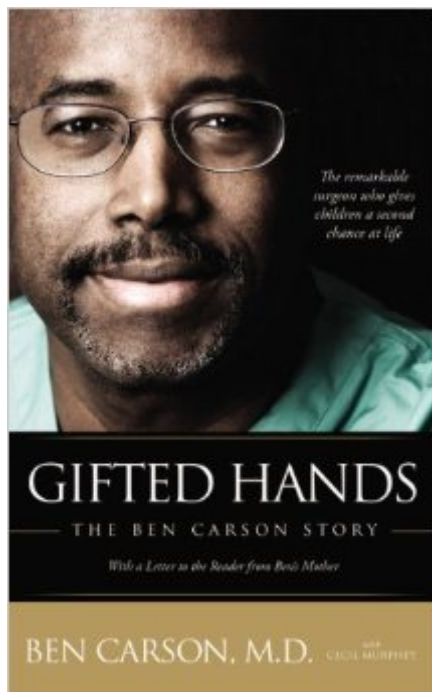


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# Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story



## Synopsis

Ben Carson, M.D., works medical miracles. Today, he's one of the most celebrated neurosurgeons in the world. In *Gifted Hands*, he tells of his inspiring odyssey from his childhood in inner-city Detroit to his position as director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital at age 33. Ben Carson is a role model for anyone who attempts the seemingly impossible as he takes you into the operating room where he has saved countless lives. Filled with fascinating case histories, this is the dramatic and intimate story of Ben Carson's struggle to beat the odds -- and of the faith and genius that make him one of the greatest life-givers of the century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

YA-- A brief, easy-to-read autobiography of a black man who is one of today's leading neurosurgeons. While pursuing his career, Carson encountered prejudice, negative peer pressure, and politics in getting a job. His sense of humor, faith in God, patience, and his belief in the work ethic come through without preaching. In the last chapter, Carson gives recommendations to students on ways to live and to achieve. --Claudia Moore, W. T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, VA  
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In 1987, Dr. Benjamin Carson gained worldwide recognition for his part in the first successful separation of Siamese twins joined at the back of the head. The extremely complex and delicate operation, five months in the planning and twenty-two hours in the execution, involved a surgical

plan that Carson helped initiate. Carson pioneered again in a rare procedure known as hemispherectomy, giving children without hope a second chance at life through a daring operation in which he literally removed one half of their brain. But such breakthroughs aren't unusual for Ben Carson. He's been beating the odds since he was a child. Raised in inner-city Detroit by a mother with a third grade education, Ben lacked motivation. He had terrible grades. And a pathological temper threatened to put him in jail. But Sonya Carson convinced her son that he could make something of his life, even though everything around him said otherwise. Trust in God, a relentless belief in his own capabilities, and sheer determination catapulted Ben from failing grades to the top of his class--and beyond to a Yale scholarship . . . the University of Michigan Medical School . . . and finally, at age 33, the directorship of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. Today, Dr. Ben Carson holds twenty honorary doctorates and is the possessor of a long string of honors and awards, including the Horatio Alger Award, induction into the "Great Blacks in Wax" Museum in Baltimore, Maryland, and an invitation as Keynote Speaker at the 1997 President's National Prayer Breakfast. Gifted Hands is the riveting story of one man's secret for success, tested against daunting odds and driven by an incredible mindset that dares to take risks. This inspiring autobiography takes you into the operating room to witness surgeries that made headlines around the world--and into the private mind of a compassionate, God-fearing physician who lives to help others. Through it all shines a humility, quick wit, and down-to-earth style that make this book one you won't easily forget. Dr. Benjamin Carson is director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He lives with his wife, Candy, and three sons in West Friendship, Maryland. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

"Gifted Hands" sets the the standards straight, which is that through hard work, determination, and sheer persistence --the American dream, the good life is attainable. Inequality didn't stop him from unveiling his potential. Ben Carson makes it apparent that with the right mind, spirit, and purpose an odyssey from the inner-city of Detroit to renowned neurosurgeon can not be explained by a mere fluke. Gifted Hand is not just an autobiography, it is motivational, inspirational, and can be viewed as an archetype to guild many who can relate. The book is an inspiration to those searching for a way out, but unaware on where to begin. It is a motivation in continuing forward in spite of the roadblocks and challenges that lie in the way. And finally, a fine example to the many young people with backgrounds similar to Ben Carson's who can see his path as an embodiment to success. Many components make this book a page turner: Ben Carson faced set backs and hurdles on the road to become a neurosurgeon. However, with hurdles comes resilience. His character comes with

humility and kindness. He displays spiritual faith, which pulled him through tough setbacks as a neurosurgeon. Those, of course, are few of the many reasons why I enjoyed reading this book. Carson also adds some wonderful words of wisdom; my favorite, which is derived from the bible, is that "no knowledge gained is ever wasted." In fact, it was his willingness to learn about classical music that was conducive to his acceptance at John Hopkins University. The lesson that I took away from this book is to never give-up. What Ben Carson had to go through required, by all means, strength, compassion, and an unrelenting pursuit of knowledge and compassion. The real truth is to remain loyal to whatever is your purpose in life and make every effort in moving forward towards it. That is what is most important to me. Great and inspirational book.

A friend recommended this book and I'm glad I took her advice. Great story of someone who, with the guidance of his amazing, tough-love mother, rose to levels of success that even he probably did not expect. His common sense, innate talent, and admirable work ethic, coupled with a stalwart faith in God, make him a role model for all. I especially liked the way he declined the limelight after doing a groundbreaking surgery. He could have ridden that wave to fame and fortune, but chose instead to continue to work diligently on behalf of his patients. I also appreciate the way he prioritizes his time. This is a guy who could go in any direction, but has figured out that keeping family and God foremost is the most important thing he can do. At the same time, doing that has enabled him to achieve as much as he has. I hope he runs for President! He has my vote. Our nation desperately needs someone with his incisive intelligence and alliance with God.

I bought an earlier edition of this book, which is no longer readily available. Ben Carson was a young black kid in an inner city neighborhood, going to a less than desirable school. His father left his life while he was still fairly young, and his mother raised him and his brother alone. She was a very inspirational person, and motivated both of them to become achievers. Through a series of incidents, which I would attribute to the providence of God, Ben was able to receive a fine education in medical school. His story is winsomely told, and I couldn't put the book down. I kept thinking, I have to stop reading and go to bed, but then I'd think, well, I'll read just a little bit more. I finished at 4 am. After Ben got his education, he began, over time, to do some very challenging forms of brain surgery. One in which he is particularly adept is known as hemispherectomy. This is done when a child receives a brain injury that causes the child to have seizures at increasing frequency. These children will die without intervention. The surgery itself is very risky, and there is no guarantee a person will survive the surgery. In addition, bleeding is generally profuse. The surgeon removes the

half of the brain that has the injury. In young children, the brains are still able to adapt so that most children will eventually become normal, though it takes time. Most surgeons won't attempt this surgery, and it has fallen out of favor several times because of the risks involved. However, it is the only chance for survival these children have. Dr. Carson has lost a couple of patients, but has been able to save most. The book ends with an account of a surgery Dr. Carson performed on conjoined twins. It is described in some detail. Ben credits God with his talents, and it is obvious from reading the book that he put in a lot of hard work to gain the skills he has. Ben is a Seventh-day Adventist. This is a denomination I have studied in depth. My heartfelt desire is that he will learn to regard Jesus as his sabbath rest, and recognize that keeping the sabbath is not the path to salvation; God's unmerited grace in Jesus is.

This is a fantastic book! The beginning of this reading explains Doctor Ben Carson's childhood as a troubled boy, without a father. There are many chapters that are inspiring and give hope to young teens. The book progresses to explain his young adult life where he studies and works during the summer, to achieve his dream as a physician. Once I got about half way through the book, I COULD NOT PUT IT DOWN! Doctor Carson talks about his career as a physician, saving countless lives. You can almost picture yourself in the hospital as he performs a hemispherectomy or craniotomy on a dying child. Lastly, Ben Carson, is a great man of God. Reading this book may even strengthen your faith!

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