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Graphic design by Emily Lee

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Foreword & F

I first met Jacqui on a cold and frosty morning, a few days after Christmas in December 2006. I was driving to the north of England to spend New Year with my parents and decided to call in and visit her on my way.

Just a month previously God had dropped into my heart the idea of starting a greeting card company. At the time, perhaps, it was a little strange as I had a career in medicine, but for me it was like God gave me something to do that I just knew was His idea, however crazy it seemed. It was a bit like getting onto a train—the train was moving and I just had to go with it and follow where He led me. I had started by selling handmade fairtrade cards from Rwanda, but I wanted to add some printed cards to the range, so I looked for an artist online, and that search led me to Jacqui's doorstep that December morning.

First impressions were good. Jacqui was lovely—warm, kind-hearted and generous. At the same time she was understated and humble and I knew that we could work together. I met her husband and son, and as we talked, I quietly admired the beautiful, carefully-placed artwork on her walls.

Tucked away in my bag were three samples of Christmas cards—designs that I had bought and sent to my own friends that year, in a style that I liked. My hope was that Jacqui would be able to create similar designs that we could print and sell in the UK. Before I could pull them out Jacqui started showing me some of the designs that she had previously had printed on cards. We spread them out over her living room floor, and then I realized . . . unbeknown to me, two of the three cards in my bag had been designed by her!

I went away from that meeting with three things—the confirmation that the card business was a God-given idea,

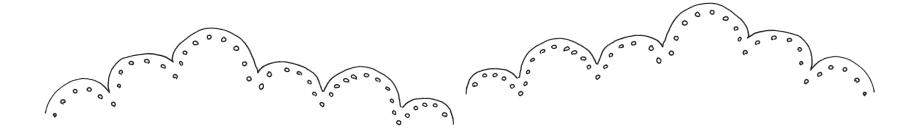
an inspirational artist to work with, and a boat-load of cards that had languished under Jacqui's bed for several years, just waiting for someone to sell them!

For the last eight years, Jacqui and I have continued to work closely together, with Jacqui designing beautiful Christmas and general cards that have become very popular in Christian bookshops throughout the UK. Her work is both modern and beautiful, but also grounded in Scripture and often with an inspirational or prophetic edge. Throughout the journey, we have been hugely supported by Emily Lee, our graphic designer, who has faithfully worked with us since the beginning and has contributed her incredible talent, ideas, and creativity to all that we have produced.

So when Jacqui came to me in May 2015 and started talking about designing a Christian adult coloring book, I needed little convincing. She had a strong conviction that this was something of God, and the designs were already buzzing around her mind. She started work immediately and after many late nights, the designs were done, each one carefully hand-drawn. The result, which you now have in your hand, is a truly inspirational coloring book, centered on the truths of Scripture. I pray that as you use this book it will be more than just a means of relaxation for you, but that you will find each page to be an encounter with the living God, who loves us, inspires us, and gives us GRACE.

Anne Horrobin Director Just Cards Direct Ltd www.justcardsdirect.com





Introduction

About Me

Since I was very young, I have had a deep inbuilt desire to be creative. Looking back, I can't even remember a time before paper and crayons! I have vivid memories of the utter delight and excitement of a new pack of multi-colored felt pens. I also remember rescuing and hoarding away every tiny scrap of paper for future use.

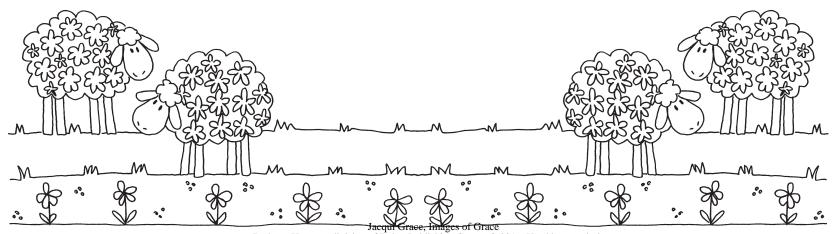
I spent my childhood coloring, painting, collaging, doodling, and junk modelling. I learned to knit, crochet, and sew, embroider, and make patchwork, and I dreamed and hoped that one day I might be able to do these things as a job.

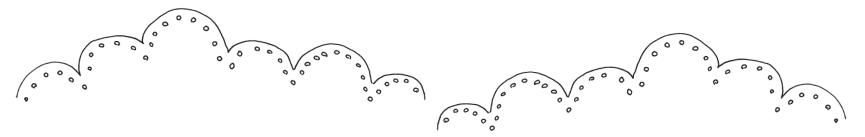
I believe that this desire to be creative stems from being made in the image of Creator God and that these skills and desires were placed within me for a reason. As a Christian I have spent many years exploring how my faith and creativity are linked and how to use the gifts God has given me.

I am thankful to God for some amazing opportunities, including creating general and Christmas card designs, book illustrations, gift wrap designs, illustrating educational resources as well as many private commissions.

Over the years I have repeatedly turned to Scripture as my source of inspiration. The Bible is full of rich poetry, analogies and parables, profound and wise quotes, and simple but essential truths. It has consistently underpinned my work, given meaning to my creativity, and provided me with my purpose and motivation. In this coloring book, I have shared some of my journey with you.

My prayer is that as you explore this book and color the pages your creative spark will be fanned into flame. I pray that you will be inspired and blessed as you color, and that you too will discover the amazing truths and exciting power of God's Word





How to use this book

This book isn't just another coloring book, for it has been designed to be so much more than that.

It is something to help you relax and unwind after the demands of a day and the busyness of life. However, it is also a tool to help you understand and explore the Bible in fresh ways, a journal to record your thoughts, prayers, and insights, an opportunity to tap into your creativity, and most importantly, a way to connect with the One who created you.

There is no right or wrong way to use this book, but here are a few suggestions to get you started....

- You don't have to start at the beginning, just pick a page that appeals to you.
- Colored pencils will give you the best results and allow you to shade and blend colors, but fine-tipped felt pens will also work well. Try to avoid chunky felt pens and permanent markers.
- There is sometimes space in a design for you to add your own drawings and details. If you decide to do this, a fine-tipped drawing pen would work best.
- Just simply relax, enjoy, color, and be creative!

If you want to go deeper, here are a few ideas....

- As you color, think about the words, mull them over, and meditate on them. Do any particular words stand out to you? Why? Allow God to speak to you through them.
- Why not commit some of the verses to memory? Look them up in other translations and explore the passages in more depth.

- On the pages where there are no words, maybe you could pray as you color? For example, choose a different person or situation to bring before God for each different flower, leaf, or shell that you color.
- Some of the pages have borders around the outside for you to add your own favorite quotes, thoughts, or drawings in the middle. Add your own inspiration to the pages and make it your own unique book.
- And finally, don't keep it to yourself...share your creations and the things that God has said to you.
- Maybe cut out the page and stick it on your fridge, frame it, or give it away to a friend, or take a photo of your creation and share it on social media pages (see the links at the end of this book for ideas!).

Most importantly, relax and have fun! Enjoy the process. Your book will be personal and unique to you. Use it and enjoy it.

Varqui Grace

