

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark jacket and light-colored pants, is walking away from the viewer on a narrow concrete path that stretches across the ocean. Her arms are raised in a gesture of freedom or triumph. The background is a vast, calm sea under a bright, hazy sky. The overall tone is one of hope and liberation.

Cruciform Press

# GRACE IS FREE

ONE WOMAN'S JOURNEY

FROM FUNDAMENTALISM TO FAILURE TO FAITH

Foreword by Byron Yawn

Marci Preheim

# **GRACE IS FREE**

*One Woman's Journey from  
Fundamentalism to Failure to Faith*

Marci Preheim

Cruciform Press | March 2014

This book is dedicated to my husband, Arnie,  
who, second only to Jesus, is the love of my life.  
– Marci Preheim

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“I thought this would be a quick read. Ha! I had to stop several times to look up Scripture, ponder, and repent. In *Grace Is Free*, Marci challenges the status quo that we as Christian women don’t normally even think to question. She’ll step on your toes, but the result will be . . . freedom. If you’re like me, you won’t even make it to the end of the book before you’re sharing it with others.”

**Paula Hendricks**, Marketing Director for TrueWoman, and author of *Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl: On Her Journey from Neediness to Freedom*

“I have endorsed very few books, despite a long career with Thomas Nelson. But I enthusiastically recommend Marci Preheim’s book, *Grace is Free*, to any woman who has ever suffered under the burden of human expectations for ‘how to be godly.’ In a simple and conversational way, Marci has skillfully recorded her experiences and advice. These experiences were born as pearls through difficult situations, providing answers that have been tried in the crucible of life. It is a helpful, practical, and down-to-earth book with no fluff. This brand of godliness is one that many Christian men would like to see in their wives.”

**Charles Z. Moore**, former Executive Vice-President, Thomas Nelson, Inc.

“In a time where self-proclaimed spirituality and theologically erroneous Christian hierarchy run rampant, this work could not have come at a better time. Marci punches holes in our thinking and swiftly pulls the rug out from underneath what we define as ‘godly.’ I have never read a work so inspired, radical, and necessary for this time.”

**Julianna Zobrist**, Christian singer/songwriter and wife of major league baseball player Ben Zobrist.

“Revealing, convicting, and inspiring. What an incredible message of hope for all women striving to be godly! Marci Preheim provides us with a much-needed practical resource for discovering who the truly godly woman is and isn’t. Major lies are identified that have held women captive through the years and are replaced with the freedom and truth of God’s Word. Here you will find the blending of personal illustrations with biblical insights that reflect her deep commitment to rightly dividing the Word of truth. Marci masterfully reminds women that at the core of godliness is abiding in Christ—in truth, and in faith. This book will be an immeasurable blessing to every woman who seeks to be godly and to be set free at last from the bondage of conformity to rules and standards set by man, not by God. I highly recommend this book and plan to introduce it to others as I share with women in conferences and retreats across the country.”

**Marlean Felix**, Women’s Bible Conference Speaker, Elementary School Teacher, Wife of Seminary Professor Paul Felix, and Mother of Wes and Allyson, Gold Medal Olympian 2012.

“As one of Marci’s youth pastors, it was both saddening and at the same time incredibly encouraging to read her book. It grieved me deeply to hear how ‘law/rules/do-this’ Christianity had been communicated and what hypocrisy such distortions of biblical truth created. But to read that through it all, the tenacious pursuing love of Christ was arresting a soul. . .total delight. Then I let my wife read it. And she was immediately an enthusiastic endorser! Linda said that Marci has written a ‘spot-on’ work about the unaddressed realities of ‘do/don’t do’ expectations imposed upon women seeking to be truly biblical. She became an instant fan! Marci has obviously identified an ‘itch’ and provided a timely ‘scratcher’! May many women find new freedom to live the biblical Christian life by taking time to seriously consider Marci’s excellent work!”

**Tom Rempel**, Senior Pastor of Faith Bible Church, Lincoln, Nebraska

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# FOREWORD

The problem with Christian men in the modern evangelical church is that we essentially tolerate their failure to act as men. Not surprisingly, then, the corresponding problem on the other side is the exact opposite—we are largely intolerant of any perceived failure in Christian women.

Our men are in bondage to an extended adolescence that the church has proliferated through low expectations. Our women are in bondage to a form of perfectionism that the church has encouraged through unrealistic expectations. The contrast in what we have come to expect from the genders could not be more stark. The similarity, however, is also stark: the remedy to both extremes is the gospel.

The recent call within evangelicalism for men to quit their negligence has been well and good. There are signs of great progress. The gospel has begun to take center stage, as well as take root in many hearts. Men have been motivated by the spectacle of grace to *take up* their responsibility and lead. But where is the corresponding call on our women to *lay down* the burden of performance set on them by the good intentions of the church? Who is calling our women with equal zeal out of their own peculiar bondage to the same grace of Christ? While setting our men free from one prison, have we abandoned our women to languish in another?



If there is one creature in the church of Christ that silently struggles under the weight of performance more than any other, it may well be the wife and mother. The alchemy for hypocrisy found within her Christian duty is greater than most others. Wives and moms can easily keep the true condition of their hearts from view behind unending tasks and domestic responsibilities. The calls to submission and a quiet spirit may well be interpreted by them as prohibitions against any failure or personal weakness. It's suffocating. Women are expected to have it all together. The end result is mechanical, burdensome, and joyless womanhood which drones on, having forgotten that one thing which rises above all her duties and gives them all meaning—Jesus Christ.

As it is, this burden on Christian women is handed down from generation to generation within the church. Our teaching on womanhood has featured almost nothing of the gospel of grace and has focused nearly exclusively on duty, reducing evangelical Christian womanhood to one extensive and unending “to-do list.” This type of Christian womanhood barely rises to the level of a sanctimonious home-economics course.

Thus, almost all of our biblical teaching boils down to a feminized brand of moralism. Most notable is our use of the Proverbs 31 woman as a template for feminine godliness and self-discipline. Without hesitation we assume that this chapter offers a pattern of behavior, and to question this interpretation is sacrilege. Think of all the Christian coffee mugs and Kinkade-like prints that bear this emphasis. The assumption is rampant, but it misses the point. We have taken a beautiful poem composed by a dotting husband and turned it into an unbending behavioral strategy for godliness.

In this, and in many other similar ways, we have robbed women within the church of the sincere joy of Christian womanhood. We have kept them back from grace and true freedom. Godliness comes from a relationship with Christ Jesus and a transformed heart, not a list. To be clear, grace does not aim to liberate us from our responsibilities, to excuse neglect, or to deny God's design. But it does aim to liberate us from our tendency to measure ourselves by our performance in fulfilling the duties we are called to do. Our righteousness is outside of us in Christ, not in our relative ability to keep a clean house. It is this latter awareness that liberates us to undertake our duty with complete joy and freedom.

Marci Preheim—believer, wife, mother, servant, friend, congregant and faithful teacher—gets it. By that, I mean she *gets* the gospel of Christ. Having suffered under empty moralism herself and having seen its effects in the lives of others, she was finally liberated by the blinding reality of the grace of God in the cross of Christ. She has in turn made it her mission in life to “free captives” by applying the unending depths of the gospel to the lives of women. Marci's message has sparked a revolution among the ladies in this congregation I pastor. The result has been a true women's-liberation movement. Unlike the ugly outcomes of past movements, the women in this one are not rebelling against the constraints of their God-given roles, but are embracing them in the freedom that can only come from the personal application of the cross of Christ.

Byron Yawn  
Senior Pastor, Community Bible Church  
Nashville, TN



## Introduction

# **RULES, RULES, RULES**

Since the fall, humans have tried to reduce God's requirements of worship, devotion, and loving obedience from the heart to a list of external rules. From Adam and Eve's firstborn son to the present, humanity has wanted to quantify and qualify our relationship with God—to earn his favor, to make ourselves godly. We think that if we have a set of tangible steps, we will be able to follow them. Success can be charted, rewarded, and checked off the list.

The façade of good behavior snares many earnest seekers. What originates as an attempt to become godly ends up quenching the power of the true gospel. In a subtle shift, good things become human obligations—laws the Lord does not require.

The ancient Israelites tried this, adding many more rules to the ones God had given them in the Law and going through the motions of religion. But God was not pleased. He said they drew near to him with their lips, but had hearts far from him (see Isaiah 29:13). The apostle Paul saw the same thing in his day and predicted that it

would become more evident in the last days when people will have a form of godliness but deny its power (see 2 Timothy 3:5).

Modern Christians may look down on the Israelites, but this practice is alive and well in Christian circles today. We have a form of godliness but deny its power most of the time. We have learned to hide our sin rather than repent of it. Christians put our own false piety on center stage by forming social groups with each other and isolating ourselves from the world, as though Christianity is primarily about building a safe club for you and others like you.

Christian women do this particularly well. We give each other helpful hints for how to have the perfect quiet time. We share ideas for running our homes efficiently, choosing the best homeschool curriculum, and making discipline charts for children. Christian women (myself included) neglect God's call to live gospel-centered lives in favor of obedience to Emily Post and to each other. It's almost as if obeying rules of etiquette somehow brings us closer to God.

But the more I learn about abiding in Christ, the less I believe that these activities bring me close to God. In fact, they may actually draw me away from him.

It is dangerous to overemphasize behavior. Focusing on behavior leads to external works and a neglect of the heart, which is where true godliness is or isn't. Behavior can be manufactured, but wisdom cannot. When we spend more time trying to appear godly rather than actually being close to God, our motive becomes pleasing people rather than God.

I shared these thoughts with a woman I love and trust.

She is suffering with kidney failure and expects to see Jesus soon.<sup>1</sup> My dear friend confessed that the week prior to my visit she had been too ill to pick up her Bible and have her quiet time. Racked with contrition, she cried to the Lord for forgiveness. The heavy hand of man-made law enslaves those who should be enjoying their freedom and close walk with God. The Bible never gives a regimen for daily quiet time as a requirement for keeping God's favor. Later I wept over the needless guilt she suffered and determined in my heart to expose the legalism that cripples women's souls.

The book you hold in your hands is the product of that resolve.



One

# **REDEFINING THE GODLY WOMAN**

As I look back on my childhood with adult (and regenerate) eyes, I see the false gospel that Christian activity preaches.

In my elementary years I perceived that the more disciplined a woman was, the more godly she was. My Sunday school classes solidified this perception. We were encouraged to keep daily journals, prayer requests, and memory verses on note cards. At the turn of every new year, I resolved to incorporate these activities into my daily life. But I was never able to discipline myself for very long. By the middle of January, I always felt like a complete failure. I asked Jesus to come into my heart several times just in case. But a just-in-case prayer is not a prayer of faith.

During my teen years, our youth group thrived on lectures about the dangers of rock 'n' roll music and premarital sex. We were given charts instructing us on the progression of fornication. We had campfires to burn our sinful music. It always ended with a tearful rendition of "Kumbaya."



As expectations for my behavior grew, my desire to meet them shrank. Many of my friends in youth group partied with the in-crowd at school while maintaining a clean-cut image at church. We had an unspoken code: no one snitches.

Eventually, I lost my desire to keep up appearances. My parents tried desperately to control my behavior and hide it from church people. I was grounded every other weekend. They took my car away and prohibited me from seeing certain friends. My mother stood at the door each evening waiting to smell my fingers to make sure I hadn't been smoking. I learned you don't need fingers to smoke.

My parents tried to preach the Scripture to me, but I didn't want to hear it. It all sounded like a bunch of boring rules. They told me I was risking their positions of leadership at church and that my behavior was hurting them. I didn't want to hurt my parents, but their pleas did not motivate me. I thought: *I'm trying to hide it from you so it won't hurt you.*

I believed that Jesus died on the cross for my sins, and since I had prayed several just-in-case prayers when I was young, I was sure I was saved. I didn't need to fake righteousness the way I thought everyone else in youth group did. My parents were the last to know the real depth of my depravity. They were so blinded by love for me, they couldn't believe their daughter could turn out badly.

At nineteen, I moved to Hollywood. There my lifestyle declined rapidly. I put myself into several situations where God had to supernaturally save my life. However, I did not repent. I pursued my own happiness full-time but still became increasingly depressed and frus-

trated. Of course, I believed this was everyone else's fault. I decided to go to church to meet some quality people, and I met a young man there who was kind and funny. I pursued him every time I was at church, and we became friends.

One Sunday, he grabbed me by the hand and pulled me across the room where we could talk privately. My heart was in my throat. He looked at me and said "Marci, I'm moving to Hawaii for the next two years for college. I want us to write to each other while I'm gone, okay?" I thought: *This is actually perfect. I have two years to clean myself up.* I made a plan to discipline myself to read the Bible, pray, journal, quit smoking, whatever—very soon. However, I had two years, so I knew there was no real hurry.

We never exchanged letters. A few weeks after his departure, news came that he had been involved in a diving accident. Then, the great blow—he did not survive. As I grieved alone for my friend, my eyes opened, and I finally began to see my sin for what it was. The weight of it was unbearable. Some days I couldn't even get out of bed. I could not figure out why God would take this good man and leave me. I deserved his fate. I had become a hypocrite to impress him. I was the one hiding a mountain of sin, leading a double life.

During a three-month timeframe some dramatic changes took place in my life. I could do little else but read my Bible, weep, and repent. I lost interest in drinking and drugs. I began listening to sermons on tape to satiate my hunger for the Word. I couldn't believe how deeply I had misunderstood the verses I had memorized as a child. My life was apparently changing quickly and obviously: I

didn't notice anything, but people at church and everywhere else did.

Because of my newfound zeal, I lost all my worldly friends. I even lost most of the friends I had made at church—you know, the kids in the back row. But that was okay because I wanted to spend all my time with people who would teach me the Word. After all those years of hearing that I needed to “accept Jesus as my Savior,” I realized for the first time that I needed to fall flat on my face and beg *him* to accept *me* even though I didn't deserve it. I still had lingering sin, but as the Lord opened my eyes to it, I realized that I did not have to strive to give it up—because I hated it. My desires changed daily. The false gospel of self-discipline I had grown up believing was now replaced with the true gospel—the gospel of Jesus Christ who saves sinners.

Those days were lonely but sweet. I felt like it was just me and God and my sermon tapes. I no longer fit in with the world, but I didn't quite fit in with church folk either. Regardless, I attended anything and everything offered at church.

One weekend, I attended a workshop for women, expecting encouragement and fellowship. The speaker started talking about what a godly woman does and doesn't do, like how a godly woman doesn't chew gum or skip steps. I looked around to see if anyone else was as horrified as I was, but everyone seemed to be eating it up. She talked about memory verse cards and three-ring binders with prayer requests and how godly it was to rise early in the morning. At intermission I raced to my car, tears burning down my cheeks. That old, familiar, false gospel of Christian activity was like a crushing weight on

my chest. I did not go back to her seminar—I had been saved by the true gospel from my inability to keep all those rules.

## **Rethinking Proverbs 31**

What is the definition of a godly woman anyway? Many people esteem the Proverbs 31 woman as the supreme example. I can almost hear a collective sigh as an unattainable list comprised of early mornings and blistered hands comes to mind. This biblically ideal woman's life has been offered as a template, but does emulating her behavior make women godly?

Imagine with me that somehow the Proverbs 31 woman was here with us today. I'm confident she would reject all the praise about her and give praise to God. She would not point to the things she was able to accomplish in a given day. She would be ashamed of all the fuss we've made over her. She would thank her husband for his encouragement but admit her inadequacies in her next breath. She would not point to herself or anything she has done. She would point to the grace of God found in the righteous sacrifice of Jesus Christ. She would humbly tell us that in spite of her sin and many failures, God has been gracious to her.

Remember, Proverbs 31 does not record this woman's sins and failings, only her victories! So when you and I fail to match her *best* moments at our *every* moment, we are cordially invited to "draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

My whole life I've watched women fall into the same quagmire of conformity. I'm not talking about biblical

conformity to the image of Christ, but conformity to an unwritten code of some elusive “godly woman” that doesn’t exist. Her dress, behavior, personality, and hobbies are subtly different in each church. But if her behavior becomes a code to live by, then she is a false gospel. This nonexistent woman robs us of intimacy with each other, condemns us as mothers and wives, and holds us in a prison of law that none of us can live up to. She is a form of godliness that denies the power of the true gospel in women’s lives. But she is widely preached as the standard of righteousness, which is why the godly woman must be redefined in our generation.

## **Faith or Formula**

The lie that etiquette and self-discipline equal godliness has crept into many churches that are otherwise biblically solid. When I teach this concept to groups of women, I get the same objection all the time: “But Marci, we have to obey!” They think I am teaching that we don’t have to obey God, that we should just feel love for Jesus and do whatever we want.

Obedience is not the debate—we all agree that we must obey the Lord. But what exactly should we obey? This has become confusing because people have added their own rules—things God does not require—to the gospel.

All the commands in the New Testament can be reduced down to one: abide in Christ. You won’t find many activity-based commands that can be written down on a to-do list and crossed off at the end of the day. The truth is that God is far more interested in our hearts and beliefs than he is in our activities.

## Obedience Begins with Belief

Genuine obedience to Christ's commands begins with belief in Christ himself. Take, for example, the command to "flee immorality." I knew a woman whom everyone in the church perceived as godly because she was always busy with Christian activity. She homeschooled her children, kept an immaculate house, dressed conservatively, and rarely missed church meetings. Everyone tried to be like her and felt intimidated by her seeming perfection. No one suspected this woman was entertaining a flirtation with a man who was not her husband. One day, she pulled me aside and confided the allurement to me. The man was exciting, rich, and full of promises. The temptation was great.

She had a choice. She could either believe God or her feelings. God says that immorality is a sin that leads to death and destruction. Her feelings made her think the relationship would bring exhilaration, happiness, and an escape from drudgery. If she believed God, she would flee *from* that illicit relationship *to* God. If she believed her feelings, she would flee *from* God *to* the relationship. Either way, her actions would reflect what she truly believed.

Of course, she didn't have to confess the temptation at all. She could have tried to continue that façade of godliness that everyone else believed. But the Holy Spirit gave her the courage to be honest with another sister in Christ and to be honest with her heavenly Father about what was going on in her heart. Confessing the temptation exposed its foolishness and robbed it of power. She saw the trap being laid for her, *believed* the allurement was a lie, *believed* Jesus was enough for her, repented, and avoided disaster.

Most of us have heard sermons that instruct us to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps (somehow), shape up, and live the Christian life. Those sermons motivate us to obey out of guilt. But on our own we *can't* obey in a way that truly pleases God. The power of God comes from knowing and then believing what is in his Word, for “without faith it is impossible to please him” (Hebrews 11:6). We deny God’s power when we claim Christianity but only put on an outward appearance of obedience.

## **The False Gospel of Christian Activity**

When we preach Christian activity more than we preach the gospel, we subtly communicate that God is really only pleased with disciplined people—those who are organized, bright, well-behaved, and particularly well put together—and that there isn’t much he can do with weak, unorganized, average people. We communicate that God helps those who help themselves. This message causes people to work on the appearance rather than the reality. It causes people to hide who they really are.

I do not blame the church I was raised in for the fact that I missed the true gospel for so many years. Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned (see 1 Corinthians 2:14). I have no doubt the true gospel was verbally preached to me hundreds of times—yet somehow I came away thinking Christianity is about lists, rules, and social pressure. I believed I needed the “Christian seal of approval” from others in the church.

## **Recognizing Our Weakness**

At the heart of the gospel is a recognition of weakness. The Lord saves both the disciplined and the undisciplined

alike—the disciplined from trusting in their capabilities and the undisciplined from their sloth. Older Christians somehow forget their own sinfulness. Younger Christians feel like they will never attain the level of spirituality they see in others. Everyone wants a formula for godly living, but a formula too easily becomes calcified into something that looks like law. To both the disciplined and the undisciplined the Lord says: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28, 30).

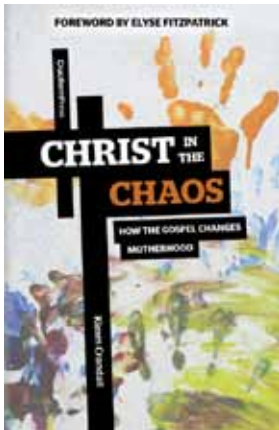
This simple gospel is a gift given to those who *believe* in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection—not our own righteousness. Abiding in Christ is not only the secret to being used by God; it is knowing his joy more fully. It sets us free to focus on *one purifying ambition* rather than on a list of rules. That one purifying ambition is to draw near to the Savior. It is basking in the freedom of what he has already accomplished for us. Abiding in Christ is the key to our purpose in life, to lasting joy and godly relationships. It’s the good news for believers.

## ***Making It Stick***

- The word *abide* means to stay in a given place, state, relation or expectancy—to continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, or tarry. The promise to the one who abides in Christ is that Christ will also abide in her (see John 15:4). What do you think Jesus means by this? Is abiding in Christ an inward reality or an outward work? Do any of these potential definitions even remotely resemble a to-do list?



- For further study, read Galatians 3:1–5 to see Paul’s response to the Galatians who had fallen into this trap. Have you found yourself caught up in following rules that have nothing to do with obedience to Christ? Give some thought to when and how you began believing you should follow those rules. Think about what it would be like to be free from social pressure and follow Christ by faith instead.



## [Christ in the Chaos](#)

How the Gospel Changes  
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by Kimm Crandall

**MOMS: Stop comparing yourself to others. Stop striving to meet false expectations. Stop thinking your performance dictates your worth.**

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[bitly/Christ-in](http://bitly/Christ-in)

“Although Kimm Crandall’s message would revive any soul longing for the breath of the gospel of grace, I am especially eager to recommend this book to that heart who strives to know God and to make him known to the little ones who call her ‘Momma.’ Kimm is a candid and gracious fellow sojourner, faithfully pointing to God’s immeasurable steadfast love and grace in the midst of our mess.”

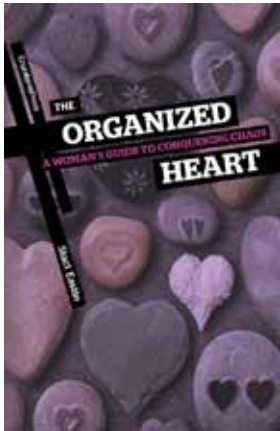
***Lauren Chandler, wife of Matt Chandler (pastor of The Village Church), mother of three, writer, singer, and speaker***

“What an amazingly wild and wise, disruptive and delighting, freeing and focusing book. Kimm’s book is for every parent willing to take the stewardship of children and the riches of the gospel seriously. This is one of the most helpful and encouraging books on parenting I’ve read in the past twenty years. This will be a book you will want to give to parents, to-be parents, and grandparents.”

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***Carolyn McCulley, blogger, filmmaker, author of Radical Womanhood and Did I Kiss Marriage Goodbye?***

“Unless we understand the spiritual dimension of productivity, our techniques will ultimately backfire. Find that dimension here. Encouraging and uplifting rather than guilt-driven, this book can help women who want to be more organized but know that adding a new method is not enough.”

***Matt Perman, Director of Strategy at Desiring God, blogger, author of the forthcoming book, What's Best Next: How the Gospel Transforms the Way You Get Things Done***

“Organizing a home can be an insurmountable challenge for a woman. The Organized Heart makes a unique connection between idols of the heart and the ability to run a well-managed home. This is not a how-to. Eastin looks at sin as the root problem of disorganization. She offers a fresh new approach and one I recommend, especially to those of us who have tried all the other self-help models and failed.”

***Aileen Challies, Mom of three, and wife of blogger, author, and pastor Tim Challies***



## [Who Am I?](#)

Identity in Christ

by Jerry Bridges

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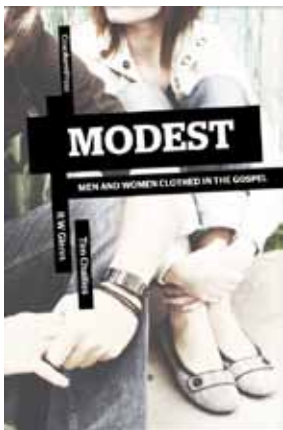
***J. I. Packer, Theological Editor, ESV Study Bible; author, Knowing God, A Quest for Godliness, Concise Theology***

“I know of no one better prepared than Jerry Bridges to write *Who Am I?* He is a man who knows who he is in Christ and he helps us to see succinctly and clearly who we are to be. Thank you for another gift to the Church of your wisdom and insight in this book.”

***R.C. Sproul, founder, chairman, president, Ligonier Ministries; executive editor, Tabletalk magazine; general editor, The Reformation Study Bible***

“*Who Am I?* answers one of the most pressing questions of our time in clear gospel categories straight from the Bible. This little book is a great resource to ground new believers and remind all of us of what God has made us through faith in Jesus. Thank the Lord for Jerry Bridges, who continues to provide the warm, clear, and biblically balanced teaching that has made him so beloved to this generation of Christians.”

***Richard D. Phillips, Senior Minister, Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC***



## [Modest](#)

Men and Women Clothed in the Gospel

by R W Glenn, Tim Challies

**Modesty is about freedom, not rules. What you say or do or wear is not really the point. The point is your heart.**

**True modesty flows from a solid grasp of the gospel.**

[bitly/CPModest](https://bit.ly/CPModest)

“It is so refreshing to have a book on modesty that is a useful resource and not a legalistic, culture-bound list that leaves you a bit paranoid and guilty. No, this book is different. Its counsel on modesty is not rooted in rules, but in the grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That grace alone is able to get at the heart of the problem of modesty, which is the heart. In a culture where immodesty is the accepted norm, Glenn and Challies have given us help that every Christian desperately needs.”

***Paul Tripp, pastor, conference speaker, and author***

“How short is too short? How tight is too tight? Glenn and Challies don’t say. But they do provide a thoughtful framework to help us come to a grace-based, gospel-grounded understanding of modesty that extends beyond mere clothing. They uphold a vision for modesty that’s both beautiful and desirable – and not only for gals, but for guys too! This book is a great tool to help you wrestle with the practical question of what and what not to wear.”

***Mary A. Kassian, Author, Girls Gone Wise***

“The authors of Modest break new ground in their treatment of this difficult subject. It is a healthy antidote to the prevailing views, which tend toward either legalism or antinomianism, by grounding the whole subject in the gospel. I heartily recommend this book.”

***Jerry Bridges, Author, The Pursuit of Holiness***



## [Friends and Lovers](#)

Cultivating Companionship and Intimacy in Marriage

by Joel R. Beeke

**Marriage is for God's glory and our good.**

**The secret?... Intimate Christian companionship.**

[bitly/FriendsAnd](https://bit.ly/FriendsAnd)

"A book about love, marriage, and sex from Joel Beeke that is surprisingly candid yet without a trace of smuttiness. Fresh and refreshingly straightforward, this is the best book of its kind."

**Derek WH Thomas, Visiting Professor, Reformed Theo. Sem.**

"Marriage is hard work. And wonderful. And sometimes, it's both at the same time. *Friends and Lovers* is like a personal mentoring session on marriage with a man whose heart is devoted to seeing Christ honored in how we love each other as husbands and wives. It's full of practical wisdom and grace. A delight."

**Bob Lepine, Co-Host, FamilyLife Today**

"By laying the theological, emotional, social, and spiritual foundations of marriage before heading to the bedroom, Joel Beeke provides a healthy corrective to the excessive and obsessive sex-focus of our generation and even of some pastors. But, thankfully, he also goes on to provide wise, practical, down-to-earth direction for couples wanting to discover or recover physical intimacy that will both satisfy themselves and honor God."

**Dr. David Murray, Professor, Puritan Reformed Theo. Sem.**

"There is no better book than this to renew the affection of happy marriage."

**Geoffrey Thomas, Pastor, Alfred Place Baptist Church, Wales**



[bit.ly/JoyStudy](http://bit.ly/JoyStudy)



[bit.ly/FaithStudy](http://bit.ly/FaithStudy)

## Inductive Bible studies for women by Keri Folmar endorsed by...

**Kathleen Nielson** is author of the *Living Word Bible Studies*; Director of Women's Initiatives, The Gospel Coalition; and wife of Niel, who served as President of Covenant College from 2002 to 2012.

**Diane Schreiner** – wife of professor, author, and pastor Tom Schreiner, and mother of four grown children – has led women's Bible studies for more than 20 years.

**Connie Dever** is author of *The Praise Factory* children's ministry curriculum and wife of Pastor Mark Dever, President of 9 Marks Ministries

**Kristie Anyabwile** holds a history degree from NC State University, and is married to Thabiti, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Grand Cayman, and a Council Member for The Gospel Coalition.

**Gloria Furman** is a pastor's wife in the Middle East and author of *Glimpses of Grace* and *Treasuring Christ When Your Hands Are Full*.