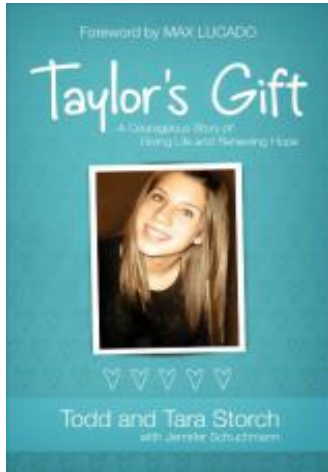


Taylor's Gift: A Courageous Story of Giving Life and Renewing Hope

by Todd and Tara Storch, with Jennifer Schuchmann



About the Book

It was the last run of their first day on the slopes, the beginning of another great family vacation for Todd and Tara Storch and their three children. But when thirteen-year-old Taylor's life was tragically cut short in a skiing accident, the Storches were overcome by the devastating loss of their daughter. Still in shock, they were asked a question no parents ever think they will hear: "Would you be willing to donate Taylor's organs?"

Their answer would change their family's lives forever and provide comfort during their darkest moments. It would also save the lives of five desperate people anxiously waiting for a heart, a liver, a cornea, a pancreas, and a kidney.

Taylor's death could have destroyed the Storches --- and in some ways it almost did. Instead, her gift of life brought them strength, knowing her heart was continuing to beat. TAYLOR'S GIFT is more than Taylor's story, or even Todd and Tara's story. It's the story of a nurse who can now be an active mom and fully present for her kids, a cowboy who now has the strength and ability to give back to the community, a biker who can now give of himself completely, and a teenager who can now see her future for the first time.

It's a story of finding strength in God and creating good even in the darkest times.

It's a story of hope.

Discussion Guide

1. In the book's foreword, author Max Lucado writes: "It is a story that causes every parent to grimace, every person to wince." What was your emotional reaction to this book?

2. In chapter 1, the reader experiences the shock of a family vacation devastated by Taylor's terrible ski accident. The following day Todd and Tara were asked if they would be willing to donate Taylor's organs. If you were in their shoes, how might you have responded to this request?
3. In the middle of chapter 2 (p. 22), "Snapshots of Taylor," the Storches share an incident in which Taylor befriended a loner at school. A couple pages later, Taylor's push to move special education students into the main school area is successful. What do these incidents reveal about Taylor? What might make a thirteen-year-old respond in this way?
4. The Storches felt that in their family "they had a five-piece puzzle and everything fit perfectly." Have you ever experienced a time of contentment like this, when everything in your life seemed to just fit perfectly? What did that feel like, and what did it feel like when/if that time ended? What does the Storches' story teach us about appreciating what we have now, not knowing where our journey may lead?
5. In chapters 3–6, the book jumps to the stories of four organ recipients who would eventually benefit from Taylor's death. These include the Cowboy (kidney/pancreas recipient), the Nurse (heart recipient), the Bike Rider (kidney recipient) and the Teenager (cornea recipient). Which of these stories is most memorable to you --- and why?
6. In chapter 5, the Bike Rider asks a priest if he should prolong his life through dialysis or let himself die. The priest offers him comfort and the assurance of God's love in either decision, but says he personally hopes the twenty-two-year-old will choose dialysis. In these life and death situations, what is it that makes a person choose to live?
7. Imagine a neurosurgeon telling you before your daughter's surgery: "In the twenty-two years I've done this surgery, I've never seen anyone survive it" (ch. 7). Would you be more likely to respond like Tara (screaming and flailing) or like Todd (calm and seemingly in control)? Where would you turn for strength?
8. At different points in the journey of letting Taylor go, Todd and Tara think about "ending" the pain by leaving the country or by overdosing on sleeping pills. What role did their faith play in helping them move past these desperate thoughts?
9. Todd says he feels God gave him the gift of "busyness" to get through the intensity of the waves of grief that threatened to pull him under. How was Todd's busyness a help? How may it have hindered him from grieving?
10. When faced with debilitating grief, Tara becomes angry at those who choose to move on or move past it. Did Tara have a right to be angry at God after seeing her friend's Facebook post about her son's life being saved? What do you believe was happening when Tara began to think *This is all for [God's] glory*?
11. At one point in the story, a casual friend of Tara's begins to pull her out of her grief by giving her "10 points for planting a tomato" or "10 points for getting a massage." How did this friend's creativity push Tara to move past her grief? Would you be bold enough to do something creative like that if one of your friends lost a loved one?
12. How did Todd wait on God in the process of birthing Taylor's Gift Foundation? Do you believe the many doors that opened to build the foundation and remind the Storches of Taylor's imprint on their lives were coincidences --- or what

the Storches call “Of course!” reminders of God’s love and presence?

13. What kind of resolution did meeting the organ recipients bring to Todd and Tara? If you were them, would you want to maintain a close personal tie to an organ recipient? Why or why not?

14. Todd and Tara had many friends who actively cared for them during their grief. Do you have friends like that? How can you cultivate community like that around you and your family?

15. What was the most significant or surprising thing you took away from reading this story?

Author Bio

Todd Storch is a successful consultant, public speaker and community leader. After the death of his daughter, he began to pursue his new God-given mission to promote organ donation. Todd is cofounder and president of Taylor’s Gift Foundation, where he and his wife, Tara, work tirelessly to help those who have been touched by organ donation. Todd is honored to lead the foundation that has helped contribute to the registration of millions of new organ donors and is still changing the conversation about organ donation.

Tara is first and foremost a mom, but she is also a sales and marketing professional, is active in her church, and is a community leader. She leads the marketing efforts of Taylor’s Gift Foundation with the mission to “increase organ donation to Regift Life, Renew Health, and Restore Families.” She loves helping others recognize the beautiful gift we all have within.

Todd and Tara have shared their story on “Good Morning America,” “The Today Show,” “The Ellen DeGeneres Show” and other national media. They are the parents of Taylor, Ryan and Peyton, and have made their home in Texas.

Critical Praise

“May this story bring hope to anyone who has suffered tragedy. There is life after loss. It comes after a monsoon of tears. But it comes.”

— from the foreword by Max Lucado

“As a journalist, I believe in the transformative power of storytelling. TAYLOR’S GIFT is an exquisite example of the power to move people...the power to heal...the power to inspire through a breathtaking story.”

— Juju Chang, correspondent, ABC News “Nightline”

“Tara and Todd Storch share their story so openly that you will be inspired no matter what circumstances are in your life. I love how TAYLOR’S GIFT shows the blessings that can come if you have hope and follow your purpose.”

— Roger Staubach, former quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys and executive chairman, Jones Lang LaSalle Americas

“The Storches are a truly amazing and inspiring family! They show beautifully how faith and hope can bring you

through the toughest of times. TAYLOR'S GIFT clearly shows that there can be a purpose in the pain.”

— Carly Patterson, Olympic gold medalist

“This is a book about love on so many levels. How grieving parents turned their anguish into joy by seeing their daughter live through others.”

— Cynthia Izaguirre, WFAA-TV news anchor

“Todd and Tara Storch are a true inspiration. Their story is amazing and touching. This book promotes faith, family, and the gift of life. Taylor was a special person and her spirit will live on forever. This book has been a gift that has changed my life. It will change yours too.”

— Jarrett Payton, ESPN analyst, radio personality

“Tara and Todd’s courage and strength in the face of tragedy are an inspiration to us all. The entire Storch family’s dedication to Taylor’s memory and Taylor’s gift makes them my heroes.”

— Ann Lopez, kidney donor

“In TAYLOR’S GIFT, the Storchs are an example of an ordinary family that experienced an extraordinary and tragic event. The Storch family transitioned from grieving to becoming a shining example of giving the ultimate gift of life all over the world.”

— Everson Walls, NFL all-pro, kidney donor

“In TAYLOR’S GIFT, Todd and Tara Storch take us inside the agony of losing a child. But more than that, they take us inside the unexpected joy that comes in seeing God use the worst thing we can imagine for good, helping us to believe he will do that in our lives too.”

— Nancy Guthrie, author, HOLDING ON TO HOPE and HEARING JESUS SPEAK INTO YOUR SORROW

"TAYLOR'S GIFT portrays the hope that comes with blazing new trails in an age of modern miracles."

— Booklist

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