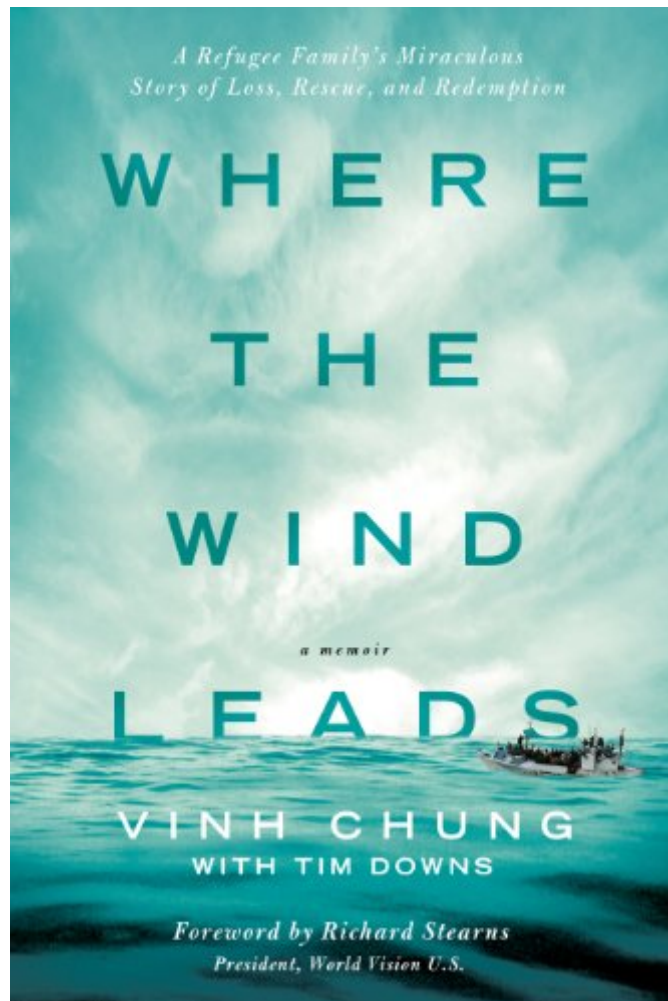


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# Where The Wind Leads: A Refugee Family's Miraculous Story Of Loss, Rescue, And Redemption



## Synopsis

Back Cover: "The account of Dr. Chung and his family will inspire you to believe in second chances and miracles and the God who gives them both." -Max Lucado, New York Times best-selling author

My name is Vinh Chung. This is a story that spans two continents, ten decades, and eleven thousand miles. When I was three and a half years old, my family was forced to flee Vietnam in June 1979, a place we had never heard of somewhere in the heartland of America. Several weeks later my family lay half-dead from dehydration in a derelict fishing boat jammed with ninety-three refugees lost in the middle of the South China Sea. We arrived in the United States with nothing but the clothes on our backs and unable to speak a single word of English. Today my family holds twenty-one university degrees. How we got from there to here is quite a story. *Where the Wind Leads* is the remarkable account of Vinh Chung and his refugee family's daring escape from communist oppression for the chance of a better life in America. It's a story of personal sacrifice, redemption, endurance against almost insurmountable odds, and what it truly means to be American. All author royalties from the sale of this book will go to benefit World Vision.

Flap Copy: Vinh Chung was born in South Vietnam, just eight months after it fell to the communists in 1975. His family was wealthy, controlling a rice-milling empire worth millions; but within months of the communist takeover, the Chungs lost everything and were reduced to abject poverty. Knowing that their children would have no future under the new government, the Chungs decided to flee the country. In 1979, they joined the legendary "boat people" and sailed into the South China Sea, despite knowing that an estimated two hundred thousand of their countrymen had already perished at the hands of brutal pirates and violent seas. *Where the Wind Leads* follows Vinh Chung and his family on their desperate journey from pre-war Vietnam, through pirate attacks on a lawless sea, to a miraculous rescue and a new home in the unlikely town of Fort Smith, Arkansas. There Vinh struggled against poverty, discrimination, and a bewildering language barrier "yet still managed to graduate from Harvard Medical School. *Where the Wind Leads* is Vinh's tribute to the courage and sacrifice of his parents, a testimony to his family's faith, and a reminder to people everywhere that the American dream, while still possible, carries with it a greater responsibility.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

ReviewWhere the Wind Leads, by Vinh Chung with Tim Downs. Most of the reviews of this book, at and elsewhere, seem to be addressed to a religious audience. The book deserves a wider audience -- among those more inclined toward the secular, toward humanism, toward science, and especially those with an interest in sociology. There is nothing in the book that should put such readers off. On the first page of the Forward, written by Richard Stearns, the President of World Vision U. S., Stearns writes: "All along the way good people, and many good Christians, intervened with a helping hand." A father is frantically running, carrying his ten-year old son, who is near death, to a hospital in a strange land. A woman stops him -- a stranger. She speaks French, which he can't understand. She hands him a few bills and he is able to take a cab to the hospital. Leaving the hospital, again carrying his weak son, another stranger hands him \$5, and he is able to take a cab back to the refugee camp. A stranger tucks a \$100 bill into the shirt pocket of a three-and-a-half year old refugee boy who is rushing through the San Francisco airport with his family, and that \$100 enables the Chung family to buy food in their new home in America. We know nothing about the religious perspectives of these strangers. We do know that they were good, decent, humane. And there is no religious test that people must pass before they may pay taxes to support programs such as food stamps, subsidized housing, and free school lunches -- programs that helped to save the Chung family. Anyone who has an interest in "the boat people" who fled Vietnam after South Vietnam fell to

the communists in 1975 will find this book enlightening. Who were they?

While I do love to read for a variety of reasons, there are some books that come along that hit one at a deeper level—these are the books that cut into your bedtime and then into your sleep time as you go over in your head what you just absorbed. *Where the Wind Leads* was one of those books for me. It's not fiction, or even a biography, but a memoir. For me, it was also a history lesson. *Where the Wind Leads* tells the story of a family—a well-to-do Chinese family—who happened to live in South Vietnam. Through various set-backs and wars, they had managed to prosper, but the Vietnam War which ended with the takeover by Communism, proved to be the one storm they could not ride out. I grew up during the Vietnam War—living an insulated life as many of us did—we heard of terrible things, of young men killed, of anti-war demonstrations, but we did not hear the story as told by a Vietnamese family. And I'd heard of the "boat people"—those who were sponsored by churches in America, starting over in a new land. But that sentence covers most of what I knew. Vinh Chung tells the story from a different perspective—as one of the youngest children in a large family, and with the memories of his family to help him. He tells the story of the money it took to bribe officials to leave, the fear of boarding a boat that was barely sea-worthy, for an unknown future, of moving slowly through heavy waves with no land in sight, through pirate-infested waters. And then, when the joy of land appeared, to find it patrolled by unhospitable soldiers, because of the thousands of refugees who had already come. This is a story of hardship and hunger and fear and courage, but as you continue to read, you realize that it's also a story of God's grace.

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