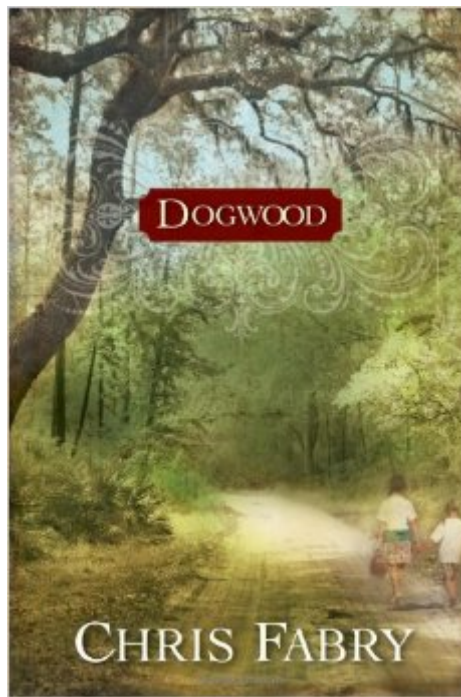


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# Dogwood



## Synopsis

A Christy Award winner from the best-selling author of *War Room*! In the small town of Dogwood, West Virginia, Karin has buried her shattered dreams by settling for a faithful husband whose emotional distance from her deep passions and conflicts leaves her isolated. Loaded with guilt, she tries to raise three small children and do the best she can. Will returns to Dogwood intent on pursuing the only woman he has ever loved only to find there is far more standing in his way than lost years in prison. The secrets of Will and Karin's past begin to emerge through Danny Boyd, a young boy who wishes he hadn't survived the tragedy that knit those two together as well as tore them apart. The trigger that will lay their pain bare and force them to face it rather than flee is the unlikely figure of Ruthie Bowles, a withered, wiry old woman who leads Karin so deep into her anger against God that it forces unexpected consequences.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It has been twelve years since Will Hatfield was sentenced to Clarkeston Federal prison, but he is about to be released in two months. He has a great desire to see the family farm in Dogwood, West Virginia and Karin the only woman he ever loved. When he went to prison, she never answered his letters as she made a new life for herself in a passionless marriage with three children she adores. When Will comes home, he is not greeted like the prodigal son as most locals believe he should have spent his life in prison for his crimes; even his brother would be happier if he left. The family has been dragged through the sewage due to Will's DUI vehicular homicide of two innocent girls. He is attacked at the place he used to work and the town tries to take the farm away from him

due to eminent domain. Karin is coming to learn the truth ABOUT THE SACRIFICE Will made for her. On the surface DOGWOOD seems like a straight line story with Danny the brother of the dead sisters receiving counseling because he blames himself for their deaths. Karin tries to be happy in her situation while Will shows patience as he waits for Karin to realize the truth. None of the peoples' stories are quite what they appear as the revelations are quite shocking. Chris Fabry has written a heart wrenching character driven tale as each of the key players feels guilt while praying for redemption and a fresh start. Harriet Klausner

I picked up Dogwood yesterday, and pretty much didn't (couldn't) put it down until I finished this afternoon. Fabry's writing had me from the first page. I love his wit - not too in-your-face; just enough to keep me smiling throughout. His use of metaphor is flawless. His character development was rich. His theological content was deep without being preachy. And His twists caught me at the end. Honestly, it isn't the type of book I typically read. However, I thoroughly enjoyed it cover-to-cover. There was a depth, a sweetness, and (for lack of a better term) a melancholy that drew me in and wouldn't let go. Fabulous book!

It is sad that anyone would read Dogwood by Chris Fabry and refer to it as a Christian novel and that therefore they found it hard to read. Individuals with that reaction are very much the same people that the story talks about, the members of the Christian church that rejects the returning convict without knowing the whole story or members of a community who do not want foreign elements coming back like a cancer, ignoring the cancers right before their very eyes. If that is an indictment of the readers, I must apologize because Will Hatfield, Chris Fabry's protagonist, does not resent the anger he encounters, but rather understands and empathizes with it, while at the same time refusing to accept it. This novel, unlike so many previous "Christian novels" deals with the real world in real world terms that some might find offensive. I did not. Quite the contrary. I found Fabry's way of handling the realities of life honest and at times lyric, which is what makes it something special. This is a story of love, of faith, of true sacrifice. It may indeed be pushing it a bit to put this novel on the level of allegory, yet there are parallels between Will Hatfield and Tom Joad, Steinbeck's hero from The Grapes of Wrath. I found it hard to put this novel down, and when I finally got to the weekend and didn't have to put it down, I didn't! I am very proud to see Tyndale publish a novel of this magnitude. I am exceptionally impressed with Chris Fabry's first attempt at an "adult" novel, and I look forward to many more. Anyone wanting a dynamic, powerful, moving novel to read has to pick up Dogwood and read it on its own terms. I am sure that you will not be disappointed.

I have to be careful in my review not to give too much away... this is a good book with lots of twists and turns that are best enjoyed curled up in bed frantically turning pages toward the end as everything starts to come out and be explained in a frenzy...Dogwood has 3 parts to it. The first part was a little confusing for me - each chapter throughout the book is written from the viewpoint of one of four people. It took me awhile to grasp that and get them all straightened out in my mind. The other confusing thing was that the tragedy that is the center of everything is kept secret for pretty much the whole first part and I couldn't figure out why it was such a secret. Also the town of Dogwood shows itself to have no forgiveness for an accident and I wasn't sure out where the maliciousness came from, I mean being upset is one thing but sheer hatred is another. Those minor things aside - this was a great book! I figured a few of the twists and turns out before the end, but Chris managed to blow my mind with the last chapter. Overall I was very impressed with this book - I loved the mentorship between Ruthie and Karin - we all need someone in our lives like Ruthie but so few of us have that. And all I can say about one of my other favorite parts is that Chris does a great job of showing the love of the Saviour in this book - you'll have to read it to fully understand what I mean.

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