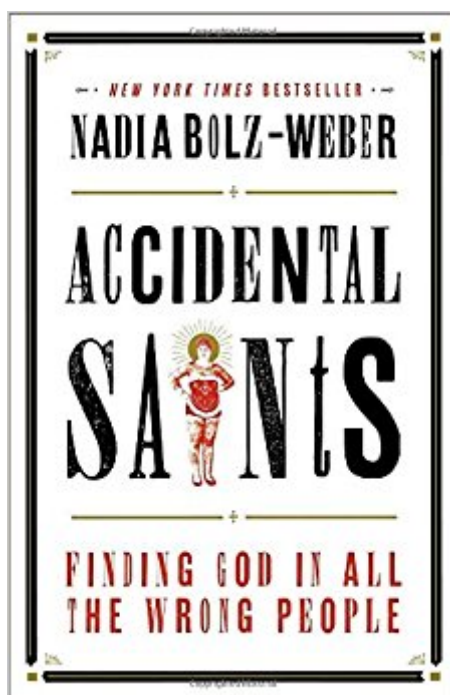


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# Accidental Saints: Finding God In All The Wrong People



## Synopsis

What if that person you've been trying to avoid is your best shot at grace today?...And what if that's the point? In *Accidental Saints*, New York Times best-selling author Nadia Bolz-Weber invites readers into a surprising encounter with what she calls "a religious but not-so-spiritual life." Tattooed, angry and profane, this former standup comic turned pastor stubbornly, sometimes hilariously, resists the God she feels called to serve. But God keeps showing up in the least likely of people—a church-loving agnostic, a drag queen, a felonious Bishop and a gun-toting member of the NRA. As she lives and worships alongside these "accidental saints," Nadia is swept into first-hand encounters with grace—a gift that feels to her less like being wrapped in a warm blanket and more like being hit with a blunt instrument. But by this grace, people are transformed in ways they couldn't have been on their own. In a time when many have rightly become disillusioned with Christianity, *Accidental Saints* demonstrates what happens when ordinary people share bread and wine, struggle with scripture together, and tell each other the truth about their real lives. This unforgettable account of their faltering steps toward wholeness will ring true for believer and skeptic alike. Told in Nadia's trademark confessional style, *Accidental Saints* is the stunning next work from one of today's most important religious voices.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Unflinchingly honest (and funny)|You don't have to be religious to get something

out of this book. NPR "Best Books of 2015" "Compulsively readable" [Bolz-Weber's] love for God and for humankind shines through on every page. Publishers Weekly "[Bolz-Weber] is one of the most important Christian voices around -- not because she has come up with some catchy, easy new way to do faith, but because when she talks about the destructive power of sin, as well as redemption and grace, she knows of what she speaks." Huffington Post "Wickedly funny and painfully vulnerable, theologically nuanced and lyrically sonorous. [Bolz-Weber's] voice communicates the scandal of the Christ and the sacraments of his church with more force and vitality than most writers can hope to summon." The Christian Century "Engaging and accessible" Bolz-Weber is clear-eyed about the personal travails faced by the marginalized and those without faith. Booklist "If Saint Augustine were to return to life and live among us now, he would be Bolz-Weber; and if his Confessions were to be written in 21st century rhetoric and style, they would be this book. Accidental Saints is what every Christian yearns to know is possible." Phyllis Tickle, author of The Divine Hours and The Great Emergence "To say this is a book about God working through imperfect people is to reduce a work of profound, unvarnished truth-telling to the very cliché it so masterfully avoids. Accidental Saints is a triumph in faithful storytelling. In just a few lines of description and dialog, Nadia Bolz-Weber manages to capture all that is beautiful and maddening and frightening about our shared humanity, including her own inconsistencies and struggles as a Jesus-loving sinner-saint. This is one of those rare books that will make you simultaneously wince with recognition and sigh with relief. A must read for every screw-up and asshole caught up in God's grace." Rachel Held Evans, author of A Year of Biblical Womanhood and Searching for Sunday "Besides the fact that she is an amazing writer, my friend Nadia understands more than most that we are messed up people living in a messed up world with other messed up people. She gets the human condition. She refuses to sugarcoat the depth of her own desperation and need. And that's why she gets our dire need for grace. She understands that God meets our messed-up-ness with his mercy over and over and over again. I couldn't put this book down." Tullian Tchividjian, author of One Way Love: Inexhaustible Grace for an Exhausted World and founder of LIBERATE "Nadia Bolz-Weber's new book is even tougher, sharper and sweeter than Pastrix: in painfully honest stories, she pulls back the curtains of religious life to show how church is the actual, living body of God is created among us. This is a book for everyone who yearns to be made new." Sara Miles, author of Take This Bread and City of God "I always feel narcissistic when I affirm writers who think like I do. But Nadia says it--and she does it--so much better, with

much more humor, more living examples, and a conviction that will convict you!" -Fr. Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Center for Action and Contemplation "This is a collection of stories about how liturgy (who would have imagined?), ritual (what?), church (really?), and a bunch of flawed people (like us?) can catch the light of grace and catch fire with the beauty of God. For so many reasons, you really should read it." -Brian D. McLaren, author of *A New Kind of Christianity* and *A Generous Orthodoxy* "This book made me so happy to be a Christian. Honest and funny, deep and insightful, *Accidental Saints* disarmed me and then, right when I was vulnerable, Nadia's words snuck right in to mess with me." - Sarah Bessey, author of "Jesus Feminist" and "Out of Sorts" From the Hardcover edition.

Nadia Bolz-Weber is the founding pastor of House for All Sinners and Saints in Denver, Colorado. She is the author of the New York Times best-selling memoir *Pastrix*. Nadia has been featured on CNN and in the Washington Post, Bitch Magazine, NPR's *Morning Edition*, *More Magazine*, and the *Daily Beast*.

It is nice to read works of faith by those whose views would be deemed unconventional by some. How can you get any more unconventional than a pastor who is described on the back of her own book as a former stand-up comic who is tattooed, angry and profane. Interestingly, I found most of what she had to say to be in line with mainstream Christian thought and found her humility to be saint like. One of reasons I picked up this book was because of the quote by Fr. Richard Rohr, on this page, in which he says Pastor Nadia thinks like he does only she says what she is thinking so much better and with more humor, living examples, and a conviction that will convict you! I have read a few books by Fr. Rohr and I do see a similarity in that he and Pastor Nadia both seek and find holiness in people and incidents that are often overlooked and ignored by many clergy and many people. This book is broken into 19 chapters most of which are focused on incidents and people who are part of her congregation the "House For All Saints And Sinners." She discusses the Blessed Virgin Mary, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil and the Church Year. All these are almost Orthodox and while she puts her own unique spin on each story I found her views to be very much in line with mainstream Christian thinking. She takes on serious subjects like the killings at Sandy Hook Elementary School and how "church was never meant to be a place for escapism." Church needs to be a place where the evil in this world is discussed. I can't agree more. Pastor Nadia admits how early in her tenure at her church she was taken aback by how many

“socially awkward people” showed up at her church and how the church would never have a chance if these were the people who showed up. She eventually realized how important these people are and how we are all socially awkward and imperfect. I have been so frustrated at times at my parish (I am Catholic) while listening yet again to one more homily at Church about how we are all brothers and sisters in Christ while there are people sitting alone and hurting in the pews all around me. I want a priest to acknowledge that life is hard and people struggle and loneliness and pain are part of this world and there is a good chance there is someone in the pew near me who can use my help and maybe I should tell one of these people we are brothers and sisters in Christ and I want to help. I have a funny feeling people at pastor Nadia’s church are more comfortable doing this than at my church. Pastor Nadia reminds us that we are all flawed, including her, yet we all can become accidental saints. I am glad I read this book.

I really wasn’t sure what to expect from this book. I googled the pastor, Nadia Bolz - Weber, before I chose the book and when I saw her tattoos and muscles, I thought this was going to be a book that was kind of like the churches I sometimes see where they play hard rock music and that kind of thing (not that there’s anything wrong with those, it’s just what I thought.) But, the "Accidental Saints" Nadia writes about are not just people who look different, but it’s about just average people who are pretty much just like everyone else, only maybe they just don’t feel like they are good enough to go to church because they don’t have nice clothes to wear, or they have problems that make them feel like they aren’t as good as everyone else. The biggest message in this book for me is where she wrote that when Jesus was here "He spent his time with people for whom life was not easy. And there amid those who were suffering, he was the embodiment of perfect love." She said in a talk to some young people that God is a "God who has always used imperfect people". So, this book for me is kind of the opposite of what I think of as church, where everyone is dressed nicely and have so many good things happening to them all the time they are always saying how blessed they are. This book is about real people. Along with the powerful and helpful messages all throughout the book, you will find that Nadia is super funny. She tells a funny story about being in Costco with her husband when she was very pregnant with one of her kids and one of the women who hand out samples said to them "You fellas want to try some clam chowder?" Another thing I thought was funny, and you’ll want to read the whole chapter for the story, but someone asked Nadia what she does personally to get closer to God. She answered "What? Nothing." I laughed so hard at so many funny things like this. And, also be ready for lots of swear words, including the "F"

word all through the book. That was kind of comforting to me to know it's ok to swear! The book is made up of several short stories and then at the back, there is a question section where you can ask yourself how some of the things in the book relate to you. There is also an interview with Nadia. Each chapter starts out with a story from the Bible or a part of the Lutheran Church's texts (I'm not exactly sure what they are called, but they are really nice). This book was great and I look forward to reading her previous book and anything she writes in the future.

Love the book, Love the way she lays out the various life situations and what bible passages have to say about them. Her writing is not a bunch of platitudes.. In my opinion this book is better than Pastrix, the book she wrote previous to this one, and I really liked that book. Looking forward to her future writings. It is so unfortunate that some religions do not allow females to become pastors. She is prime example of why we should have more female pastors. She provides diversity in thoughtfulness, explanations, and interpretation of various biblical passages. and I thoroughly enjoy them. I am so glad she is a pastor and she has wrote this book. She seems like a very for real person..

I am someone who had lost faith in American Christianity. Pastor Bolz-Weber has renewed that faith. Its funny, she's waaaaaay more conservative liturgically than I am, but her application of Jesus' teachings are what I aspire to. She talks candidly about her own short comings which makes her very credible as a pastor and easy to apply to my own life. She admits to the same petty things I feel or do and talks about how she dealt with it. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants a fresh look at 21st (aka 1st) century Christianity. If you want to be challenged to really live your life as Christ did, accept we are all imperfect in our attempts to do so and that God's grace allows you space to get there, this is the book for you.

Nadia Boltz Weber is not a usual pastor but she is brilliant, refreshing and thought provoking. This was our church Book Group selection and I was delighted to read it. This is not a book for a faint-hearted or uptight Christian - the language alone can be off-putting but it will break your stereotypes of what a faith journey in a Christian community is like and enable you to see others with more love and charity..

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