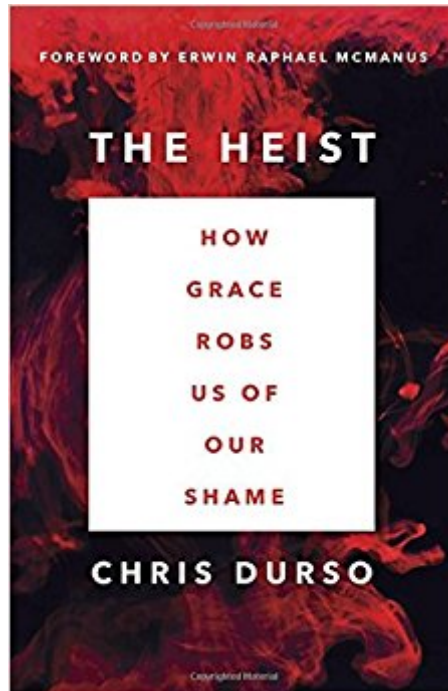


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# The Heist: How Grace Robs Us Of Our Shame



## Synopsis

Some say there were two thieves crucified on Golgotha, but I believe there were Three. In the ultimate act of sacrifice, Jesus robbed the Enemy of every claim he ever had on our lives. He stole all our shame and guilt, and gave us back our lives so that we could live in true freedom. The real scandal of Jesus' work on the cross is found not only in what it gives but also in what it steals. The Grace of God robs the enemy of his ability to shame us. It robs death of its sting. And it robs sin of its power to destroy. We've all felt the weight of shame and brokenness. Like the prodigal son, we've pursued our own path only to find ourselves far from home and out of options. We long for a fresh start, but what we need most is the ability to see ourselves through God's eyes of grace. New York City pastor Chris Durso believes grace is the central message of all Scripture. While there have been some daring heists and cunning capers throughout history, this book is about the greatest heist the world has ever seen—a daring raid where God's son took back what the enemy had stolen, freeing us from the power of shame, sin, and Satan. Through a fresh take on the parable of the prodigal son, and the fascinating account of a true modern day diamond heist, *The Heist* offers a bold invitation into God's boundless grace.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Chris Durso is a young pastor with an authority beyond his years. His edgy demeanor gives him license to speak life and truth into people who are lost and broken. Even seasoned Christians will rediscover their first love through his passionate words. His revelation of grace and the truth of

the gospel will compel and inspire you to step into your God-given purpose and destiny.

• Brian Houston, global senior pastor, Hillsong Church  
“The Heist is a story of grace and restoration. Readers will find refuge in the promise that God’s grace can and will stop shame in its tracks.”

• Christine Caine, cofounder of the A21 Campaign and Propel Women  
“Gutsy. Unexpected. Refreshing. Chris Durso explains the story of saving Grace in a language that both the world and the Church, sinners and so-called saints, can understand. The Heist walks us down the road with the prodigal son, inviting us to come home to the One who has a grace-party waiting. Fresh and accessible, I believe this book will help many live fully and freely in Jesus.”

• Louie Giglio, pastor of Passion City Church, founder of Passion Conferences, author of Goliath Must Fall  
“I have the privilege of being Chris Durso’s friend, and I have watched him teach that Jesus is the way to real life. I believe The Heist has the potential to remind people that whatever has been stolen or destroyed can be redeemed in an instant. I love this book and I highly recommend its author!”

• Carl Lentz, lead pastor, Hillsong New York  
“The Heist is packed with hard-hitting, attention-grabbing, and life-altering truth. Chris Durso masterfully portrays the death and resurrection of Jesus in a new and unprecedented way, that will not only catch readers off guard but draw them closer to Jesus.”

• Craig Groeschel, founder and senior pastor of Life.Church and New York Times best-selling author  
“Chris Durso manages to beautifully remind us that just like the prodigal son, we are all able to return home into the loving arms of our God.”

• Judah Smith, lead pastor of the City Church, Seattle  
“Most of our lives are spent avoiding anything that resembles a robbery. However, Pastor Chris Durso has cleverly used a metaphorical illustration to exemplify the powerful, stealthy work of grace. This grace removes the plagues from our hall of shame, enabling the guilty to appear faultless before God’s throne. To the wounded, read this powerful book with the doors unlocked and the alarm off, anticipating the possibility of a new life! This is The Heist for which the human soul longs!”

• T. D. Jakes Sr., senior pastor, The Potter’s House of Dallas  
“I’m so glad Chris Durso took the time to pen The Heist. It will change how you view Jesus and his death on the Cross. It will reveal how the road to salvation is anything but a boring, old Bible story and portray Jesus as the Mastermind working to rescue us from the clutches of Satan.”

• Lisa Bevere, minister and New York Times best-selling author of Without Rival  
“The Heist isn’t just a book that creatively retells the story of Jesus dying on the cross. It’s a book with a timeless, vitally important message that we are all loved by God, and that it doesn’t matter what we do or where we are; we

can always run into his arms. Jentezen Franklin, New York Times best-selling author and pastor of Free Chapel Worship Center “Pastor Chris has a unique ability to help us see something familiar through a different lens. This book is an incredible picture of how God came in to our spiritual homes and robbed everything that was never meant to live there. When we receive the revelation of this kind of grace, we can’t help but step up and live from a free and secure place. This book is a necessary read for each of us because we all need the fullness of this grace revelation. Alex Seeley, author and pastor, The Belonging Co., Nashville “In a culture that is constantly drowning under the strong currents of condemnation and shame, Pastor Chris Durso has thrown us all a timely lifeline with his powerful new book The Heist. Pastor Robert Madu “My son Chris Durso is not just a brilliant writer. Rather, his ability to take a doctrine of the faith and put it into everyday language is simply masterful! Jesus taught the people “as they could understand. This is the Gospel: how heaven robbed hell. This is the heart of God! What a concept! Michael Durso, senior pastor, Christ Tabernacle “Once again, Pastor Chris Durso delivers a masterpiece. I know The Heist will bring great encouragement to your life and great insight into who Jesus truly is the grave robber. Pastor Chris writes not just from a theory of Jesus but from an experience of Jesus. Chad Veach, author and pastor of Zoe Church, Los Angeles “Chris Durso speaks to the heart of this generation in his new book The Heist. He paints a powerful picture of the grace of God with courage, conviction and clarity. Chris is a much needed voice and his thoughtful reflection on the message of Christ is sure to touch many lives around the globe. Rich Wilkerson Jr., author of Sandcastle Kings, pastor of VOUS church

Chris Durso is the founding pastor at Misfit NYC, a ministry for millennials in New York. He is co-pastor of Christ Tabernacle church in Queens, New York. Chris resides with his wife, Yahriss, and two children, Dylan and Chloe, in New York.

This book will push you past pain that you didn’t know was holding you back. This book will shape your perspective and show you the heart of God for you. Chris Durso is the man. Thank you for penning this.

Gift

I bought one copy for me and gave one to my sister! Wow! Such a good read. It's amazing how we let shame hold us back - not anymore!

Phenomenal book. Completely changed my perspective of grace and renewed it in a way I never thought possible.

Pastor Chris is amazing and his book is a true best seller.

Awesome book! Worth the time to read for sure!!!

The description on the back cover lured me in. The first two sentences read, "In the ultimate act of sacrifice, Jesus robbed the Enemy of every claim he ever had on our lives. He stole all our shame and guilt and gave us back our lives so that we could live in true freedom." I am my own harshest critic and I tend to get myself bound up in unnecessary amounts of guilt at times. I have read books on grace that were Biblically sound and refreshing reminders of my identity in Christ. I hoped this book would have a similar, uplifting effect and would help me train my line of thinking to give myself grace since Christ extends it to me. Unfortunately, I found this book very difficult to finish. In the first few chapters, I found the tale of an actual criminal heist interwoven into the authors commentary and retelling of Bible passages to pique enough of my curiosity to keep me reading. By about 1/3 of the way through the book, it was challenging for me to continue to reading this author's writing style. I don't like to sound harsh, but am a firm believer in being honest and not sugar-coating things unnecessarily, so here goes: I feel as though this books message would be better delivered if it were condensed down into a single speech. When reading through the sampling of different Bible passages being retold and expanded by the author, I felt there were many sentences of redundant nature and words were not carefully chosen to have the most impact. I acknowledge that I am not a skilled, professional writer, but I consider myself well-read. I appreciate when a book has the right balance between being conversational and also efficient (not following an undue amount of rabbit-trails). Here is an example from the book: "I wonder what life was like in the prodigal son's home before he ran away. Were the brothers constantly fighting, as brothers often do? Was the younger brother tired of always playing second fiddle to an older, more responsible brother? Did he grow up hearing, "Why can't you be more like your brother?" Living in the shadow of a smarter older brother would have been tough. Is that what caused him to want to leave his house so badly? Or did he think he was missing out on something? Was he comparing his life to what the guys down the

street were doing? Did he start believing the lies? Perhaps he had been counting the days until he could collect his inheritance and be done with both his father and his brother, and he just got tired of waiting." (pgs 53-54) While much of the length of this book comes from the author inserting his speculations about exactly what was going on in the thoughts of individuals mentioned in the Bible, I was able to bookmark two locations where I felt the author shed new light on Scripture. I appreciated the perspective found in those locations. On pages 21-22, the theme of God knowing we would need a covering, from providing clothes to Adam and Eve following their sin, to providing Christ's righteousness for our sin is introduced. On page 52, the author draws a conclusion that part of the reason the slaves (after being liberated from Egypt) exhibited an attitude of defeat and were prone to complaining could've been due to their still viewing themselves as slaves. Having spent a lifetime under the oppression of slavery is likely to put a damper on optimism and confidence. In another location, Durso makes a claim that I feel was poorly stated in the least. Pondering the fact that Mark 15:44 states Pilate was surprised to hear Jesus was already dead, he writes the following: "I was confused by Pilate's astonishment, so I did some research to help me understand what he was reacting to. As I dug through commentaries, reading the historic facts noted by different theologians and scholars of the Word, I found out that in those days the cross was not necessarily intended to kill people. We might see the cross as a means to death because we know the cross as the place where Jesus ultimately met His death, but that wasn't the original intention of the cross. The purpose of the cross was to humiliate the very worst criminals." I agree that humiliation was likely part of the goal of crucifixion as a means of punishment, especially since many men were stripped of their clothing and hung on the cross naked. However, to deny that the primary goal of pounding nails through a human's wrists and feet and leaving them suspended on a wooden cross is intended as capital punishment is not logical. The intention of crucifying a person was to kill them. It was public capital punishment. Suggesting otherwise made the author's credibility suffer in my opinion. On page 161, Durso claims that at the time of Lazarus's death, Mary (Martha's sister) was an unbeliever. I am hesitant to agree with this claim for several reasons, but I'll let you read the author's words in one final quotation so you can make your own decision: "Technically, at this point, Mary too was an unbeliever. Jesus had told Martha that Lazarus would rise again, but she thought He was telling her about the distant future. Could this be why when Jesus finally arrived at the tomb, He wept (see verse 35)? Jesus wanted these sisters to know that Lazarus would live again. He wanted them to believe His word. Jesus didn't cry because He was grieving over Lazarus. He was crying because they didn't recognize fully who He was and didn't trust that His word wouldn't return void (see Isaiah 55:11)." Mary didn't understand that Jesus wasn't

talking about the bodily Resurrection that would come later for believers, but calling her an unbeliever due to a misunderstanding during a time of great grief in her life seems to be quite an assumption on the author's part. The Lord judges by the heart and only He knows exactly when Mary had placed her faith in Jesus. I feel the emphasis on Christ here is only on His Deity, with the author's interpretation leaving no room for Christ's humanity, which could certainly have wept with sorrow over his friends' loss and grief. I don't claim to know what was going through Christ's mind as He wept, and I feel we should be very cautious listening to writers, speakers, or even theologians who do claim to have such knowledge. For the reasons I've outlined above, I would not recommend this book.\*\*In the interest of full-disclosure, I received this book courtesy of Blogging for Books for the purpose of reviewing. I am not obligated to give a positive review, my opinions shared are genuine.

Originally pitched as The One Crime Jesus Did Commit, the publisher thought How Grace Robs Us of Our Shame less offensive subtitle to Chris Durso's latest book The Heist. The way God saved us from Satan's grip and frees us from ourselves, from our sin and shame, is nothing short of an incredible heist. The author elaborates the parable of the prodigal son, interwoven with the almost perfect diamonds and jewelry robbery by Leonardo Notarbartolo in Antwerp, Belgium back on 2003's Valentine's Day. Leonardo was caught afterward because of his team members panicked and failed to set the remnants which could trace back to the criminals on fire. In a perfect act of sacrifice, Jesus Christ robbed the enemy of every claim he ever had on our lives in return for grace and freedom. The narrative makes excursions to the biblical stories of David, Lazarus, Zacchaeus, and Simon Peter. What started as a sermon, so much is clear, should have kept the focus on the two initial story lines to better serve the reader. The personal stories of being a pastor's kid and church kid was a turn-off as well. It sounded too much like a recommendation to live 24/7 in a bubble called a local church, possibly unintended, but difficult to relate to as 99,99% of the rest of mankind, believers and unbelievers. Speaking of the latter, this audience may find it difficult to follow Durso in his quick steps through bible land in order to reach the party of the father who has his prodigal son back, the graceful end God planned for all of His children. Erwin Raphael McManus (Mosaic, Los Angeles, author of The Artisan Soul) wrote the foreword to The Heist.

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