

Half Truths: Hearing Grace in a World of Noise

Love = Agreement

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the competing voices and narratives that shape our lives. Often, these cultural messages—while well-intentioned—can leave us feeling burdened, anxious, or disconnected. We will explore seven pervasive cultural “half truths” that mislead our understanding of life, identity, and purpose.

This series of Small Group studies isn't about proving who's "right." Instead, the goal is to discover how Jesus is the truth, and to step into reality where his gospel liberates us from all the little lies that cling so closely. And his gospel is the best tool for healing our bad theology and tendencies to make ourselves little gods.

? What is something someone has done recently for you that made you feel loved?

The Half-Truth: Love = Agreement

If you love me, you have to affirm the things I believe about myself and the world. If you don't, we're done here & it's mostly your fault.

? How have you seen the idea that “love = agreement” play out in your own life or in society? What were the results?

Possible answers: My sister goes to a different church than me and is certain I am both wrong and unable to be worshiping the same God as her. I love my neighbor well and because I care for them well, they assume I share the same political beliefs as their yard sign says...which leads to future misunderstanding.

? What aspects of this belief might hold some truth, and how can they be understood in light of scripture?

Possible answers: Oftentimes we have a hard time disagreeing in love, or being shown love in return. It is hard to argue “well” with differing views. It takes more work. If we believe scripture to be true, this is where we need to look for guidance in navigating these conversations & relationships.

? When and why is it hard to love people who hold different beliefs than you?

Where Do We See This In Scripture?

As you read these scripture passages, consider what they say about this half-truth: love = agreement.

Proverbs 27:5-6 (NIV)

Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

John 8:1-11 (NIV)

¹ but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³ The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group ⁴ and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” ⁶ They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” ⁸ Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

⁹ At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. ¹⁰ Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

¹¹ “No one, sir,” she said.

“Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

John 13:35 (NIV)

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.



How do these passages & the gospel reshape our understanding of love and disagreement?

Possible answers: Jesus moved toward people and loved them well. He extended much grace without agreeing with all their views. At times loving people does bring uncomfortable conversations or pointing out places we're in disagreement. We can both love and disagree.



Is there a difference in how we disagree with people inside and outside the church?. Does it change when others don't return the love/care to you?

How can we draw closer to the one that is the Truth?

For Discussion and Accountability

? Share a situation or relationship that is hard for you to easily extend love or you haven't received love. How can we pray for you in this relationship dynamic this week?

? How is your heart believing this half-truth right now? How can we come alongside you in this?