

Culture of Hope: Radical Middle

Reflect

1. Consider this word: *Tension*. What does it mean?
2. We manage many tensions in life, for example, work/life balance, freedom and security, etc. What tensions do you see in your life?
3. In what ways is our world divided? What does our faith tell us about how to live in a divided world?

Read Your Bible

- John 1:14
- John 8:1-11

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. Consider the grace and truth described in John 1:14. How does it come to us?
2. How do the Pharisees see truth in relationship to the woman caught in adultery?
3. Do they offer her any grace?
4. In what way does Jesus challenge them?
5. What grace does Jesus offer to her?
6. In what ways do Jesus' words "Go now and leave your life of sin" capture a radical grace and a radical guiding truth for this woman?
7. How might your life be guided by this tension of God's grace and truth? How might this tension affect your relationships with others?

Conclusion

One of the great gifts of our faith is the ability to hold things in tension. We are caught between God's truth that guides and convicts us, and His grace that frees and forgives us. As the church we are called to live in this in-between and to proclaim it as the only hope for the world. There are rarely easy answers in life and our world seems more and more complicated each day. Rather than get enmeshed in the cultural chaos of our world, we are called out by the grace and truth of Jesus, to fix our eyes on a vision that is more than left or right, this side or that. Our vision is fixed on Jesus, whose truth and grace guide and free us for a different way of living. We are held firmly in that tension, between a truth that shows us what is right and grace that forgives abundantly. This is a radical position in a world that always chooses sides.

Pray

Father in Heaven, Your Word became flesh and made His home among us. In the person of Jesus, we find the truth for our lives and the grace for our failures. Hold us between them, so that our lives might be good and pleasing to You, so that we might be transformed to be more like You. Through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.