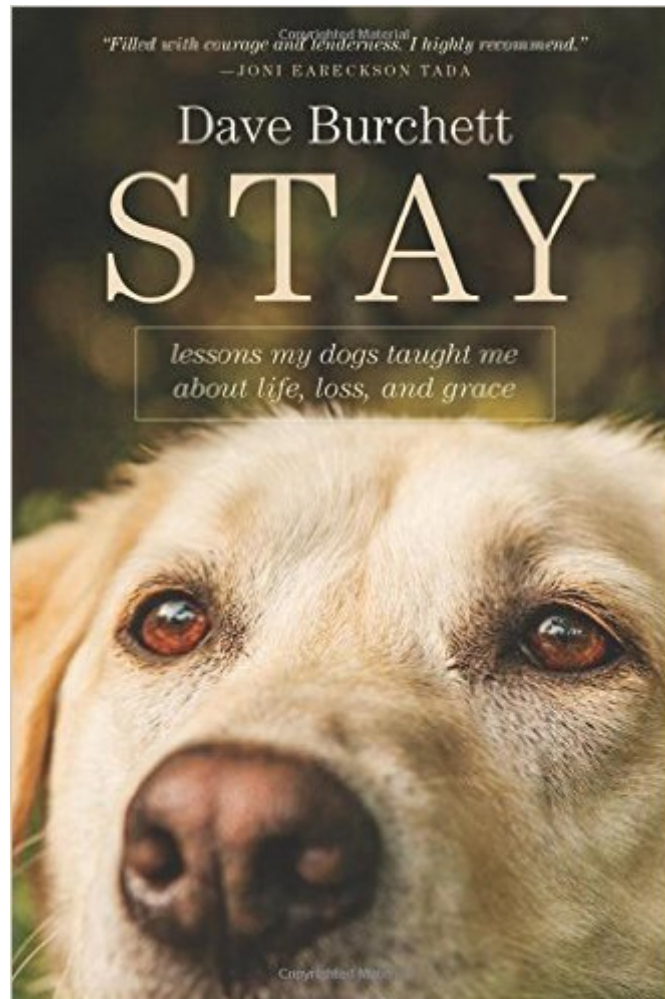


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# Stay: Lessons My Dogs Taught Me About Life, Loss, And Grace



## Synopsis

Amazing (Furry) Lessons from a Dogâ€™s Life Youâ€™ll be enthralled by this story of a man and his lovable Labrador retriever, Hannah, and what their canine friendship can show us about life, grace, and long walks in the park. Hannah was Daveâ€™s best friend. He couldnâ€™t imagine starting a day without her tail wagging an energetic greeting, her body wiggling with sheer gratitude when her food dish was filled, and her unbridled enthusiasm for tennis balls. (How she fit three tennis balls in her mouth at once heâ€™ll never know.) So when Dave first learned of Hannahâ€™s cancer diagnosis, he decided to take whatever time he had left with Hannah to cherish the moments and capture his thoughts in a journal. As he wrote about his canine friend, he soon realized that Hannah was an able (and furry) mentor of faith, grace, kindness, and forgiveness. The lessons were invaluable: from being present to trusting the master. When Hannah lived well past the expected time frame, Dave started to see that the insights he was gaining were more than just journal entries about a family pet. Through Hannahâ€™s antics, God was preparing Dave for life itself. You wonâ€™t want to miss this heartwarming tale of a dog who knew how to live . . . and showed her owner how.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Iâ€™m often suspicious of biographies. Most of the time I wonder how well the author got to know the subject of the biography. Did they get to interview the subject personally? Was the subject completely honest with the biographer? Does the biographer have an agenda or viewpoint that contradicts with the real story? I donâ€™t have any of those concerns regarding Dave Burchettâ€™s

new book, *Stay: Lessons My Dogs Taught Me About Life, Loss, and Grace*. Though Dave is writing about Hannah, and later Maggie, heâ€™s telling their story from his perspective â€“ that of a best friend. Because Hannah and Maggie are manâ€™s best friend â€“ dogs. Dave has written what I think is the best biography of an animal as told from a human viewpoint that Iâ€™ve ever read. Iâ€™ve not stopped thinking about what the vet said after giving Dave the emotional news of a terminal diagnosis for this beloved furry friend. The doctor explained that Hannah didnâ€™t know she had cancer and would live each remaining day with all the life she had in her. â€œDogs have no fear of death, so they live in the moment. Enjoy each moment that you have.â€• What began Daveâ€™s journey of observing and learning from Hannah has the potential to shake you to the core of how you live life. The lessons he learned along the way are for all of us. The freedom and grace Dave discovered through the months that remained for Hannah will shatter your view of rules, legalistic morality, anger, and even death. Itâ€™s not a fun story. I knew what was going to happen to Hannah, yet I still cried as Dave recounted the end of Hannahâ€™s life. Initially that was the end of the book. But, in the way that God always gets the last laugh, there would be more to the story. Maggie. A new rescue dog.

**\*spoilers\*** Dave Burchett, leads us on a story of goodness and grace through the life he leads with his dogs, but mostly with his best life friend, Hannah, a golden retriever, the dog his family had during one of the lowest times of their life. When Burchettâ€™s wife was diagnosed with cancer, he started a journal. The book is written from the first person, and as journal entries I loved that about the book. This book was fantastic. During Joniâ€™s cancer treatments, Hannah stayed by their side and seems to â€œreadâ€• her owners behaviors and their love. Giving them some comfort and peace during each treatment and after her surgery. Then sweet Hannah was diagnosed with cancer. They chose a course of treatment that would only make Hannah comfortable and keep her out of pain. During those next few months they saw a lifetime of love, and grace in the way that Hannah lived her life. Putting their needs first. Hannah lived in the moment and was free. One of the best quotes in the book was when the vet told them this â€œdogs donâ€™t fear death, they live in the momentâ€• After Hannahâ€™s illness took her, Dave thought he would never be able to love again, however, when he saw sweet Savannahâ€™s face, he fell in love. When they brought Savannah home, they knew that her name was too close to Hannahâ€™s so they eventually changed her name to Maggie. In doing so they learned that Maggie, didnâ€™t really realize her name well. When they enrolled Maggie in obedience class, they learned the things she needed. In doing so they learned Maggie needed a leader, someone to take her and tell her yes, no, sit, stay,

the commands in every dog's life, as well as teach her to walk on a leash and guide.

I loved this book. I'm pretty busy, so sometimes it takes me a while to get through a book, even a really good one. However, when a book really, really grabs me I am known to shove everything else away so I can climb into it...and that's what happened when I began reading *Stay*, by Dave Burchett. *Stay* is an easygoing, conversational recounting of the spiritual lessons Burchett learned through his two dogs, Hannah and Maggie. This actually makes such superior sense. Why hasn't there been a book like this before? I've often thought, as the owner of four (yes, four--though one actually belongs to my son and his fiancée) dogs, that there are spiritual lessons in the relationships among us. Burchett grabbed his pen and journal and put them down on paper to share with us. The first lesson is perhaps the most significant. As Burchett's wife Joni battled cancer, Hannah was steady, sure, and never condescending. She was a precious, visible reminder of God's closeness to their family as they traveled through the valley of the shadow of death. There are other lessons. For instance, watching Hannah shake excess water off her body one day when she emerged from the water, Burchett spiritualizes us to "shake off the lies." The enemy of our soul assails us, drenches us if you will, with lies. We have to learn to shake them off, remembering to "step back, be still, and listen for the quiet voice of the Holy Spirit." Burchett learned another critical lesson from Maggie. On the first day of her obedience training (and she needed obedience training!), the instructor said something that truly preaches: "First of all, you have to teach her to sit and stay. When she is sitting, she can't jump and misbehave." Yup. Application? ..

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