

# The Rigors of Refinement and the Goodness of God

*Devastated after a home invasion, a miscarriage, a cancer diagnosis, being dropped by his insurance provider, a surprise pregnancy and a failed church plant, Peter Chin examines the reality of suffering, the rigors of refinement and the mysterious, untamable goodness of God in intensely personal, funny and hopeful new book.*

## What is it?

When Peter Chin moved his family into an inner-city neighborhood to plant a church, he was sure he was doing what God wanted. But in the span of a year, his family experienced a heartbreaking miscarriage, a break-in at their home, a breast cancer diagnosis, the termination of their health insurance and the failure of the church they'd relocated to plant. Why would God allow these things to happen?

But, God wasn't finished. He had one more surprise prepared for the Chins - a child, conceived in the most unlikely and dangerous of circumstances, through whom Peter would realize that although God's ways were wild and strange, they were always *good*.

Filled with twists and turns, deep insights, and surprising humor, *Blindsided by God* explores the reality of suffering, the mystery of God's ways, and why, even in the darkest times, there's always reason for hope.

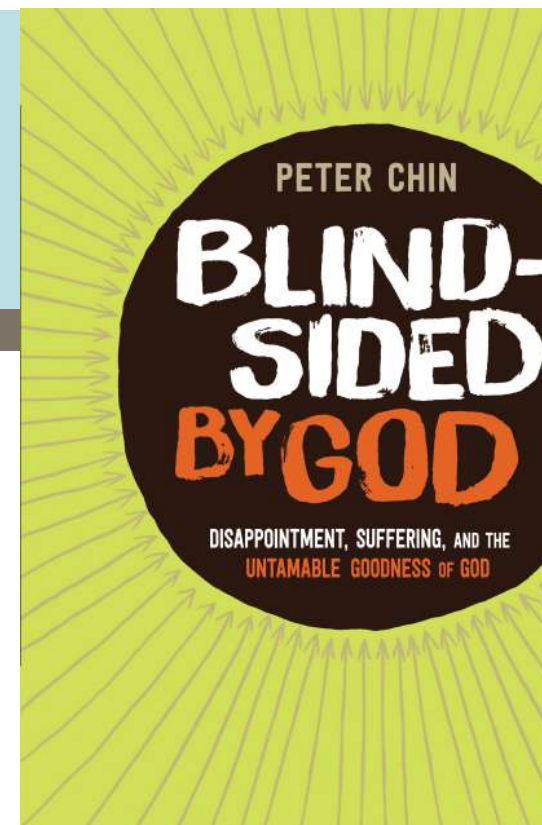
## How is it different than other books on this topic?

The book is a **hybrid of memoir and teaching**, which uses the story of the Chins' heartbreaking year to teach a healthy and biblical theology of suffering.

Each chapter of Peter's story **helps the reader understand suffering in the context of their faith**. It reinforces the fact that those who follow Christ are not immune to suffering. But at the same time, it is a wonderful illustration that God is still good, just not in the simplistic and mechanistic way that we typically envision him – His is a *wild* and *mysterious* goodness. It shows how God can use suffering to do miraculous work and refine us. It also demonstrates how even after seeing a miracle of God, suffering does not cease. God may not provide happy endings, but instead, amazing glimpses of Himself and His ways that give us strength and hope to endure even the worst that this life has to offer.

The book is also written in a **very personal and engaging manner: biblical, theologically informed**, and yet filled with **honest and often humorous descriptions of life as a pastor, husband, and father**. It is **sober** and **even irreverent at times, but real and filled with an authentic, divine joy, as well**.

Moreover, **very few books that include stories of breast cancer are written by men and husbands from a personal -- and/or Christian -- standpoint**. Other books on the market dealing with breast cancer are by and large professional texts written by doctors or researchers.



## BOOK DETAILS

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## Who are the audiences and why is it relevant to them?

**Christians struggling with trauma, pain, suffering and to trust God's sovereignty and goodness.** The difficult topic of suffering (and why God ordains it) is hardly new to Christians. But the Prosperity Movement and 'The American Dream' have perverted it, teaching us that following God ensures material, spiritual and physical blessings. So those in the grip of loss and disappointment are often left questioning the goodness of God.

**\* Cancer patients, survivors and their families.** Includes those who are facing cancer or have a loved one who is. There are 12 million people in the US who have cancer and that population is desperately searching for real stories of encouragement and hope .

**\* The breast cancer community.** Over 200,000 women are diagnosed per year. A book that speaks to them has the potential to speak to millions of Americans for years.

**\* Families facing an at-risk pregnancy,** as doctors had advised the Chins to terminate their pregnancy in order to begin treatment as soon as possible. Millions of pregnancies a year are considered 'at risk', and couples are faced with terrible choices that they feel completely unprepared to make.

**\* Church planters.** Church planting is no longer a fringe ministry of the church, but the dominant way in which churches are spread and grown in the United States. As such, leaders everywhere are hungry for resources. While most resources approach the topic from a superficial and pragmatic standpoint, this book stands apart because it reveals a more nuanced portrayal of church planting: church planting and the health of the family; church planting and the notion of worldly success. These are subjects that few resources address.

**\* Asian-American community** (17 million people, the highest-income, best-educated, and fastest growing racial group in the US). Asian-American evangelicals are highly engaged in faith (church attendance surpasses that of whites, 76% to 64%), especially in key demographics of 18-25. Asian-American pastors such as Francis Chan, Dave Gibbons, and Eugene Cho are influential voices on a national level, and Peter Chin is poised to join their ranks.

## Who is Peter Chin?

Peter Chin is a pastor, writer, speaker, and advocate for racial reconciliation. A graduate of Yale University and Fuller Seminary, he has pastored and planted churches in Los Angeles, Virginia, Washington D.C. and Seattle, and now serves as lead pastor of [Rainier Avenue Church](#), located in one of the most culturally diverse zip codes of the United States.

As a writer, Chin is a frequent contributor to *Christianity Today* and *RELEVANT Magazine*, and his [2013 essay for Christianity Today](#) was one of the most widely read articles of that year for the site. He blogs on faith from the multi-cultural perspective in his "Third Culture" column hosted by [ChristianityToday.com](#). He is also a devotional writer for [Our Daily Journey](#), a ministry of Our Daily Bread.

His advocacy work in racial reconciliation has been profiled by national news outlets, including [CBS Sunday Morning](#), the [Washington Post](#), and NPR's [Tell Me More](#) and [All Things Considered](#).

He lives in Seattle with his wife Carol, a breast cancer survivor, and their five children.



Peter Chin

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*" ... if I make any claim to credibility - the operative word being 'if' - it's not by virtue of what I've done well, but by what I've seen. I've witnessed God save me and my family from the darkest of situations, in the strangest of ways. If I comment on faith or church or race, as I often do, I do so as a person who trusts that God can do anything ... but knows that He rarely does so in the manner we would like."*

[www.prbythebook.com](http://www.prbythebook.com)

## Chapter by Chapter Synopsis

**Chapter 1: It's Aspen, Not Old Spice** - Peter meets his future wife, Carol, and then learns that love and pain might be related.

**Chapter 2: Prepare to Be Broken** – The church planters' training that Peter received and how, although well intentioned, it could not possibly have prepared him for what was to come.

**Chapter 3: Welcome to the Neighborhood** – Even before they move into their new home, it is burglarized. Other incidents threaten to isolate the Chins from the community they came to serve.

**Chapter 4: "It's Cancer"** – The story of Carol's diagnosis in November of 2009 and its immediate impact upon the family and church. Peter's theological and personal understanding of God begins to shake as a result.

**Chapter 5: A Drop in Coverage** – The Chins' insurance provider calls Carol's cancer a pre-existing condition that will not be covered. Feeling abandoned by God, Peter's faith begins to weaken even further.

**Chapter 6: Triple Negative** – Carol's biopsy reveals that she has a particularly deadly kind of cancer that responds to very few modern therapies. Peter's fear overwhelms him, and his conception of God shattered.

**Chapter 7: "He's Up to Something"** – In for her mastectomy, a routine pre-surgery blood test reveals that Carol is pregnant. Their shock turns into submission as they realize that God is up to something. Peter's faith is being rebuilt into something stronger.

**Chapter 8: "I Don't"** – An expert informs the Chins that they should terminate their pregnancy immediately, or risk Carol's life. Peter and Carol struggle with the decision, but are convicted by God that He has given them this child for a reason.

**Chapter 9: The Seminary of Suffering** – A new type of person begins to attend the church plant - the truly broken. Peter discovers that it is his own suffering that best enables him to encourage and minister to these people.

**Chapter 10: The Mulberry Tree and the Wisteria** – Carol's chemo begins, and she and Peter find themselves spiritually and physically living hand to mouth, only able to focus on the day in front of them. But there is still very real joy that they find in that season, particularly in their daughters.

**Chapter 11: A (Minor) Miracle** – Overcome with fatigue, the Chins enter the final months of chemotherapy and become aware of God's daily provision in their lives. The story of the day that the baby stopped moving is also told.

**Chapter 12: Nothing Can Hinder the Lord From Saving** – The day of Jonathan Chin's birth, miraculous from start to finish. Carol's mother arrives from Seattle hours before labor begins. Carol, even after chemo, labors without an epidural. Jonathan Chin is born in full health.

**Chapter 13: Not Just Higher - Better** – Peter leaves the hospital for a speaking engagement just down the street from the hospital, and is able to lead a young woman to Christ. The Chins read a medical study that pregnant breast cancer patients have a better chance of survival. God's loving and mysterious plan is finally unveiled.

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