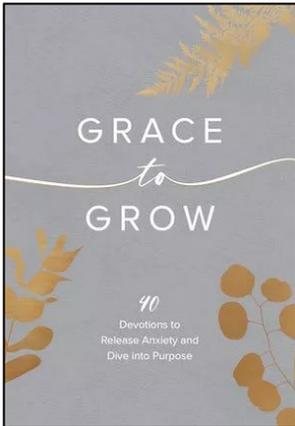


**CONTACT:** Ben Laurro, 615-595-8466  
[Ben@purepublicity.com](mailto:Ben@purepublicity.com)

## GRACE TO GROW

Release Anxiety and Encounter God's Extravagant Grace



Minneapolis, MN: We were designed for a close, intimate relationship with God. But despite our best efforts to nurture our connection with him, busyness often distracts us from truly experiencing it.

One of the most common distractions to our relationship with the Lord is anxiety, which breeds self-doubt: *What if I fail? What if I make the wrong choices? What if I miss my purpose?*

Thankfully, once we understand that God offers abundant grace through Bible study, prayer, worship, and fellowship with him, we experience abundant confidence, clarity, and security in our lives.

**Kristel Ward**, a wife, mother of three, and former high school teacher at some of the toughest schools in Texas, believed she could manage almost any stressful situation. It wasn't until her four-month-old son started having seizures that Kristel discovered she had a lifelong, hidden battle with fear.

In her darkest times of uncertainty in which she struggled to understand God's plan for her family, Kristel wrote ***Grace to Grow: 40 Devotions to Release Anxiety and Dive into Purpose*** (BroadStreet® Publishing). Her book reminds us that God offers us "grace for our place." Despite whatever season of life we are in, the grace of the Lord is not only freely available to us but also covers us. Featuring relatable stories, biblical examples, encouraging prayers, and pauses for reflection, Kristel touches on a variety of topics, including

- **Finding Grace in the Desert:** Even when the Israelites wandered in the desert, God provided them direction, protection, manna, and water. In your desert season, remember to draw close to God and prioritize prayer, and you will find his strength and grace in your difficulties (Ps. 139:7–10).
- **Trusting God's Perfect Timing:** In our prayers, we encounter the living God who meets us with peace, encouragement, and strength. The desires of our heart matter to the Lord. He knows our needs before we ask (Matt. 6:8) and delights in every detail of our lives (Ps. 37:23).
- **Harnessing the Breath of Life:** Spiritual growth happens as we draw from the Holy Spirit. If we go prolonged periods without connecting with God, we can make wrong decisions or struggle to accomplish God's will. When our spirit is active and growing, we can fulfill God's plan for our lives (Rom. 8:11).
- **Identifying Personal Worth:** Feelings of fear and failure can push out the encouragement of the Holy Spirit. You and I are not enough on our own, but Jesus exceeds all expectations and qualifications. In his superiority, he chose to exchange his perfect life for ours (Ps. 18:35).
- **Embracing the Gift of Imperfection:** The Bible is filled with imperfect people whom God was able to use and redeem their faults. Spiritual gifts are not negated by faults. Don't allow your flaws to stop you from using your spiritual gifts. God can redeem our weakness and use us as examples of His grace to others (1 Peter 4:10–11).

Kristel hopes readers will learn to resist their anxious thoughts and remember that God's abundant grace is always available. When we accept this undeserved gift, we become equipped to transform trials into spiritual growth, encounter peace by taking time to pause, and embrace difficult circumstances as divine opportunities.

### **About the Author:**



**Kristel Ward** is a Bible teacher, speaker, podcast host, and founder of the nonprofit organization Grace to Grow. With a background in public education and pastoral ministry, her biblical wisdom has supported women around the globe and encouraged them to follow Christ. Kristel and her husband live in the Greater Houston area, and have three beautiful and sometimes messy children. Her website is [www.GraceToGrow.tv](http://www.GraceToGrow.tv). Connect with her on Facebook and TikTok @KristelWardTX.

**About BroadStreet® Publishing:** BroadStreet® Publishing Group is a Christian book publisher that creates meaningful, inspirational products that share God's truth with quality, beauty, and creativity. Its imprints include Belle City Gifts, BroadStreet Español, BookStreet, and BroadStreet Kids. BroadStreet publishes The Passion Translation (TPT), which has sold over 1.5 million copies, as well as Bible study materials, biographies, Christian living nonfiction, devotionals, journals, gift books, planners, children's books, and accessories for books and Bibles. Learn more at [www.broadstreetpublishing.com](http://www.broadstreetpublishing.com).

### **Suggested Interview Questions:**

1. Kristel, what prompted you to write this book? Have you discovered people, even Christians, who struggle with anxiety and maintaining peace in their lives?
2. You share that you discovered your lifelong battle with fear when your son was a baby and started having seizures. How were you able to hold on to hope and trust in God even though you didn't know the outcome?
3. Why do so many women struggle to find time to slow down and nurture their relationship with the Lord?
4. What do you tell women who feel they don't deserve grace because of their past or feelings of unworthiness?
5. In the book, you share a moment in your life when everything came to an abrupt standstill, leaving you unsure as to whether you would recover. Can you talk about what that was like?
6. What are some ways we can combat doubt and fear when we encounter them?
7. You write about the power of praise. How does praise benefit us? What happens to us when we offer praise and worship to God? What about the times we don't feel like praising God?
8. In what ways does shame affect our personal growth?
9. What words of encouragement do you have for the person fighting anxiety, self-doubt, or feelings of unworthiness?
10. Where can we learn more about you, your ministry, and your podcast?

## Notable Quotes:

Daily practices of choosing worship over worry, praise over powerlessness, and promises over lies kept me moving forward. Faith developed within as God demonstrated his faithfulness...When fear whispers false promises over my son, I still cling to the words the Lord spoke long ago. That tiny baby is now an active kid. He drives me crazy asking one million questions. Evan has been seizure-free for many years. God's presence and promises still hold me firm on days when my thoughts are unsettled (p. 12).

Praise is a celebration of the goodness of God. It may not always look like dancing or singing, but it always proclaims God's glorious character. Praise places God on the throne of our minds. Our adoration is not dependent on the situations surrounding us. When the world is falling apart, God is still worthy of honor. Miss Joy understood that God is good regardless of circumstances. Our life on earth is temporary, but God's loving-kindness is eternal. These moments with the Lord aren't always experienced from Sunday sanctuaries. Sometimes they are made of broken prayers lifted from ordinary places (p. 23).

God did not design you to live in isolation. Remember that the Holy Spirit is always close when loneliness looms like a shadow. He is the primary supplier of all needs, including friends. Your heavenly Father will provide people who support your purpose if you ask him. Godly friends pray, build up, and speak life. They are supports that reinforce your calling. Don't do life alone. Today, consider reaching out to an old friend and, perhaps, making a new one (p. 67).

Often unforgiveness imprisons the victim instead of the offender. In an attempt to punish the abuser, we often hang on to bitterness and harm ourselves instead. Harboring unforgiveness is like wrapping fingers around a hot curling iron but refusing to let go. Jesus said, "If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Matthew 6:14–15 NLT). Extending forgiveness to the person who hurt you doesn't absolve their actions. Only God does that. But it sets you free. Choosing to let go of pain and bitterness empties your heart to make room for God to pour in (p. 91).

Discovering purpose is a universal need, but it's important to remember that our primary role on earth is to love God. Our deepest need is to know him and allow the Holy Spirit access to the private places of our hearts. As we are with the Lord in prayer and in his Word, the Spirit of God reveals our next step. Assignments are handed out through an intimate relationship with Jesus. But instead of asking the big question, *What is my calling?* Try asking, *God, what are you calling me to do right now?* Obedience to the Lord in this season gives us what is needed for the next one. Whenever we submit to God, we're successful (p. 138).

Fear of failure, regret of lost time, and shame of sin all want to cancel our callings. If we're not careful, we'll believe their lies. They sell slander such as *You're not good enough for this*, *You've missed your opportunity*, and *You're going to have to earn forgiveness first*. Friend, God is too big to let you fail. He is the author of time and redeems it in your favor. There is no magnitude of sin that measures up to God's grace. Those lies are not for you. All of God's goodness is made available on your behalf. The Lord can keep the dreams hidden inside of you safe from harm (pp. 154–155).

The race of life isn't always easy. There are missteps, hurdles, and bruises along the way. We entangle with setbacks and inevitably stumble...At times we may feel like we're running alone...Shackles of shame, fear, and condemnation, among others, often hold us back from running at full speed...While these weights make our gait heavy, they also cause us to fix our eyes on dangerous places. Looking straight down in shame, backward in condemnation, or all-around in fear may cause us to trip and fall. Scripture calls us to focus on Jesus, the champion of our faith. He carried our sorrows to the cross. As we stride with him, he sets the momentum at the pace of grace. No longer striving under a heavy load, we have the freedom to run with endurance (pp. 170–171).