sits in a bowl on the shelf and never causes trouble or demands a response. Now available as a trade paperback, Lucado's bestselling book reminds readers that there's more to grace than we've ever imagined. In this cornerstone message of Lucado's ministry, he challenges readers to not only receive grace but also to be changed by grace. Shaped by grace. Strengthened by grace. Emboldened by grace. Softened by grace. Snatched by the nape of their neck and shaken to their senses by grace.

## Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Thomas Nelson (February 18, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 052911769X

ISBN-13: 978-0529117694

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 943 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #16,828 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Salvation Theory #28 in Books > Self-Help > Time Management #103 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Self Help

## Customer Reviews

With more than 130 million products in print, Max Lucado is America's bestselling inspirational author. He serves the Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas, where he lives with his wife, Denalyn, and their mischievous mutt, Andy.

In the Christian book industry, Max Lucado has been a common name on a pretty regular basis when it comes to new releases. Apparently he is not slowing down in writing more and more great books. In keeping with his library of already released works, he has just released his newest book

entitled simply "Grace". As I picked up this book today (being familiar with other writings by Max Lucado) I expected smooth lines, well-crafted stories, and a poetic flow. I expected bite-sized chapters and devotional thoughts. But what I did not expect was to be emotionally stirred and wrapped up in this book! I guess you could say that I set out to read this with more of an academic mindset and yet this one cuts to the heart! In chapter after chapter, you are going to forget what those plans were that had been at the top of your day's list. Instead, you'll probably find yourself saying, "Just one more chapter". That's what I did...and I just finished the book! If we are supposed to be captivated by this idea of grace, Lucado has done a great job in conveying that to his audience. In my opinion, I believe Lucado did a much better job in this book of weaving illustrations and creative recreations of biblical events without going overboard as I sometimes believe he has done in other works. Reading through the book, as you make it to chapter 8, you will be cheering alongside Max Lucado as he defines grace triumphantly in these words, "Grace is simply another word for God's tumbling, rumbling reservoir of strength and protection. It comes at us not occasionally or miserly but constantly and aggressively, wave upon wave" (p. 99). As you begin chapter 9, you'll probably find yourself holding back your emotions as I did (I won't spoil the story) as Max once again skillfully weaves a story of the grace of God through, of all things, a wedding dress. I'm sure it was dust in my eyes anyway, right? In chapter 10, you'll find hope in the fact that God's grace extends to you an adoption invitation! You'll take a step further in understanding grace as you grasp this idea that God chose us even though He knew our entire story! He didn't buy the lemon car with all of the surprises down the road. Instead, Lucado points out that God offers us salvation even while we are still sinners (Rom. 5:8). Lucado warms our hearts as he reminds us that we are adopted. Well I won't walk through the whole book for you. That kind of steals the fun out of reading it. Instead, let me encourage to go and get this one. While you might wait a month and see if it goes on sale at your local retailer, it would still be worth it at full price! This one is going to lift your heart and your smile! Note: I was also able to pick up the companion study guide and DVD at a local bookstore. For those interested in that, the DVD is simply Max retelling the chapters. So you might want to skip purchasing the DVD and simply read it yourself and then work through the companion study guide.

I found the book, GRACE, by Max Lucado to be a quickly liberating book. Picking it up at a time I was wallowing in a lot of shame and guilt, Lucado presented the grace message in simplicity, which cut to the heart of salvation and forgiveness. I also normally like his writing and turn of phrase. However, I have to concur with another reviewer noted, and it's why I rated the book 4 stars

instead of 5. Sometimes what can be considered a smart turn of phrase can also diminish the importance of the message because it changes the tone from reverent to glib. Since I have a strong spiritual grounding, that kind of thing didn't diminish the message I needed to receive when reading this book, but it could give a wrong impression to a newly converted Christian. As a writer, myself, I came to realize that I'm not writing to entertain or have someone think my phrasing is cleverly delivered, but rather to represent the Lord Jesus Christ. So there are times we have to set aside what or how we'd like to say something in favor of speaking for the One we represent.

This well written accessible treatment of a central concept in Christianity worked well as a study for an adult Sunday School Class. Lucado is a sound author who will be well received by most groups. The treatment here is not as sophisticated theologically as Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship* nor is it as extensive and provocative of discussion as Yancy's *What's So Amazing About Grace?* but the book has enough depth to help practicing Christians grow.

Effortless, this is how Max Lucado seems to craft his books. I wonder if sometime he wakes up with 23 stories and an idea and while he drinks his morning coffee he finishes his next book. *Grace* is not the master story-tellers best book, it does sit within his collection as one of his stronger pieces of writing. The title gives insight to the content and most chapters in this book follow the same formula...1) Tell part of a gripping story.2) Transition to some brilliant word smithing on the concept you want to convey.3) Build a bridge back to another brand new story a retelling of a biblical story, this time keep it simple and include a conclusion.4) Make a simple point, support it, make it (witty/gripping/confronting/poignant/moving/sad). (xRepeat)5) Jump back to the original story and weave it all together in a special conclusion.6) Liberally apply well pick bible passages to support your point.7) Repeat. The formula works to, I find myself getting emotional at an unexpected story. I highlight passages because of the clarity he brings to the concept of Grace. He retells well-known bible stories in an engaging manner and his chapters are short and easily readable. Perhaps this is the problem, I started the book 3 hours ago and I'm now done. I love his insights on Grace but I am thirsty for more, perhaps this is the allure of Grace! Max has crafted a solid read, and his 3/5 rating isn't because his book is average compared to others I've read. It is because I can only fairly judge this story-teller by his previous works. Max's standard is Max and he has made a solid book, not an utterly brilliant one. If you haven't read Lucado then start with this one, it is the perfect insight into an excellent writer.

I really enjoyed reading and spending time with God through this book. I have taken on the challenge to walk our congregation through this challenge to understand grace. as Grace is something that none of deserve, but received it anyway. Having Grace is when someone steps in the place to sacrifice himself so we could live. I chose this rating because it is relevant to today and not many of us truly understand what living and walking in Grace is all about. I would recommend this book to anyone who may be new to the Christian faith or been walking with God for many years.

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