

FOREWORD BY RAY ORTLUND

ADAM RAMSEY

TRUTH

on

FIRE

GAZING AT GOD UNTIL
YOUR HEART SINGS

BOOK REVIEW: TRUTH ON FIRE

ADAM RAMSEY (THE GOOD BOOK COMPANY)

REVIEWED BY CASSIE WATSON

What matters more in the Christian life: knowledge or feeling?

You'd probably answer differently depending on your background and experience. But you don't have to choose—in fact, you shouldn't! In his new book, *Truth on Fire: Gazing at God Until Your Heart Sings*, Adam Ramsey is addressing “the divorce between theological and experiential Christianity” (16). We must be thinking people and feeling people. For if we truly believe the truth we proclaim about God, how could it not change everything about how we experience this world?

Ramsey devotes each chapter to a different attribute of God and ties them to our experience as Christians. God's sovereignty gives us the experience of assurance. God's goodness gives us the experience of trusting through suffering. God's love gives us the experience of relational beauty.

GOD IS OTHER

The first chapter of *Truth on Fire* provides an important foundation for the rest of the book. God is *other*, he is not like us. We need to remember this so we don't impose upon God our own limited or twisted ideas about what his attributes mean—what defines good, loving, or sovereign.

We are dependent and fickle, but God is self-existing and unchanging. Nobody and nothing can match him. This must change how we relate to God: “Real worship is undergirded by a perpetual

sense of wonder as we fix our eyes on the God who is unparalleled in beauty and unrivalled in power.” (24)

So, Ramsey calls us back to childlike wonder. He urges us, counterintuitively, to “mature toward childlikeness” (31). It's only when we drop our illusion of self-sufficiency that we can gaze in wonder, awe, and joy on the God who is so far above us. The question is whether we'll slow down enough to do it—a crucial challenge in our busy, overloaded lives.

GOD IS HAPPY

One chapter near the end of *Truth on Fire* addresses an attribute of God that is rarely talked about: God's *happiness*. How could he not be happy, when every single one of his good purposes is coming to pass? And this matters immensely for our Christian lives and how we relate to God:

How you picture God when he speaks to you through the Scriptures profoundly matters. It is the difference between thinking you're hearing from a “God” who wants you to change your life so that he can stand being around you, and a God who wants to embrace you so that your delight in him increasingly changes your life (142)

That makes all the difference in the world. We know and love and enjoy a God who is profoundly happy, and invites us to share in his happiness even through the suffering we face in this world.

As I write this review, I can hear the rain pattering on my roof and see birds flitting through the trees outside. Ramsey's book is helping me to appreciate the created world in a new way. When I hear birdsong or look out across a glittering ocean, I'm reminded not just that God is powerful, but also that he created the universe with joy. By enjoying nature I'm participating in the overflowing joy and delight of the triune God who made it all. This is just one of the practical ways that *Truth on Fire* has shaped my head and my heart, helping me to rejoice in the Lord more each day.

So pick up this book today, and you'll find a

banquet of transforming truth. It's a much-needed balm for those like myself who love to read and may be tempted to "settle for having a more accurate understanding of God at the expense of a joy-soaked, moment-by-moment communion with God" (18). But it'd also be a great introduction to the attributes of God for those who are new to theological reading. Adam Ramsey succeeds in his goal to "paint a biblical picture of God that opens our hearts in song" (163). Let's keep singing of the beauty of our eternal God as we learn more and more about who he is.

"I want the truth that I believe to be on fire in my life. I'm guessing you do too."

For years, Adam Ramsey had a faith that engaged his emotions but not his mind; and then for years more, he had a faith that engaged his mind but neglected his emotions. Growing tired of the divide, he realised that we don't need to choose between a passionate faith and a thoughtful one. God wants us to have both.

This book is your invitation to embrace God in all his fullness. To think about God more deeply so that you enjoy him more intensely. To behold him in such a way that your daily experience is transformed. To let God's truth set your heart on fire.

"Exquisite. Herein is a feast for head and heart."

JEN WILKIN

"A theologically robust, spiritually life-giving, and, above all, exciting vision of the Christian life. We need this."

SAM ALLBERRY

"Authentic, practical, powerful, and lovely. I cannot recommend this book enough."

LÉONCE B. CRUMP JR

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