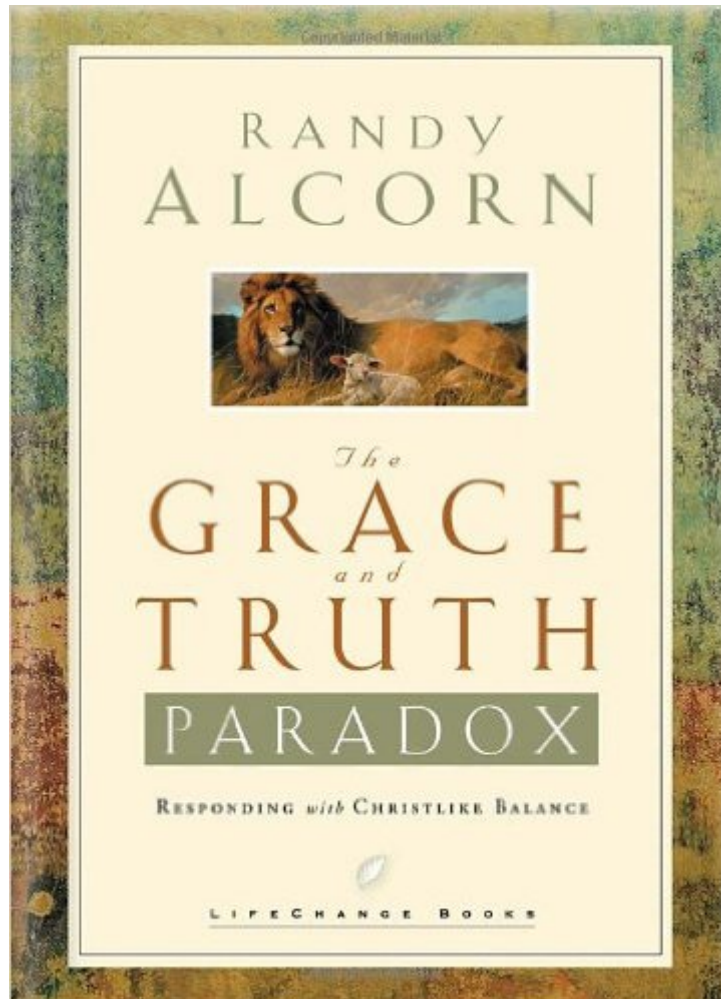


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The Grace And Truth Paradox: Responding With Christlike Balance



Synopsis

Christians trying to model their lives after Jesus may find that He gets buried under lists, rules, and formulas. Now bestselling author Randy Alcorn offers a simple two-point checklist for Christlikeness based on John 1:14. The test consists of balancing grace and truth, equally and unapologetically. Grace without truth deceives people, and ceases to be grace. Truth without grace crushes people, and ceases to be truth. Alcorn shows the reader how to show the world Jesus -- offering grace instead of the world's apathy and tolerance, offering truth instead of the world's relativism and deception.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book does a good job of discussing the balance between Grace and Truth. As another reviewer pointed out, Truth can appear to be "Law" in this book, or maybe Grace is Truth. The fact is that Jesus repeatedly pleaded with His apostles to keep His commandments (Matt 28:20, MK 12:30, John 15:12) and He also said: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34) "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself. "Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. (Rom 13:8) Jesus said "If you love Me you

will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). (A good summary of love is 1 Cor 13:1-13) This cannot be overlooked. Grace is never an excuse to sin. That is why this book really useful. It helps show the line between grace and truth. Jesus didn't come to Jerusalem and preach only grace. If it were that simple, He wouldn't have condemned the scribes and Pharisees. They had no love in them. We are still commanded to love: You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. (Gal 5:13) This book gives various circumstances where people (some Christians and some non-Christians) have needed to be reached in gentleness and love. Sometimes this is explaining the Truth about the law, so that grace can be preached: What shall we say, then?

This is the second book I've read from Mr. Alcorn, the first being *The Treasure Principle*, and he has quickly become one of my favorite authors. His writing is very concise and piercing. The compactness of his writing fits perfectly to the LifeChange Books produced by the Multnomah publishing house, spanning less than 100 pages. That amount also happens to be the average mental capacity of my brain. As the title suggests, Mr. Alcorn explains the tension and apparent contradiction between Grace and Truth. More importantly, he suggests that many Christians live their lives marked either by Truth-only (grace-less, legalistic) or by Grace-only (lack of essential truth, fearful of truth) qualities. Instead the Christian life is marked by both Grace and Truth, not one or the other. He explains how Christ in His incarnation was revealed to be the One who was full of Grace and Truth. He illustrates this using John 2 with the first miracle of Jesus when He turns water into wine. Alcorn asks why was Christ's first miracle turning water into wine? He claims that it was simply to show grace by preventing the host of the wedding from being embarrassed for running out of wine - allowing the people to enjoy themselves at the party. But immediately following, Jesus offers truth when he whips those who have turned His Father's house into a house of merchandise. This illustration displays the balance that Jesus had when he walked this earth. He epitomized Grace and Truth in all that He did. I appreciate his pithy introductions especially when defining What is Truth in chapter 4. He explains that Truth is like the guardrails in life that protect us and that it hedges us in for our own good. However in order for Truth to be able to protect us, it must produce moral decisions.

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