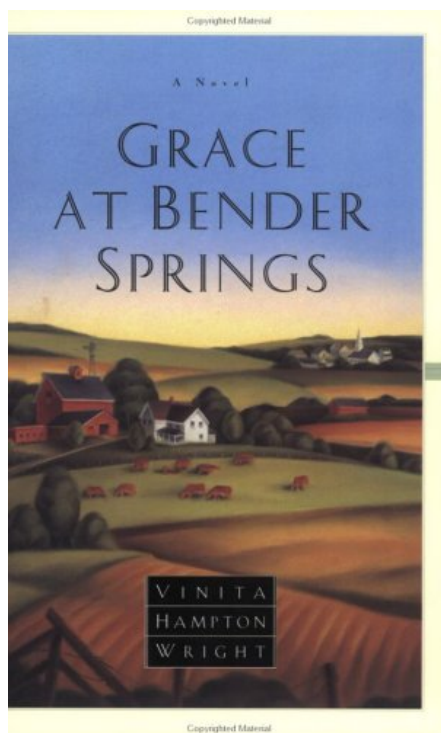




Grace at Bender Springs

Vinita Hampton Wright

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This critically-acclaimed literary novel set in the small, worn-out town of Bender Springs, Kansas boasts an intricately detailed plot with a variety of character types that give every reader someone with which to identify.

Grace at Bender Springs Details

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Author : Vinita Hampton Wright

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From Reader Review Grace at Bender Springs for online ebook

Elaine says

There's a drunk accused of stealing. Several preachers planning a revival. An old woman frustrated with the neighbor's dog that keeps relieving itself in her yard. Her mission now seems to be to get even with the dog or its owner. A man who is seeing a woman quite young for him, plans to break it off before she does to save himself from getting hurt. There's a young, mother angry at everything - a preacher's wife who is trying to find something worth loving in her husband. A young man sinking deep into emotionless thoughts and thinking about suicide -- "trying it on." His grandpa steps into the shed...

Too much day-to-day detail in the lives of the many characters such as one woman putting pin curls in her friend's hair while that woman cries over the death of a woman's cat and prepares to spend time with a family member. While this is going on, another friend is making phone calls to verify times of rides for her, etc. Doesn't exactly make for an interesting read. I keep waiting for something, anything, to happen.

Poor ending.

Kerstin Gunia says

I read a review that made reference to parts of the story being borderline sacrilege. This may be as a result of a steady diet of Oke & Wick (good writers but maybe too sentimental). Wright is known for her edgy honest stories and although I found it hard to follow the abundance of characters, she writes it the way it is. I was not offended by her honesty. She even admits to her varied religious roots and shows it in this offering which reminded me a bit of Lisa Samson's style. It's one of those books for me that is written really well and that makes up for the plot's low points. I was determined to not mark a hundred pages but in the end I had to flag anyway, Wright has something to say and she deserves to be heard in my little review. Although the overlapping stories are not unique; disillusioned pastor and depressed wife, suicidal teen, angry widow, there is a breath of fresh air with the young widower angle which I liked very much. There is also a somewhat unstable charismatic lady preacher that I could not make peace with. The choices that these characters make were not predictable at all and it felt like the book never really ended. Most of my favorite moments were not so much content as they were beautiful words:

Pg. 187 (see I did wait a while) "It was frightening to live in a world where a single event could change your life.

Pg. 339 We just thought we'd look in on you. In on you. Sarah tried not to notice the phrase, but her sarcastic self butted into her thoughts: At what point had these people begun to multiply their prepositions? The voice proceeded to rattle off phrases gleaned from conversations: In on you, go on down to, went on over to, it's over by, looked around in...Conversation in this town was something like the Amplified Version of the Bible – multiple choice.

Pg. 343 I don't know much about dreams, but sometimes they tell us more about the way we think than about what God thinks.

Pg. The next day Mamie carried the casserole, wrapped in towels and balanced on one forearm, while she managed the cane with the other hand. She hated to use the cane in front of the woman who had prayed so fervently for her healing, but she didn't care to end up face first in her own casserole either.

Pg. 362 She thought again of Iris and wondered if what she'd said about God's calling people was true. What had Cassie's calling been? Had she missed it because of the war? Did things like war interrupt God's business?

Pg. 380 The last time I saw my mother, she was dressed in a navy blue suit with a small suitcase in her hand.

I didn't see her again. I was so young,...I always thought it shouldn't have mattered that much, that I hadn't known her long enough to have a lot of memories or even to miss her as much as other people did.

Karen says

I mostly agree with the other 4 reviews I read here. It is technically well written, but I got tired of the details. The characters were realistic, but depressing and not engaging. I also agree that if you like the Mitford series, which also doesn't go anywhere much, you will like this. But it will take you over 200 pages to get to anything that is a little more than mildly interesting. You need a lot of patience for this one. I like "Velma Still Cooks in Leeway" better.

Becky says

Although it's not a literary masterpiece, I'd say this is one of the best books I've read in this genre (Christian fiction). The characters seem so real -- particularly the pastor's wife, who carries out her daily duties with a constant underlying sense of frustration and anger, and Mamie Rupert, an elderly lady who fixates on minutiae but has a kind heart. I like it that characters actually have to deal with spiritual issues -- there is acknowledgement that life is on more than just a physical plane -- but everything isn't just neat and tidy and squeaky-clean the way it is in many Christian novels. The characters have to deal with really tough situations, and things don't always come out perfect. Some reviewers criticize this book for not ending with complete resolution, but I LIKED the strands that were left hanging. Life isn't a neatly-wrapped package; there are loose ends all the time.

Melissa says

Supposedly a Christian book, but not very Christian in its actions. Some grace shown in the end but a lot of sad, lost people needing Jesus but never truly finding Him.

Karen Williams says

What I like about Vinita Hampton Wright's books is that although they are spiritual/Christian in some ways - there are always flawed characters who are struggling to find their way. Instead of pat answers, it is love and acceptance that support them.

If you like the Jan Karon Mitford series, I think you'll enjoy these.
