

## An interview with Rachel Hauck, Author of *The Wedding Chapel*



In a day when marriage seems disposable, best-selling author Rachel Hauck weaves a story that reminds us of love's timeless truths.

**Hauck's *The Wedding Chapel* (Zondervan/November 17, 2015/ISBN: 978-0310341529/\$15.99), a slip time story set in the late 1940s/early 1950s, captures the romance and hope of a post-war South while the contemporary timeline wrestles with the challenges and complications of commitment in the modern world.**

**Q: What inspired the plotline of *The Wedding Chapel*?**

This book came from the old saying, "Desperate times call for desperate measures." I needed a new story idea, and while on vacation in Tennessee I drove past a wedding chapel called Chapel in the Glen. I pitched the title to my publisher a few minutes later. She and the team loved it. And I was off to find a story to go with it.

**Q: Why did you choose to marry a classic love story from the 1940s with a modern tale of romance gone off-course?**

I like to look at all aspects of life in a novel. Maybe it's hindsight or the Golden Age of Hollywood, but romance seemed sweeter in the post-war 1940s. Coming out of a depression followed by war, men and women seemed devoted to getting back to basics, just living life, and loving each other and family. (I'm sure it was not as rosy as I imagine.)

In our day, people can walk away from a relationship so easily at the slightest sign of trouble. It's easy to decide it's not worth time and effort. However, the chapel itself stands for enduring love, even when love looks impossible.

**Q: What would you say is the major thread or theme that runs throughout *The Wedding Chapel*?**

This book takes a long look at the complications of family yet champions the power of enduring love. Tragedy such as war destroys lives, destroys dreams, but the zeal of the human heart helps people to carry on. The book also looks at how selfishness and greed are just as devastating as war, destroying the family and tearing down dreams. But with a little prayer, guidance and Divine intervention, we can find a way.

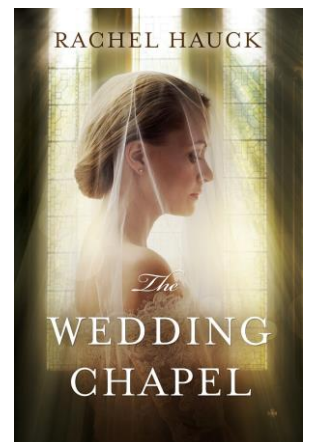
The book also confronts lies and misconceptions and calls for forgiveness. The story furthers the enduring power of love to bring wrong things right.

**Q: Has a communication breakdown ever caused issues in one of your important relationships?**

I'm sure it has! I can't think of any because I try not to let communications or misunderstandings hinder my relationships. I'd rather humble up, apologize and make it right.

**Q: Taylor and Jack marry impetuously, eloping only a few months after reconnecting, and they almost immediately start having issues. Why is the first year of marriage so hard? What advice can you offer to young married couples?**

I don't think the first year of marriage has to be hard (though it is for a lot of people because it's the merging of two lives, two wills and wants). Marriage, as a God-breathed institution, calls for selflessness. And that's just hard for most of us — the whole dying-to-self thing.



For couples who find themselves in conflict, I say breathe out, calm down. Sometimes situations seem large and impossible, but trust in the Lord to help you through. Get on your knees and pray! Go to a Godly couple for help. Learn to listen.

Don't take everything so seriously. Love well. Listen to each other, but even more, "see" each other. It took me a while to "see" what my husband did to show his love for me. If I'd waited for him to show love the way I did or the way I expected, we'd have had a lot of conflict. I prayed a lot too. There's no wisdom like God's wisdom!

**Q: How can we defeat negative patterns such as bad relationships or substance abuse, which sometimes seem to run in families?**

I'll be blunt here. Jesus. The power of the Holy Spirit. There's no program or pill that can do what He can do in our hearts.

In Him, we can break those family iniquities. We don't have to carry forward the abuse or alcoholism or whatever our ancestors did.

But it takes leaning into Him, fighting the good fight. But it's so worth it. "Old things have passed away," Paul writes. "All things have become new."

Romans 12:1-2 says it best. "Be transformed by renewing your mind." We take those old thoughts and patterns captive and replace them with the truth of God's word.

Here's the definition of transform: to change in form, appearance or structure; metamorphose, to change in condition, nature or character; convert, to change into another substance; transmute.

We're given the command because it's possible. Dig in and don't give up!

**Q: How have you seen God at work even after you or someone in your life made a poor decision?**

I usually come out the other side of a trial a bit more humbled. God loves humility, and the best response I've ever had to trial was to get on my knees and pray, to lean into Him. I've seen God redeem relationships, finances and hearts, even bring physical healing.

**Q: Those who have a complicated relationship with their earthly fathers may struggle with a having healthy relationship with God as Father. How can they reconcile what they believe about God with what they've experienced with their earthly dads?**

I've been mulling on this a lot lately. God is our Father. He's holy, which means He's "totally other than." He's like nothing or any one we've ever encountered or experienced. That's exciting because God is also love (1 John 4).

For those hurt by their earthly fathers, my heart goes out to them. I think it's probably the hardest thing to overcome. Abuse, neglect or rejection from fathers so molds a young heart. But God the Father is much greater. He extends His love to us even before we fully understand who He is. That's the message of the Cross. Even Jesus, His begotten son, earned God's pleasure and love without doing a thing!

Remember when Jesus went to John to be baptized? At that point, He'd not yet started His ministry. When He came up out of the Jordan, everyone heard a voice saying, "This is my son in whom I am well pleased." Up to that point, Jesus had not entered His ministry. But He believed the Father — which pleased Him.

Same with Abraham — he was just living his life when God the Father called him out of Ur. Abraham's only response was, "Yes." Faith and belief.

God tells him, "I am your exceeding great reward." Wow. The God of heaven and earth wants to be OUR great paycheck. There's a powerful punch in that notion!

So for those who've had a troubled past with fathers or mothers, believe in the Father who says He loves you. He'll move in and through your heart.

**Q: Are there ever moments when we should give up on our dreams?**

That's a great question! I think we have to evaluate our dreams constantly to see if they are realistic and if we have the heart, the time, the talent and the drive to do them. Don't ever give up dreaming, but do make sure your dreams match who you are.

Psalm 37 says God gives us the desires of our hearts; as we seek Him, He gives us dreams to dream! Joseph would've never imagined being a ruler in Egypt on his own. God put that dream in him then tested him until he was ready.

**Q: You feature a villain in the book whose life has become rife with bitterness. Have you ever been tempted to give in to anger or jealousy? What do you hope your readers learn from this character?**

I work in a competitive business. Jealousy is always knocking. I just try to never open the door to it. God's love and blessings are great enough for all of us. His blessing of another author does not take away His blessing from me!

Never let your bitterness get the best of you. It only leads to pain and hurt, maybe even physical issues, and a distorted view of life. It's not worth it.

I see so many public figures functioning out of their wounds and bitterness, and their life view is based on experience, not truth. And it creates a distorted view of others as well as themselves.

Get God's perspective.

**Q: In your book *The Wedding Dress*, you included some rich symbolism that showed how God impacts history and our lives in ways we don't always see or understand. Did you incorporate any of that imagery in *The Wedding Chapel*?**

Every book is different, but in the back of my mind I want to show, in a physical way, God touching the lives of the characters. I think He's doing that for us every day. In the "real world," we can't always see God moving; that's why our relationship with Him is a walk of faith, but He is working on our behalf daily. We just have to be willing to believe, to see with our heart.

With *The Wedding Chapel*, the heroine, Taylor, is aware that she once heard God, but after some choices she made, she no longer hears Him. She begins to long for those days again.

The chapel itself is a symbol of love, of one man's devotion, which is a small reflection of Jesus's love and devotion to us.

Like *The Wedding Dress*, there is a family thread, connecting generations. Two of the characters hear a sound whenever they are in the chapel. It creates quite a mystery for them. For me, that sound is God's eye and attention on us. He wants good for us. He wants us to believe He is with us. It's symbolic of God's desire for us in the quiet, intimate place.

**Q: When you sat down to write *The Wedding Chapel*, what impact did you hope it would have on its readers?**

I always hope my stories leave readers uplifted, hopeful and aware of God's love for them. In this book, I tried to show how His heart beats for us, even when we are running the opposite direction.

Just stop and listen!

Learn more about Rachel Hauck and her books at [www.rachelhauck.com](http://www.rachelhauck.com) or on [Facebook \(RachelHauck\)](#) and [Twitter \(@RachelHauck\)](#).