

Truth and Grace: Making It Safe for Prodigals to Return

A pastor's kid, Pastor Verna Brown once became a prodigal and walked away from the church. She says she grew up in a church culture of what she terms "turn and burn, holiness or hell."

Now the senior pastor of Soul Harvest Worship Center in Modesto, California, Brown says she believes in both truth and grace when addressing any type of sin, especially sin that has become controversial within the body of Christ. But leaders, she says, must make the church a safe haven for those who have strayed before "we polarize a demographic of young people that are caught in some of these lifestyles."

"As leaders, we love, and we love deeply," Brown told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. "But ultimately, our allegiance is to the Word of God. How we handle it is going to determine whether those who are caught in those types of lifestyles feel safe coming into the house of God or not."

"When Jesus came to the woman who was caught in adultery, He obviously stood up for her. He said, 'He who is without sin may cast the first stone.' But many in the grace camp stop there. We have to remember that Jesus is full of grace and truth. We have to balance the two. Jesus addressed the sin when he said, 'Go, and sin no more.' ... So we must have the right tone, and we must have the right heart, but we also must stand and declare the truth of God's Word and align with the plumb line of God's Word."

For more about grace and truth with Pastor Verna Brown, listen to the podcast below.