



# The Friends We Keep: Unleashing Christianity's Compassion for Animals

*Laura Hobgood-Oster*

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Today we find ourselves in an anomaly in human history: many of our lives are empty of animals. Many of us have pets or watch documentaries on Animal Planet, but, for the most part, we humans don't really know how all the other species on our planet live today. And as Laura Hobgood-Oster reveals, many of them are not living very well?sadly, not very well at all.

Seeking to awaken Christians to the place and, too often, plight of animals in the twenty-first century, *The Friends We Keep* gently but astutely introduces the situations animals face today?as companions, as animals in sport, as animals raised for food, and as creatures in the wild?and simultaneously retells a myriad of often surprising and instructive stories from the long, rich history of Christianity. We see and experience animals as Christians have for generations?as beloved companions to the saints, as unfortunate prisoners in Roman arenas, as sentient and compassionate recipients and givers of hospitality, and as good and worthy beings created by God. Once upon a time, it seems?not too terribly long ago?animals held an important place in Christianity.

Could it be, then, that Christianity can be good news for animals today?

With a guide for group discussion and ideas for how people of faith can respond, this thoroughly engaging and enlightening book is essential for all who desire to live compassionately.

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