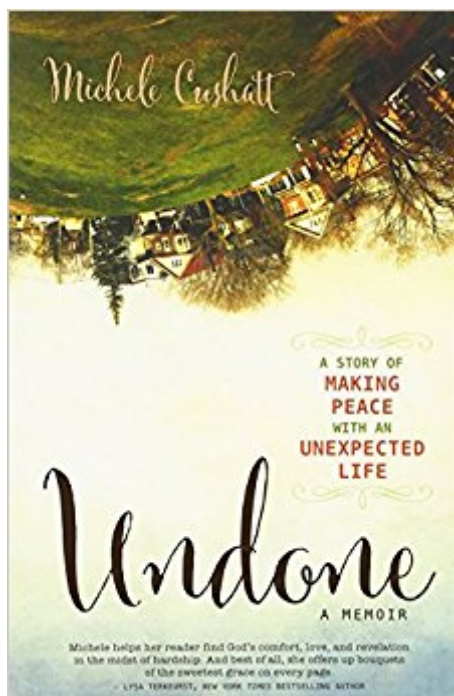


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# Undone: A Story Of Making Peace With An Unexpected Life



## Synopsis

Undone is author Michele Cushatt's quest to make peace with a complicated life. It is an honest confession of a diagnosis of cancer and the joys and disappointments of motherhood and marriage, ripe with regret over what is and, yet, still hopeful for what could be. With enough humor to ease the rawness of the story, Undone takes the reader on a roller coaster two-year journey through the unexpectedness of life. A look back makes Michele long for a do-over, the chance to make fewer mistakes and leave less of a mess to clean up. A look forward makes Michele wonder if all her attempts to control life have robbed her of the vibrancy of it. And, in the middle of this internal chaos, she finds her once-pristine house filled with the sights and sounds of three small, uncontrollable children who just want to be loved. In the end, Undone turns complication into a beautiful canvas, angst into joy, and the unknown into an adventure, revealing that sometimes life's most colorful and courageous stories are written right in the middle of the mess.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Michele is a friend that I adore and trust to speak truth over deep places in my life where I need a confidant. If you have ever felt burdened with unanswered questions and prayers, this book is a must-read. God's truths are woven through her many beautiful words and heartbreaking stories. She is wise. She is funny. She helps her reader find God's comfort, love and revelation in the midst of hardship. And best of all, she offers up bouquets of the sweetest grace on every page." --Lysa TerKeurst, New York Times best-selling author of The Best Yes & President of Proverbs 31

Ministries"While this looks like a book, it's not. It's actually a life preserver, disguised as a book. Hearing Michele's story helped me understand more clearly my own story--and connect it to the even bigger story of God's fierce, persistent, and gracious love. It made me laugh, cry, and ponder anew the mystery of suffering and the meaning of life." ã Æ --Michael Hyatt, New York Times best-selling author, Former CEO, Thomas Nelson Publishers"Do yourself a massive favor and read this book! I cannot recommend it highly enough. Michele is one of the most gifted communicators I've ever met, but more than that, she's one of the most Jesus-filled people I've ever known. Michele's story will inspire you, move you, and leave you feeling empowered that you, too, can face overwhelming odds and unknowns with courage and bravery." ã Æ --Crystal Paine, founder of MoneySavingMom.com and New York Times best-selling author of Say Goodbye to Survival Mode"This is a hopeful, heartfelt memoir about finding the hidden beauty in the midst of life's greatest struggles. In Michele's story, you will see your own story -- and find something beautiful to hold onto." ã Æ --Jeff Goins, Author, The Art of Work"The hardest things in life have a way of showing up unexpectedly, as do the most beautiful and breath taking. Through Michele's story, I found mine. Through her remembering, I was reminded. Reminded how God has shown up when I least expected; how Comfort and Peace have pulled up close when I felt alone. How strength came in the most unexpected ways. If you feel like you're coming undone, read this book and let Michele's words awaken the hope and courage your heart needs today!" ã Æ --Renee Swope, author of A Confident Heart and Proverbs 31 Co-Host of "Everyday Life with Lysa & Renee"

If your life is everything you dreamed it to be, this book isn't for you. Just move along; you won't hurt my feelings. ã Æ However, if you've ever known what it's like to have a dream unravel, a hope or desire remain unfulfilled, regardless of how long and hard you've wished and prayed otherwise, then Undone isn't just my story. ã Æ It's your story. ã Æ Life seldom turns out like we imagine. Oh, we try to make it everything we've dreamed it to be. We work oh-so-hard on our marriages. We exercise, eat right and care for our health. We parent with feverish desperation. We read books, go to conferences, take notes and then try a bit harder. But regardless of our efforts, sometimes the unthinkable happens. ã Æ A marriage disintegrates. A child runs away from home. A doctor calls with bad news. A church splits right down the middle. In the span of seconds, ordinary life turns upside down. And everything you thought you knew and loved about your life is gone, evaporated in front of your eyes. ã Æ What you're left with resembles nothing of the life you dreamed. It's messy, uncomfortable, and just plain hard. Painful, even. And no matter what you do, no matter how many times you pick yourself back up again and try to fix it, the life you dream about remains out of reach.

So if you're at the end of your hope, if you wake up and wonder how in the world you can go on with this unexpected life you've been given, if you're tired of fear and desperate for a drowning of peace, pull up a chair, my friend. You're not alone. And, believe it or not, undone is beautiful.

Michele Cushatt is one of the best writers I've read in a long time. And her new book, *Undone*, gives more than good writing. It's a great perspective on life. Real life. The book hooked me early on. I read. And read. And read. Refreshing, real, raw. She had me laughing and crying often on the same page. The message of the book is wonderful. The fairytale we want out of life isn't real. It never was. If you've ever struggled with shattered hopes, a fearful diagnosis, a wayward child, a dysfunctional church, or the silence of God, *Undone* will walk beside you as a companion. It asks as many questions as it answers, showing us that we need God's presence and promises more than we need to know His reasons. *Undone* shares Michele's journey down the road of an unexpected life.

Michele's cancer revealed "a cancer far worse than the one in her heart. We all have this disease, don't we?" My favorite quotes: "Peace isn't a byproduct of control, the payout of a happy conclusion. Peace is the infiltrating, life-giving presence of a very real God. One who loves nothing more than to step into the middle of locked and darkened rooms and impossible circumstances, close enough to touch." (Page 57) "Just as a writer must embrace a rough draft as the necessary means to a book's successful end, I had to learn how to embrace my life's process. Including the countless ways my shortcomings and flaws have made me a better character in my own story." (Page 190) "At times I wish it were easier, I won't lie. I'd give anything for a normal, boring day. But I'm not sure normal would keep me kneeling." (Page 235)

"Ministry of the truest kind isn't about impressing unknown strangers with spotless presentations and a flawless life. It's about exposing the hidden imperfections and giving others permission to do the same. Becoming a fellow struggler who delivers zero judgment but abundant grace. Few things display unadulterated beauty like a pouring out when you've nothing to give. It must come from an otherworldly place, a well whose source you do not control." (Pages 82-83) *Undone* shows you how God waits on the other side of our thin expectations as He draws us close to Him through painful places, finally opening to us the broad expanse that is His grace. Get this book.

I first heard about *Undone* from my wife. She is a friend of the author, Michele Cushatt, having attended college with her and now being Facebook friends. I wasn't planning to read the book because I put it in the category of a "chick book." I know there are movies that guys refer to as "chick flicks" so I kind of put this memoir into that category of a book for women written by a woman. My wife started reading it and kept talking about how much she enjoyed it, so I decided to get a copy. I'm glad I did. The subtitle of the book is "a story of making peace with an unexpected life." Not only is Cushatt a gifted writer (she has a way with words), but part of her story had similarities to where my wife and I have been. She writes about the pain of divorce, an ongoing battle with cancer and managing a family with a biological child, two step-sons and three foster children. While I have never struggled with cancer, I related to enduring divorce and experiencing blended families and adoption. Cushatt writes with an honesty that keeps the reader turning the pages. She shares the lessons she's learned, the struggles she has added and how she handled adversity including the good, bad and ugly. I appreciated her humor that is sprinkled throughout her book. In discussing her diagnosis of cancer and the responses she received from people. This example reveals her sense of humor and she related this response from one person: "And my personal favorite: 'My friend was diagnosed with the same kind of cancer as you. He died a few months ago. Thank you. Super helpful.' Now that's funny! This is potentially my favorite quote of the book from a powerful chapter. In chapter 16 she tells about going to Christmas Eve service with her three "littles." You have to read the chapter to appreciate all that is going on, but as she brings the story to an end, she writes these words that she shared with a friend: "Just because something is hard doesn't mean we're not called to it. And just because it's hard doesn't mean it's not good." *Undone* was a compelling read and as I read it, I know the author's story is not over. If your life has ever taken an unexpected twist, you will appreciate the words this book contains.

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