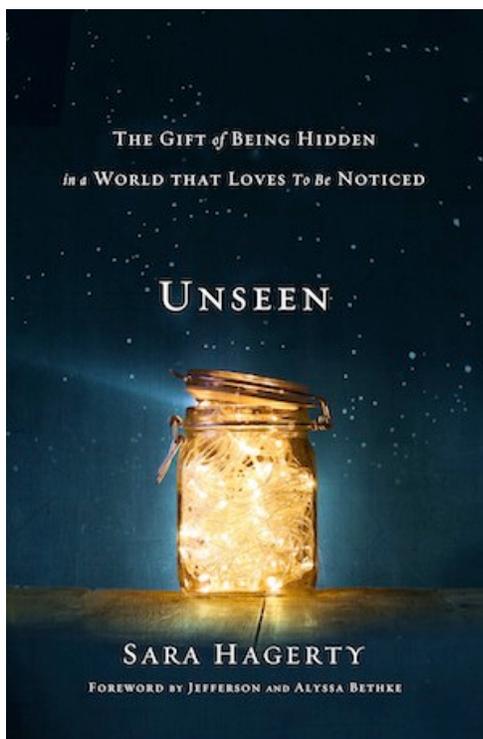




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The Gift of Being *Unseen* ***Memoirist Sara Hagerty Reveals the Beauty in Finding Our Identity Apart From Accomplishments***



Grand Rapids, Mich., Mar 15, 2017 – A person’s value can be wrapped up in the amount of applause received for a job well-done, number of trophies on the shelf, or even the number of social media likes for a recent post. Our society is geared toward those who accomplish, publicly rewarding those who make significant impact. It’s no surprise the church has become caught in this same trap, leading people to believe their only value is found in doing great things—such a ministry, teaching the Bible, serving the poor, buying ethically-made items, international adoption--for God.

Author **Sara Hagerty** has found the opposite to be truer. Her new book, ***Unseen: The Gift of Being Hidden in a World That Loves to Be Noticed*** (Zondervan, August 2017), offers an upside-down way at looking at value, one that invites readers to find their identity in God in the quiet, hidden places of life. Her poetic writing style, combined with piercing vulnerability, allows Hagerty to chronicle her journey from needing to do great things for God, to uncovering the greater value found in the intimacy of knowing and being known by God.

Hagerty’s Christian journey hit a bump in her early twenties when she was ministering to teenagers. She knew God was benevolently disposed toward her but she always assumed His benevolence was also connected to her “producing”

something for His kingdom. “When I felt productive in ministry, it wasn’t hard to imagine that God had loving thoughts toward me, or that He looked at me with warm affection,” Sara explained. “I had a harder time trying to imagine what He might be thinking about me during the hours of the day when I wasn’t doing anything tangible for Him. What was the expression on His face when I didn’t have a trail of changed lives lined up behind mine?”

She gave in to burnout. But she wasn’t just tired. “I’d been driven by a passion to see lives change, but I also craved the validation I received when my life made a notable impact on someone else’s. Over time, the deep satisfaction I’d found in my work lessened. The nagging drive, albeit subtle, to which I’d responded to do more and more, continued to leave me feeling inadequate. My expectations for myself increased as my ability to meet those expectations diminished. Even worse, I had begun to see myself as critical to God’s success. I just couldn’t do it anymore. So, I left the ministry I admired.”

This juncture in Sara’s life turned out to be a blessing as she journeyed deeper into life outside of the spotlight. She began to spend time reading the Bible and praying, seeking to know God apart from what she felt she needed to do for Him. She found a God filled with love and passion for her, longing for her to know He was holding her heart through it all.

This newfound intimacy would sustain her through the difficulties of the coming years—through marriage struggles, dealing with infertility, the bureaucracy of foreign adoption, and raising children who had a broken past that her love couldn't heal.

Filled with gripping stories that will encourage readers to a deeper intimacy with God, *Unseen* is not so much a "how to" book as it is an authentic look at one woman's brave journey to know God, and not just go through the motions.

Highlights for the readers of *Unseen*:

1. Embracing the mysteries of God
2. Learning to long for God's presence
3. Hearing God's truth above the criticism and chatter
4. Training our eyes to see God's beauty
5. Living a vibrant story we had not planned
6. Discovering who we are apart from what we do

Never delineating the value of accomplishments done for God's glory that other people don't notice, Sara points to the hidden, internal moments as the most valuable. "Great kingdom impact comes not just from actions that make a dramatic and observable impact," she explained, "but from all the accumulated moments we spend looking at God, to bringing Him glory in private, and letting Him shape our insides."

Sara Hagerty is wife to her best friend Nate, and a mother of six, including four children adopted from Africa and two through natural childbirth. Her first published book, *Every Bitter Thing Is Sweet* (Zondervan, October 2014), found her a worldwide audience, drawn to the authentic voice heard in her emotive and Scripturally-based writing style, as she searches to find God in the midst of questions and brokenness. She speaks regularly at churches, conferences, and retreats, and was featured on a two-part *Focus on the Family* radio broadcast. Sara writes regularly about life's delays, finding God in the unlikely, motherhood, marriage, and adoption at www.SaraHagertyAuthor.com, Twitter: @sarahagerty, and Instagram: @everybitterthingissweet

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Unseen: The Gift of Being Hidden in a World That Loves to Be Noticed

By Sara Hagerty

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