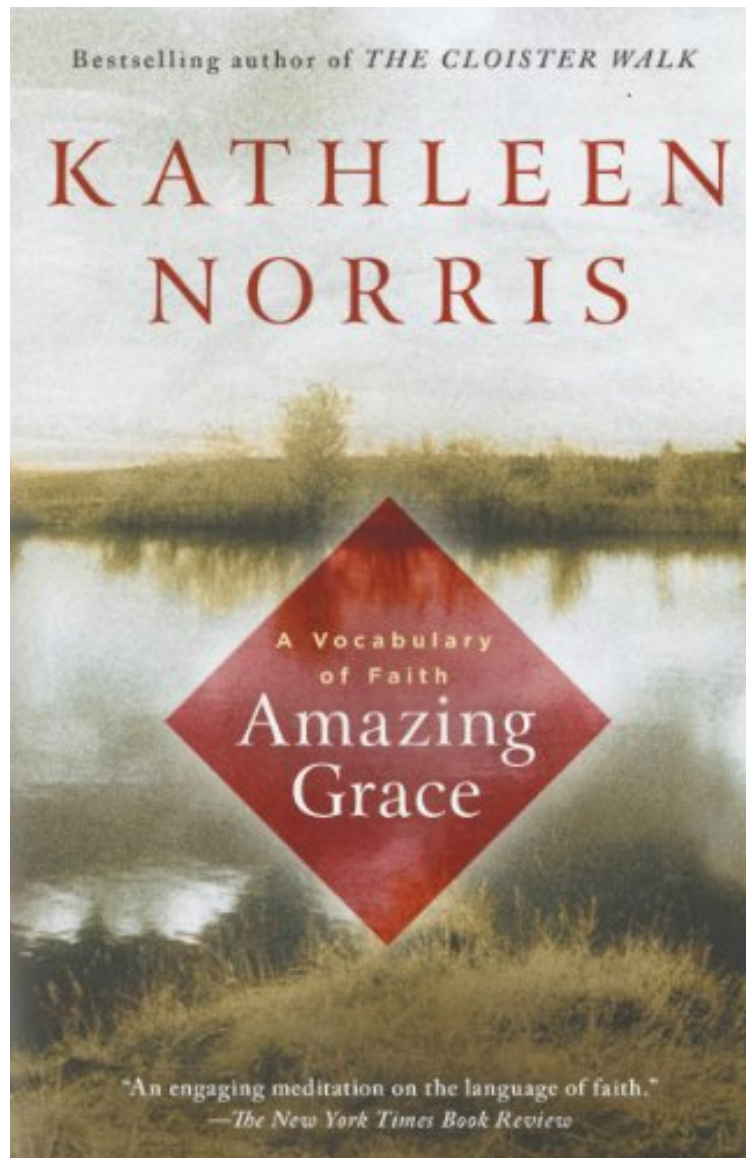


(Read now) Amazing Grace

## Amazing Grace

Von Kathleen Norris

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**Von Kathleen Norris : Amazing Grace** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Amazing Grace:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Trying to reach a state of grace...as are we all...Von Ein KundeA very thought-out book from a very thought-provoking lady. Kathleen Norris' reemergence as a Christian continues, but this time she's out of the monastery and back in the real world--where, one is tempted to say, her stories make a little more sense--I liked "The Cloister Walk" but found it hard

to relate to given its setting. This book is a bit more accessible...she speaks quite frankly of the struggles both she and others have had with religion, and especially Christianity. Hearing her thoughts on such matters is at the very least entertaining and at the most rather insightful. Make no mistake, though--she's a no-bones wordsmith and can be quite acid-tongued in some of her more pointed observations. I would suggest that she intended this book primarily for a Christian audience, particularly an open-minded and road-worn Christian audience. She's quite open to other ideas and experiences, but she's got a burr under her saddle about quick fixes and what she perceives as warm, fuzzy, fake spirituality--hates 'em like the plague! However, one gets the impression that her opinions are well-meant; she seems to care more about self-honesty than anything else, and her pet peeves are those she considers to be spiritually and emotionally dishonest. That bizness about the Republicans...mmm, Kathleen, got any more wormwood to spread around? If you're a sporting person willing to listen to how the author dealt with her own "religious heritage" then it can be quite an enlightening book. When you get Kathleen Norris, you get all of her--both her redeeming qualities and those you might disagree with. True to her style, however, she does give the reader a complete picture of herself and a candid account of her own shortcomings. To the spiritual seeker, she will no doubt shed some light on Christian spirituality and why it can sometimes seem so obtuse.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A model of reflection for adults re-turning to religion

Von Robert L. Rose

Norris's wide-ranging and carefully written account elicited my respect and admiration for the endeavor, although I am a bit troubled by the too easy equation of faith and Christianity (or religion) throughout the book. Yet it is an account of a return to Christianity, and reportedly, a faith of any kind, so I am understanding of the "beginner's" tone to it all. At the outset, Norris describes her effort with the analogy of an infant and writes of "rudiments of words" forming in her response to the language of Christianity (page 2). "Religion came to seem just one more childhood folly that I had to set aside as an adult," Norris continues. "In my mid-thirties, however, it became necessary to begin to reclaim my faith." And later, on page 169 she writes, "faith is still a surprise to me, as I lived without it for so long." What I find surprising is how someone with such obviously well-honed reflective skills seems to be implying that she lived without faith prior to the return to Christianity. It just doesn't seem likely, at least from my perspective as a seeker with a similar spiritual story. Must experience be Christian to be faith-filled? God, I believe, is present in all of life, and faith experiences within or outside a particular tradition (even prior to affiliation or return) provide a "surplus of meaning" which religions never fully capture, I suspect. Religions do help illuminate experience in a particularly helpful way, so they can be useful partners in the journey of personal transformation, helping us to discern God's presence as the "hidden wholeness" (Merton) in those times when we thought we were without faith. Maybe Norris will reflect on this aspect in the future for those readers who sense that if a return to church (or religion) is not also a return to the world of profane experience, then it may seem cloistered indeed. What Norris may find in such an effort, to borrow a phrase from Caroline Myss, is just how "richly guided" our lives have been at all times. Now that is truly amazing grace.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Not about Grace and certainly not Amazing...Von L-squared

I am sorry to say the best part of this book is the cover. There is very little about true grace in this book and the only amazing thing is how Kathleen Norris's definitions have so little to do with God's authoritative word of The Bible. This book is all about her own personal opinions, which are without authority. Lying underneath the cover of "Amazing Grace" is the psycho-babble of a misguided feminist seeking to exalt her womanhood disguised as Christianity. Kathleen states that one of the things that keeps her rooted in the Presbyterian Church is the fact that a "brilliant clergywoman is the president of one of our largest seminaries." While women can be good leaders, choosing your church based on the sex of the people in charge is hardly the sign of someone earnestly seeking the objective truth of God. You will find this underlying current of feminism throughout this book. As a sample, Kathleen's essay on "Grace" has stunningly little to do with actual grace. Kathleen devotes less than two pages to the term "grace" and never clearly defines the term, nor mentions Jesus Christ. The true meaning of grace is 'unmerited favor from God' - it is a gift of God and cannot be earned. Yet Kathleen implies that it can be earned by our human potential for good. She meanders on about God not punishing Jacob "as he lies sleeping because He can see in him Israel, the foundation of a people." She states that God didn't pour His wrath out on Peter or Saul because "God could see the apostles they would become." She even goes so far as to state that "We praise God not to celebrate our own faith but to give thanks for the faith God has in us." What does this have to do with Grace? This is all so Biblically incorrect it is irritating. And let's look at the true meaning of faith found in Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." God loves us, and created us. But why would God ever have faith in us? What could He be certain of that He could not see? What could He hope for when He directs our every step and knew every thing we would do before we were even born? He sees our innermost thoughts; He searches our hearts and minds. There are many scriptural facts to be found in the Bible about God's relationship with man, but I have never run across anything even remotely suggesting that God has faith in us. Amazingly enough, this definition of faith found in the book of Hebrews isn't mentioned even under the chapter entitled "Faith." About the only truth in this atrocity is that faith is a verb - it is action. Yet Kathleen rambles on about her encounter with a Lutheran bishop who was somewhat mean and unsympathetic to her and a letter from a monk that helped her greatly. It is hard to gain any true insight into what faith really is in this misdirected personal commentary. This is just a sampling of the Biblically unsupportable writing

Kathleen has to offer under the title *Amazing Grace*. This is too bad, really, as the concept of this book had promise. Clearly identifying the true Biblical meaning of Christian terms would be helpful to many earnest seekers of Christian Faith. Let me say that Kathleen does seem sincere. But it is possible to be sincere and yet mistaken. The Bible tells us to test everything to the scriptures and this book just doesn't hold up. If you are looking for the truth, I would suggest this be one of the last places you look, and preferably not at all.

Kurzbeschreibung  
A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK OF THE YEAR  
From the New York Times bestselling author of *The Cloister Walk*, a book about Christianity, spirituality, and rediscovered faith. Struggling with her return to the Christian church after many years away, Kathleen Norris found it was the language of Christianity that most distanced her from faith. Words like "judgment," "faith," "dogma," "salvation," "sinner" even "Christ" formed what she called her "scary vocabulary," words that had become so codified or abstract that their meanings were all but impenetrable. She found she had to wrestle with them and make them her own before they could confer their blessings and their grace. Blending history, theology, storytelling, etymology, and memoir, Norris uses these words as a starting point for reflection, and offers a moving account of her own gradual conversion. She evokes a rich spirituality rooted firmly in the chaos of everyday life and offers believers and doubters alike an illuminating perspective on how we can embrace ancient traditions and find faith in the contemporary world. From the Trade Paperback edition.  
"Our ridiculously fallible language becomes a lesson in how God's grace works despite and even through our human frailty. We will never get the words exactly right. There will always be room for imperfection, for struggle, growth and change. And this is as it should be." With observations like this one, Kathleen Norris, author of *Dakota* and *The Cloister Walk*, has again provided a salutary corrective for contemporary Christians in *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith*. The book is about how she learned to use religious words, such as "incarnation," "idolatry," and "evangelism." Norris is a feminist, a theological conservative, a sophisticate, and a country bumpkin. And she's one of the few living Christian writers who can be described as truly great.  
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