

Interview Questions—Evidence of Grace

- 1. What is your new book about?** Evidence of Grace is the third book in the Jenna's Creek Novels Series. I don't want to give too much away for readers just starting books one and two. Suffice it to say, new evidence surfaces in the murder of Sally Blake. The guilty party may be hiding more secrets about that night or may not have acted alone in the murder. Christy Blackwood has vowed never to speak to her mother again after finding out the secrets of her past. But now Christy is home and hiding some secrets of her own.
- 2. What were some of the challenges in writing the book?** Evidence of Grace is probably the hardest book to write so far in my career. I had so many story lines going on at one time, I had to make sure I gave each one ample billing. I also wanted to make sure the reader cared strongly about each story line. It was a challenging book to write, but also a lot of fun. I really enjoyed it. Of course, I always say that after a book is finished. While I'm writing it, it's a pain and I wonder why I ever started it in the first place.
- 3. Have you ever started a book you haven't been able to finish?** Not since I started writing full time. You put too much of yourself into a project to walk away from it when it gets tough. No one would do that in any other line of work. If you did, you would lose all your clients.
- 4. How many more books do you see in the Jenna's Creek Series?** At least five. I think that's a nice round number. But it all depends on how well the folks of Jenna's Creek, Ohio deal with me intruding on their lives every so often.
- 5. What are the challenges in writing a series and a stand-alone book?** The challenge in writing a series is keeping each new installment fresh and interesting. I have to be careful too, about giving too much back story. I don't want to lose readers who haven't read the previous books, but I can't bore readers who've been with me since the beginning. A stand-alone book is fun because I can write the story and then walk away. That's also the downfall. I don't know how many people told me they are anxious to read the sequel to *A Tender Reed*.
- 6. Are you planning a sequel to that book?** No, that story is finished. But I'm flattered that readers were reluctant to let the story go. I'm happy the characters had such a hold on them.
- 7. Are there any more series' in your writing future?** I've just started working on a new series called *Picture Perfect*. The main character has a photography business. At this point it will be a short series, maybe only two or three books. You never can say for sure though, when something like this takes off. My books tend to tell me what to do instead of the other way around.
- 8. What's the most exciting thing that's happened to you since you became a published author?** Oh, no, I don't think I could narrow it down to one event. I have had the opportunity to meet other Christian writers, either in person at the International Christian Retailers Show in Denver, Colorado last summer, or in my online writers' groups. But the greatest thing has been meeting with readers. I've done a lot of traveling to get the word out about the books, and everyone has been great. It's wonderful to hear that the books are having a positive impact in people's lives. That's the most gratifying thing for a writer.

- 9. I know writing is a very isolating experience. How do you deal with being your own boss?** That is a very difficult task. I probably waste a lot more time than I would if I had a boss breathing down my neck. I'm dedicated about getting up at 6:15 every morning. I start my day with prayer and an exercise workout. If I don't, it seems like the whole day gets frittered away with very little to show for it.
- 10. How much understanding and encouragement do you get from the people in your life?** More than I ever imagined. My husband is wonderful. He works nights, so he gets up about nine o'clock in the evening to get ready for work. If he wakes up to a tearful wife, he knows it's been a bad writing day. If he wakes up to frozen pizza for dinner or no dinner at all, he knows it's been a good writing day.
- 11. What would you do if you weren't writing?** That's a question I don't really have an answer for since I truly feel called to write and blessed that I'm able to pursue it full time. I am naturally good with small children, so I suppose I would enjoy teaching at an early grade level. Or maybe I could become a nuclear physicist. I wonder if you need any special training for that.
- 12. Do you have any words of encouragement for people who dream of writing for publication?** Everywhere I go, someone asks me the formula for getting published. It's like losing weight. I'm sorry to say there isn't a twelve step program to success. We all know what to do; it's just having the discipline to stick with it. Dedicate yourself to sitting in the chair and writing your story. Then polish and make it absolutely perfect. That includes typos and coffee stains. No editor wants to see a messy manuscript on her desk. Last but not least, don't give up. I am living proof that an un-agented, first-time writer can find a traditional publisher. It isn't easy or fast. But it is possible. Just keep writing.