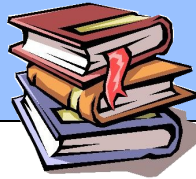
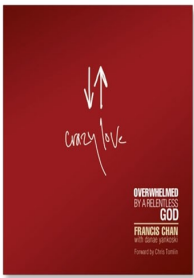


Library News

By Dan Benson



Book Review: *Crazy Love* by Francis Chan



In *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God*, Francis Chan challenges us to consider our response to the fierce love of God. He writes, "my desire for my children is only a faint echo of God's great love for me and for every person He made.... I love my kids so much it hurts. How could I not trust a heavenly, perfect Father who loves me infinitely more that I will ever love my kids?"

Chan challenges us to live according to that great love and take seriously verses such Matthew 13:44: "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field." Are we willing to "sell" all we have to possess Christ? Chan wonders. Do I love God wholeheartedly, which the Friedens mission statement says is our goal as a church, as a "Gospel-centered" community?

For me, the best thing about "Crazy Love" is the challenging questions Chan brings up, such as:

- What am I doing in my life right now that requires faith?
- Is the way I'm living the most loving way to live?
- Am I in love with God or just his stuff? Chan quotes John Piper: "If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on Earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or

any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ was not there?"

Especially challenging to me was the chapter, "Profile of the Lukewarm," in which he examines Jesus' words to the church in Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22. Lukewarm people, he writes:

- Attend church regularly because it is what "good Christians" do.
- Give money to charity as long as it doesn't impinge on their standard of living.
- Don't want to be saved from their sin, just the penalty of their sin.
- Are moved by people doing radical things for Christ, but consider such actions extreme and not for average believers.
- Rarely share their faith with neighbors, co-workers or friends.
- Measure their "goodness" by comparing themselves to the secular world.
- Say they love others but only love those who love them back.
- Think about life on Earth more than heaven.
- Do not live by faith; their lives are structured so they never have to.

Some of these statements sting, I admit. Jesus' counsel to the Laodicean church wasn't to try harder or do more stuff, but rather let Him into our hearts and lives (Rev. 3:20). One prayer Chan suggests we pray to open that door to Christ is, "Help Lord. I don't love you. ... I need God to help me love God."

May that be our prayer as we move forward as a body as we strive to be "a Gospel-centered community that seeks to glorify God by loving Him wholeheartedly, connecting with one another authentically, and sharing God's love generously."

"Crazy Love" is available in the Friedens library.

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