

The Gift of Hope

The aspiring young author was in need of hope. More than one person had told him to give up.

“Getting published is impossible,” one mentor said. “Unless you are a national celebrity, publishers won’t talk to you.”

Another warned, “Writing takes too much time. Besides, you don’t want all your thoughts on paper.”

Initially, he listened. He agreed that writing was a waste of effort and turned his attention to other projects. But somehow, the pen and pad were bourbon and Coke to the workaholic. He’d rather write than read.

So, he wrote.

How many nights did he pass on that couch in the corner of the apartment reshuffling his deck of verbs and nouns? And how many hours did his wife sit with him? He wordsmithing. She cross-stitching.

Finally, a manuscript was finished. Crude and laden with mistakes, but finished.

She gave him the shove: “Send it out. What’s the harm?”

So, it went out. Mailed to 15 different publishers. While the couple waited, he wrote. While he wrote, she stitched. Neither expecting much, both hoping everything.



Responses began to fill the mailbox:

- “I’m sorry, but we don’t accept unsolicited manuscripts.”
- “We must return your work. Best of luck.”
- “Our catalog doesn’t have room for unpublished authors.”

That author is Max Lucado, one of my favorite writers. He has written 100 books with 100 million copies across 54 languages in print. He was recipient of the *Charles “Kip” Jordon Gold Medallion Book of the Year* award three times for his books *Just Like Jesus*, *In the Grip of Grace* and *When God Whispers Your Name*. And he has appeared regularly on several bestseller lists.

(more)

“I still have those (early rejection) letters,” he said. “Somewhere in a file. Finding them would take some time. Finding Denalyn’s (his wife’s) cross-stitch, however, would take none. To see it, all I do is lift my eyes from this monitor and look on the wall (In cross-stitch):

Of all those arts in which the wise excel, nature’s chief masterpiece is writing well.

“She gave it to me about the time the 15th letter arrived,” Lucado said. “A publisher said yes. That letter is also framed.

“Which of the two is more meaningful?
The gift from my wife or the letter from the publisher?”

The gift, hands down. For in giving the gift, Denalyn gave hope.”

Now that you know the experience of Max Lucado, the question naturally arises: Have you shown your gratitude to someone who has given you hope at a strategic point in your life? Or is there someone you know who is desperate for hope?



Love patiently accepts all things. It always trusts, always hopes, and always endures (1 Corinthians 13:7 NCV).

– Beecher Hunter