

## Parable of the Brown Girl: The Sacred Lives of Girls of Color

**Khristi Lauren Adams**

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Fulfilling the promise that “the last shall be first,” Khristi Lauren Adams’s *The Parable of the Brown Girl* is a moving call to power for black women and girls. Drawing on biblical stories and Adams’s personal experiences as a spiritual mentor and minister, it’s a book about reclaiming grace in everyday life.

The stories of girls of color are often ignored, Adams says; their experiences are relegated to stereotypes, turned into tragedies, or used to support nonblack narratives about blackness. Centering black women’s voices instead, this book addresses struggles specific to black girls that affect them through puberty and beyond.

Candid and compassionate, it includes seven “parables,” including “The Parable of the Brown Girl Finding Her Voice” and “The Parable of the Fass Brown Girl.” Girls whom Adams counseled speak for themselves through these tales, sharing their stories, and recounting progress made, in their own words. Psalms and other spiritual texts support the book’s message that spirituality must empower black girls instead of belittling them or perpetuating cultural violence on them.

Each chapter focuses on one girl’s experience before addressing universal issues that black girls face. Identity, sexuality, health, relationships, and racism are among the common problems named; hypersexualization, unfair expectations, and pressure to conform also harm young women. Adams argues that all can be surmounted through faith. Compelling, heartfelt mini-sermons explain how black girls’ perceived inequality is actually divinity: “By engaging black girls as the *imago Dei*, we connect deeper to ourselves, to one another, and to God.”

In *Parable of a Brown Girl*, Khristi Lauren Adams—a speaker, advocate, chaplain, and ordained Baptist minister—combats negative messages about black girls with the direct, radical, loving notion that black girls are created in God’s image and should be treated with the respect given to all that is holy.

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