One of the greatest gifts parents can give their children is the assurance that mom and dad love them just as they are, apart from anything that they do. But telling them once won’t make it stick. Kids need to be reminded of that foundational fact over and over, until the truth takes root deep within their hearts.

In the same way, children need to hear again and again that their heavenly Father loves them and wants to spend time with them— even if they’re not wonderfully talented, extremely smart, or exceptionally popular.

That message of God’s unconditional acceptance and deep desire to enjoy a friendship with his children is at the heart of this book. Originally published by Crossway in 1994, The Children of the King has now been redesigned to enchant a whole new generation of children. Combining the warm narrative of best-selling author Max Lucado and the engaging illustrations of award-winning artist Sergio Martinez, The Children of the King will give parents and grandparents fresh opportunities to remind children of God’s never-changing affection for them.

That truth—the assurance of God’s delight in them—is a blessing that has eternal impact on all children of the King everywhere.

Max Lucado is a best-selling, inspirational author and speaker, and a minister of preaching at Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas. His award-winning books have been translated into more than 40 languages and have occupied spots on every major national best-seller list. His books include You Are Special!, Only a Child, Ears that Hear, and The Day and the Fish.

Sergio Martinez has done freelance illustrative work for Disney Press and other major publishers, and has illustrated internationally awarded gift editions of several literary classics, including Peter Pan, Pinocchio, and A Christmas Carol. His classic style graces the pages of many children’s books, including Crossway’s best-selling children’s book, You Are Special!, also written by Max Lucado.

CHILDREN AGES 4 AND UP

U.S. $17.99

The Children of the King

Illustrations by Sergio Martinez

A Timeless Tale for a New Generation

When it was originally released in 1994, The Children of the King introduced a generation of young people to God’s desire to enjoy a relationship with each of them, no matter what they had to offer him. With charming illustrations by award-winning artist Sergio Martinez, this heartwarming story by Max Lucado now takes readers on a new, vivid journey at the same time—thanks to a new generation of 9- to 10-year-olds.

In timeless truths—like their heavenly Father loves them and delights in them just the way they are—is one of the most lasting messages we can give our children. It’s a truth no child should have to live without.

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The Children of the King
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Summary: When the king comes to adopt some children, they are all too busy trying to impress him with their talents, except for one little girl who offers only her kind heart.

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Along time ago in a land much like your own, there was a village. And in the village lived five orphans. A lonely family of fatherless children, they had banded together against the cold.

One day the king learned of their misfortune and decided to adopt them. He announced that he would be their father and would come for them soon.

When the children learned that they had a new father, and their father was the king, and that the king was coming to visit, they went wild with excitement.
When the people of the village learned that the children had a father, and their father was the king, and that the king was coming to the village, they were excited as well. They went out to see the children and told them what to do.

“You need to impress the king,” they explained. “Only those with great gifts to give will be allowed to live in the castle.”

The people didn’t know the king. They just thought that all kings want to be impressed.

So the children began preparing gifts to offer the king. They worked long and hard to be sure the king would approve.
One of the children who knew how to carve decided to give the king a wonderful work of wooden art. He set his knife against the soft bark of the elm and whittled. The small blocks of wood came alive with the eyes of a sparrow or the nose of a horse.

His sister decided to present the king with a painting that captured the beauty of the heavens—a painting worthy to hang in his castle.

Another sister chose music as her way to impress the king. For long hours she practiced with her voice and mandolin. Village people would stop at her window and listen as her music took wings and soared.

Yet another child set out to turn the king’s head with his wisdom. Late hours would find his candle lit and his books open. Geography. Math. Chemistry. The breadth of his study was matched only by the depth of his desire. Surely a king would appreciate all his knowledge.
But there was one sister who had nothing to offer. Her hand was clumsy with the knife, her fingers stiff with the brush. When the little girl opened her mouth to sing, the sound was hoarse. She wasn’t much of a reader. She believed she had no talent. And so she believed she had no gift.

All she had to offer was her heart, for her heart was good. She spent her time at the city gates, watching the people come and go. She would earn pennies to buy food for her brothers and sisters by grooming people’s horses or feeding their animals. She was a simple stable girl. But she had a good heart.

She knew the beggars by name. She took time to pet each dog. She welcomed home the travelers and greeted the strangers.

“How was your journey?” she would ask.
“Tell me what you learned on your visit.”
“How is your husband?”
“What do you enjoy your new work?”

She was full of questions for people because her heart was big and she cared about people. They were all the same to her—the beggars and the rich. She cared for all of them just the way they were.
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