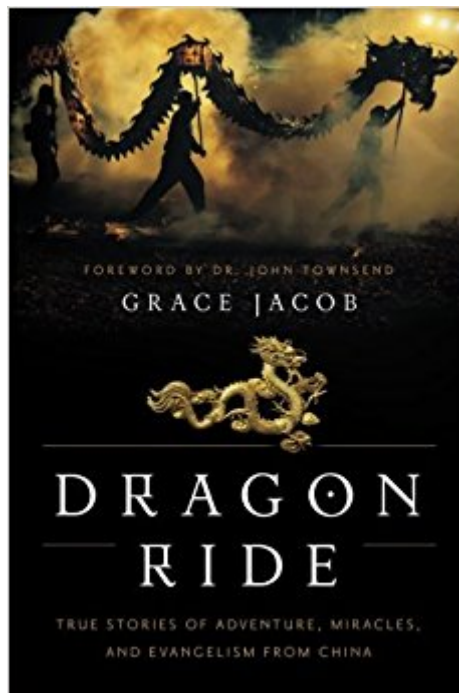




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Dragon Ride: True Stories Of Adventure, Miracles, And Evangelism From China



Synopsis

The first time Doris, an orthodox Buddhist, heard about Jesus, she whispered to Grace, “Don’t tell anyone that Jesus died for us. This will be our secret!” Leah, an idol-worshipper, longed to become a Christian, but she was afraid. “If I believe in Jesus, the gods I worship are going to retaliate. They’ll hurt me really bad. Is Jesus powerful enough to protect me from them?” In the kick-off meeting of a discussion group Grace was leading for atheist university students, Carol burst out laughing. “Grace, you can’t be serious! You actually believe God exists?” These are some of Grace’s Chinese friends you will meet in *Dragon Ride*. What eventually attracted them to Jesus? How did Grace effectively share the gospel with atheists and people of different faiths? You will also come to know some of the heroes of the faith: Twenty-year-old Peter, when threatened with incarceration in a mental institution for his faith, refused to let Grace fight for his release. “If leaving me in the mental institution will further the gospel, then leave me there!” And 19-year-old Hope—the police were interrogating her every few days, pressuring her to disclose Grace and Justin’s ministry to university students. With tears in her eyes, Hope told them, “I’ll never betray you two, no matter what they do to me!” These 48 true stories will enter you into an exotic world of cross-cultural adventure, danger, and humor. Grace’s stories are raw, personal, and edgy, and she openly shares about her own spiritual struggles and growth as well as the moral dilemmas she faced. *Dragon Ride* will challenge you to reflect on your own life, enrich your walk with the Lord, and embolden your witness to people who seem unreachable, while deepening your understanding of modern-day missions.

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Customer Reviews

“Dragon Ride is the most exciting modern mission book I have ever read. It is a lively narration of how God used a former atheist to reach atheists and others in one of the greatest mission fields in the world—China. It is realistic but positive, a God-centered, and God-empowered view of outreach work that will rekindle the desire to reach the “unreachable.”

• Pastors, youth leaders, teachers, parents, Christian apologists, as well as students, will profit greatly from the techniques learned from three decades of on-the-job experience.

• Norman Geisler, Ph.D. Apologist and co-author of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*

“There are books that we should read, and books that we want to read. This book is a rare blend of both. Grace Jacob has written an important book about her 29 years as a career missionary in China with her husband and family. The stories are riveting, and it is literally a compulsive page-turner. Jacob's writing style is clear, descriptive and emotionally-accessible, and I could hardly put it down. It challenged me in how I need to address the felt needs of people I want to share Christ with, in my own sphere of influence.”

• Dr. John Townsend, New York Times bestselling author, and co-author of *Boundaries*, from the Foreword

“Buckle your seat belts for an adventure at every turn (of the page) and in multiple dimensions! I could not put it down. Grace, the author and guide to this adventure, has chosen vignette after vignette to immerse you into the “not-for-the-faint-of-heart” challenges and realities of living and working in China and following a God-given north star. And, the adventure is made even more vivid because it is told with truth, grit, wit, wisdom, and heart. Yet it gets better than that because of Grace's blessed awareness of physical, spiritual, cultural, and biblical contexts. Grace's battle-tested journey—and the journeys of those she loves—are on view. You'll be boldly encouraged and inspired to answer God's call for your own life.”

• Dr. Benjamin K. Homan President, Langham Partnership (formerly John Stott Ministries)

“As an American pastor I've always dreamt of spending time in a far-away culture as a gospel carrier. But the reality is that I probably never will. And yet, after reading *Dragon Ride*, I feel that I have. I feel as though I've been a missionary in China without ever stepping foot on its soil. Every fear, tear, struggle, adjustment, joy, relationship, conversation, and gospel triumph recorded here became mine. Honest, sincere, human, and accessible. I found this work extremely easy to pick up and hard

to put down. But what inspired me the most was the gospel-centered intentionality and heart of Grace. She was a woman, a wife, and a mother on mission, to the glory of God. I will be putting this book in the hands of everyone in our church, that we, too, may be diligently committed to tell the good news of him who saves all people everywhere. Evangelistically inspiring!

—David Thompson Pastor, The Door, Three Rivers, OR

“You will laugh and be inspired as you witness this bold family live out their faith.”

—Brenden Bridges Pastor, Richvale Evangelical Free Church, Richvale, CA

“Having lived for 20 years in China, one observes a range of people who come and go. Some, and rightfully so, are there for only a brief season, know little of the people and culture, and leave with an interesting life experience. A very few others integrate into the culture and become vital contributors to the expansion of God’s kingdom in that great land. The Jacobs are most definitely in the latter category. Observing their lives and ministry was one of the great privileges of our life in Asia.”

—Tom Lowder, ThM, PhD

“This is a beautifully written story of a courageous American woman who, along with her husband and two sons, made her home in China for 29 years. It describes her unsettling journey as a young person through atheism, and then traces her extraordinary life in coming to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. Why should any of us pay the cost of being an authentic follower of Jesus? Dragon Ride shows us that a lifetime of overcoming hurts and obstacles in loving obedience to Jesus is never a waste, but is a doorway to the most fruitful, adventurous, and meaningful life possible. This amazing, life-changing story of one who gave up everything for the sake of giving voice to Christ’s culture-embracing love beautifully illustrates the words of Jesus when he said

“For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.” (Mark 8:35, NASB)

David Ewert Pastor Emeritus, New Hope Church, Winston, OR Ministry Resource, Emmanuel Reformed Church, Castleton, NY

“I never imagined I’d see God moving in a Communist country like China until I got to know Grace and Justin. They worked underground, secretly sharing God’s grace in Jesus Christ. Dragon Ride is an inspiring story of God’s call, his equipping, and his faithfulness to carry out the task.”

—Jim Cashwell Area Director, Charlotte/Knoxville Joni and Friends International Disability Ministry

“This is a thrilling account of the grace of God demonstrated in the lives of humble servants who were called to a seemingly impossible assignment in China. Justin and Grace Jacob shine with the beauty of Jesus when facing danger, stress, illness, persecution, trials, and spiritual warfare.”

—Dr. John H Munro Senior Pastor, Calvary Church, Charlotte, NC

“Dragon Ride is a well-written and insightful look into the lives of missionaries serving in a creative access country. It is filled with true life experiences shared

in an easy-to-read short story format. I also found the author's candid honesty about her personal challenges refreshing, particularly as they demonstrate what God can accomplish through fallible human beings who obey God's directions and courageously follow him. In short, an inspiring book.

• Dr. Jim Isaacson Pastor, Portland Avenue Evangelical Free Church, Tacoma, WA.

“When I'm not laughing, crying, or repenting, creepy chills are running down my spine.

• Suzette, a homemaker, while reading *Dragon Ride*

Grace Jacob was a missionary (with her husband and two sons) in Hong Kong and Mainland China from 1986-2015. She speaks both Cantonese and Mandarin. Grace's work has been published in *Decision* magazine and she speaks nationally about evangelism. She holds a Bachelor of Biology, and she also holds a Master of Divinity from Trinity International University.

Grace's account on her missionary work in China for 29 years is extraordinarily filled with awe and wonders! The stories in her book are so captivating that the book is a great source for those who like to peek into the clashes of Christianity and other cultural values, political systems and ideologies. It can also serve as a guidepost for those who are interested in learning about the foreign mission fields. Grace details the struggles she and her family have to face while sharing the gospel in China. The struggles are so up close and personal that I felt like being with her at every scene while reading the book. She on one hand have to overcome the systematic restriction imposed by a communists' government on evangelism, and on the other hand she had to break through the barriers stemmed from cultural, traditional and religious beliefs. She holds an excellent observation on many very subtle behaviors of Chinese that as a Chinese I am so amazed at her insights. Some people let her pray for them and politely accepted the faith in front of her. But through experience accumulated from living in China for years, she knew many were reluctant to refuse her offers, to hurt her feeling and to lose their face! Not every time she has the rightful wisdom to help her share the gospel but sometimes whimsical ideas that only heaven knows just came out of her mouth! For example, when discussing value of humility, her Buddhist friend Doris said only when a person becomes humble is he honored by others. But Grace would counter

“When a person becomes truly humble, he no longer cares if people give him a lot of honor.”

This dialogue highlight the sharp contrast of Buddhist karma and humility in Christ. I also like the discussions on comparing Christianity with Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. They offer readers who take Christianity for granted different perspectives on their faith and Grace's positions on these discussions substantially clarify the true meaning of

gospel and faith. All in all this is a great book of adventures in the mission fields. The awesome wonders of God's invisible hand can be seen throughout the book. Highly recommended.

I've known Grace and her husband for many years, and completely trust their accounts of life in China. Some of that confidence stems from my own experiences in China over the last 13 years. If you're interested in the reality of living in this atheistic communist country (unfoundedly fearful of Christianity), rather than politically influenced western romantic speculation, then you need to read "Dragon Ride". Along with the challenging perspectives we're offered through Grace's accounts, we are blessed with her delightfully animated personality, and gifted communication style! Being a typically slow reader myself, I've often taken months to read a single book. Yet I have "sped" through this captivating book in just over one week! (I'm pitiful, right?) Enjoy the "Ride"!

The aptly titled memoir *Dragon Ride* chronicles Grace and Justin Jacobs' missionary work in Hong Kong and Mainland China from 1986-2015. In the early chapters Grace writes revealingly about her own rocky path to faith as a teen and young adult including her side road into atheism from which she would emerge as an authentic follower of Jesus in the mid-1970's after studying apologetics under Norman Geisler. Fast forward to 1986. She is married to Justin, and along with their two little boys Nigel and Adam, they take their first cross-cultural leap to Hong Kong. This is where the book really picks up speed with the author detailing the backdrop of life in the Far East as American missionaries. And she doesn't stop with vivid physical descriptions of densely packed Hong Kong and the largely dystopic cities of Mainland China where they worked and made friends. The book's richness lies in her own - their own - spiritual odyssey by describing events that induce the humility and wisdom they needed to make Jesus and His Gospel clear. Their sacrificial love for the Chinese people rings true in chapter after chapter. I particularly enjoyed the accounts of the author's conversations with the men and women she befriended and the way she skillfully used questions to guide the curious away from error to the joy of faith in the one, true God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Having read other books written by people of faith and their encounters with closed cultures and people groups I was very interested to see how the Jacob's family experiences would unfold. I was impressed by the details and insights Grace Jacob gives the reader about the culture and perspectives of the common person in China. You don't get this from

the news media! This isn't a book telling the reader "here is what happened to me in China" or a step by step guide on how to engage people in spiritual discussion. Grace has chosen short stories and vignettes to show how one can learn to explain faith in a loving God to a foreign culture. She also shows how deeply lives can be controlled by culture and an authoritarian government. This control includes not only what one might call basic rights but also the enforced conformance to "acceptable" basic presuppositions taught. Most of us in less restrictive western cultures take for granted that we have intellectually accepted only concepts and presuppositions that we think we know as "truth" without even questioning it. This book challenged me to think through the "truths" I believe and ask questions to determine the why behind my beliefs. As Jacob shows us this means starting with debunking the untruths and confirming the basic truths so one can build upon a solid foundation. This book is an excellent read showing how your faith might look to other cultures and how you can learn to explain it logically. It will also get you thinking about what you believe and why.

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