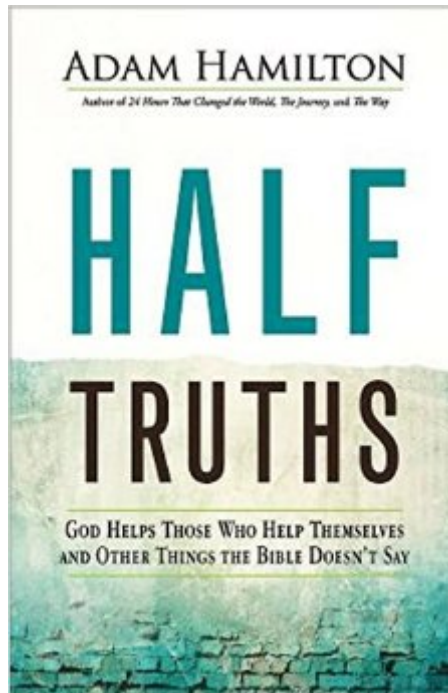


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Half Truths: God Helps Those Who Help Themselves And Other Things The Bible Doesn't Say



Synopsis

They are simple phrases. They sound Christianâ"like something you might find in the Bible.

Weâ"ve all heard these words. Maybe weâ"ve said them. They capture some element of truth, yet they miss the point in important ways. Join Adam Hamilton in searching for the whole truth by comparing common Christian clichés to the message and ministry of Jesus. The clichés include:

Everything happens for a reason. God helps those who help themselves. God won't give you more than you can handle. God said it, I believe it, that settles it. Love the sinner, hate the sin. A Half Truths is also part of a small-group experience complete that includes a DVD, Leader Guide, and a youth study.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an almost deceptive book - at first it seems like an accessible walk through the common sayings that, once reconsidered, most Christians would dispense with - but it's more. Examining phrases like "God Helps Those Who Help Themselves" and "God Won't Give You More Than You Can Handle", the author explores our basic understanding of God, our relationship with our Creator and our relationships with each other. It can be read on my levels - I recommend it highly.

I am a huge Adam Hamilton fan. He articulates the mainline middle better than anyone I know. His books beat with a pastoral touch because many of them begin as a sermon series and then are expanded to include more than is feasible in the weekly sermon. This book half truths is extremely

valuable because so many church folks mouth these as an effort to make sense of a world that leaves them frustrated and in tears. Hamilton doesn't just lampoon the half truth-he offers the beginning of a substitute way to think about the issue. How many times have you heard someone in your christian community mouth something like, it all happens for a reason God doesn't give us more than we can handle Love the Sinner hate the sin. This is just the beginning of the list of half truths that Christians spout without thinking. The problem is that those who are in pain often don't see the validity of the words we speak-because they are platitudes. This book is a great book for a small group study, a grief support group, or lay ministers training. Highly recommended-again

Most of the views Hamilton have expressed and examined here are not new to him. These are predictable and oft-stated views. It's likely no one who believes in the inerrancy of the bible would read this book.

Straightforward tackling of phrases that some well meaning Christians say...but probably shouldn't. I was not expecting a scholarly work as this is Adam Hamilton trying to preach to the masses; so, while I agree with one of the reviewers on the point that it is fairly simple, inoffensive rhetoric that even an elementary school can comprehend...that isn't always a bad thing (and should probably be expected from this type of study). I am pleased that someone is addressing these overused and misused phrases -- hopefully it reaches a wide audience and these words will be replaced with more accurate representations of the Bible. The book itself is easy to read and understand and is written in a fairly conversational style. A couple of my fellow participants mentioned that the 1st chapter was too long; I don't agree, although I'm not sure if they are talking strictly length or if they thought it got a little redundant -- either way I felt it was fine and it seemed to go quickly. I recommend it overall. We are doing this as a study in our church and it has prompted some interesting discussion (although so far, not all that controversial). I do feel that the while the content is good, it is lacking in a couple of ways (although the second way refers to the overall study, not just the book) . It would be nice to have some ready made resources for a more in-depth study for those who want to go beyond that 3rd grade level (Bible passages to read independently or something written by a respected theologian). Including this may lead to some better discussion instead of just everyone agreeing or nodding. Secondly, if doing this as part of the group, I find the video a waste of time and money. It simply rehashes what is in the book and covers some of the discussion out of the leader guide which then makes that practically pointless. Also, the questions in the study guide are pretty bland.

He is a United Methodist in thinking and belief and practical faith. What I admire about Hamilton is that he does not ridicule, degrade or dismiss Calvinistic belief and practice; he would have those of such persuasion hold on in troubling/trying events. He only invites that when one is not under pressure to hold on that the questions we all have be looked at again in the light of Scripture. He uses as a frame some statements most believe are Biblical BUT ARE NOT. His dissection is scriptural, cogent, Spirit led, I believe. Two pages of summary near the end of the book are alone worth the book's price: and priceless theology for Grace and Hope!

Hamilton makes thought-provoking analogies of some favorite sayings, many that I've used or thought myself. Interesting how we tend to be judges of others, instead of erring on the side of grace. But I believe Hamilton's advice is sound: scripture that is not "dictated" by God but written by Godly men, like Paul and the disciples, is meant to be examined for relevance and interpretation; words specifically given by God to some of the prophets and EVERY word spoken by Jesus must be considered His final Word. We enjoyed some good discussions in our adult study of this book.

While I liked the idea of this book, I found it lacking. First, the price point did not match the content. Had my church not been studying this, I don't think I would have purchased and after reading, I would not recommend this for any adult study groups. Could be better for youth groups though. Second, I found the scripture references also lacking. I would have preferred to see more scripture references that attest to the idea of where the half truth came from and scripture that attests to the opposite of the purported half truths. I had never even heard of one of the half truths so I'm not sure how much research went into that one. Third, it's easy to be harsh and judgmental, but I did gain something from this easy read. I really liked the half truth on God doesn't give us more than we can handle. I thought that section was well written so I'm giving it two stars. Overall, because of this price point for this short easy read, it seems like just another greedy Christian book. It took an hour for me to complete reading this book.

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