

Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God Book PDF Download



By:
Francis Chan

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What people Say:

Gavin Breeden

Mark this one under the Good Premise, Terrible Execution category. Chan seeks to combat the "lukewarmness" of the American Church by calling us to live a radical "obsessed" life for Jesus. Lots of good ideas here. The American Church certainly is lukewarm and quickly going the way of the increasingly churchless countries in Europe. Chan argues that our call to live radically is rooted in God's crazy love for us, and that's certainly true. I have no doubt that Francis Chan is a solid follower of

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The problem is, the house Chan builds has a pretty soggy foundation. It's not rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, but in this amorphous notion of God's love. In one cringe-inducing paragraph Chan actually asks, so why does God love messed up people like us so much and his response is that he doesn't really know. What? We do know the answer, God loves us because of Jesus. He's united us to Christ and his love for us is because we are "in Christ.". This lack of gospel-centeredness is the biggest problem here, because then all of the imperatives that follow are guilt-driven, not gospel-driven. Sure, Chan says once or twice that he doesn't want us to be motivated by guilt, but simply saying that doesn't remove the guilt-driven ideas throughout the book.

There are some other unfortunate theological choices as well. Chan gives us a heavy individualism with very little attention given to the Church. He talks of taking four day retreats to be alone in the woods with God and uses lots of the warm, fuzzy, quasi-romantic "fall in love with God" language which I keep hoping will run its course in our culture. The book is also not especially Christ-centered and leans heavily on the unhelpful sacred/secular divide in several places. I also think Chan doesn't consider the believer's battle with sin realistically. He acts like we could be 100% sold out for Jesus if we just wanted to, but consider Romans 7 where the apostle Paul-- as mature a Christian that'll ever walk this earth-- bemoans his own divided heart and how he doesn't always do what he wants to do but he does things that he hates. The Christian life is a constant battle with indwelling sin. I spent years of my life trying to be 100% devoted to Jesus and couldn't figure out why I kept failing spectacularly.

The other big problem with this book is how Chan describes this radical Christian life that we ought to be living. He really hammers home the importance of working with the sick and the poor (those in America, but especially those around the world, and even more especially those in Africa it seems-- he mentions people going to Africa a lot) and giving away money, selling possessions especially houses (he mentions people selling their houses a lot). The problem with all that is I can sell all my possessions, spend decades in Africa doing missionary work and still not love Jesus. Chan's call to radical Christianity doesn't necessarily address the primary problem in the American Church, he's just giving us something new and exciting to do, something that's frankly easier than taking up our cross daily and following Jesus.

The problem in the American Church is that we love other stuff more than we love Jesus. And not everyone is called to go to Africa, some people are called to go next door. And not everyone is called to sell their house and downsize so they can give more money away, some folks use their homes as tools for ministry. Chan holds these activities up as the definition of radical Christianity and tells us countless stories (an entire chapter devoted to them, in fact) of people who've done these sort of things. But he's missing the problem, namely, our wayward hearts. He's addressing the symptoms, not the sickness.

As a pastor in the American Church, I don't want everyone in my congregation to sell their possessions and move to Africa. I'd be delighted if some of the did that because of a genuine sense of the Lord's calling. But the Church is a body, Paul tells us, and each member has different functions and different uses. What I want for these people is for them to love Jesus more than they love their houses, their jobs, AND even mission trips to Africa. I want them to be faithful spouses, parents, and children. I want them to be godly bankers, truck drivers, doctors, business owners, teachers, retirees, students etc. I want them to be faithful and boring and I want them to love Jesus more today than they did yesterday.

Radical Christianity takes many different forms, sometimes it means going to Africa and dying for the gospel there and sometimes Radical Christianity means being genuinely OK with the fact that God has called you to be a boring, faithful Christian in your small town. Because what makes Christianity radical is not how much money we give away or how many countries we do mission work in, what truly makes Christianity radical is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which every single day is pulling people out of darkness and into the light and then sending them into every nook and cranny of this world with the good news of a Perfect King and a Coming Kingdom.

Kevin

This is one of those WOW! books that cause you to read something and then quietly close the book, lay it on your lap and meditate on what you have just read. So many times while reading this I had to stop and wrap my mind around what I just read. Francis Chan has taken the very things that I need to focus on and concisely and passionately expressed them in this book in a way that I totally get. How to live my life in a way that I am showing a God who loves me that I love Him back. Francis writes

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Kate Davis

I've had a serious theological problem on literally *every* page of this so far. Here are some highlights:

Chan is dismissive of life, even it's highest joys and lowest sorrows, because the story is about God, not people. So that's all that matters. In addition, a person's life boils down to how many people

they've "saved" (which seems to mean "have gotten to say a prayer"). Not sure where this leaves, say, Mother Teresa, who focused more on taking care of people than convincing them to say praye

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Oh, and now Chan's confronting the problem of hell. A student asks how a loving God can demand we love him via threats of punishment, and Chan's response is that God does it for our own good. He threatens us because he loves us! Wasn't that student listening when her boyfriend hit her? It's for her own good, it's because he loves her!! Apparently God's love for us isn't crazy in the sense that it's so abundantly good, it's crazy in that stalker-boyfriend-with-a-knife-who-ignores-a-restraining-order kind of way. So remember: when your partner threatens and punishes you, it's acceptable, because that's how God works.

Next (Ch 4) is a misinterpretation of the 'lukewarm' verse in Revelations (for a great interpretation, Rob Bell has a sermon in Mars Hill's series on the Letters to the 7 Churches. If anyone's interested, leave a comment and I'll look it up. The verse is concerning water; both hot and cold water are useful in that time and place, lukewarm water was unhealthy and unuseful). Chan says "good" or "real" Christians aren't lukewarm, which seems to boil down primarily to morals within sex: not getting divorced, not having sex before marriage, not cheating on your spouse (this is taken from early Ch 5).

This is where I stopped reading. I don't feel badly about it; there are plenty of great theological authors I'd rather put my reading time towards.

Katie

Totally whooped my tail. Probably THE most convicting spiritual book I've ever read. Challenges you

out of any luke-warm tendencies. Challenges you especially in the realm of giving financially and sacrificially. Really, really good - prepare to be challenged out of your mind.

Matt Rudio

My initial reaction to Francis Chan's Crazy Love

First of all, "Crazy Love" is a terrible and misleading title for this book. It is not about love (until, maybe, chapter 10, but by that point it is too late; too much damage has already been done). It is certainly NOT about God's love for us mortals.

When a friend asked me about the book, this was my initial response:

I was hoping for a good read, but all I've seen so far (a bit more than halfway through) is an angry God. It's as if the title [Crazy

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When a friend asked me about the book, this was my initial response:

I was hoping for a good read, but all I've seen so far (a bit more than halfway through) is an angry God. It's as if the title [Crazy Love:] means, "You are so stupid and such a failure and so incredibly lame, it is crazy that God, who is disgusted by you and beat up Jesus because of it, would love such a low-life as yourself."

Here is another picture of my reaction to the book: The following are summary statements and reflections I made of each chapter. I wrote them down immediately after reading each "I was honestly summarizing and reflecting upon what I took from that part of the book:

Chapter 1: