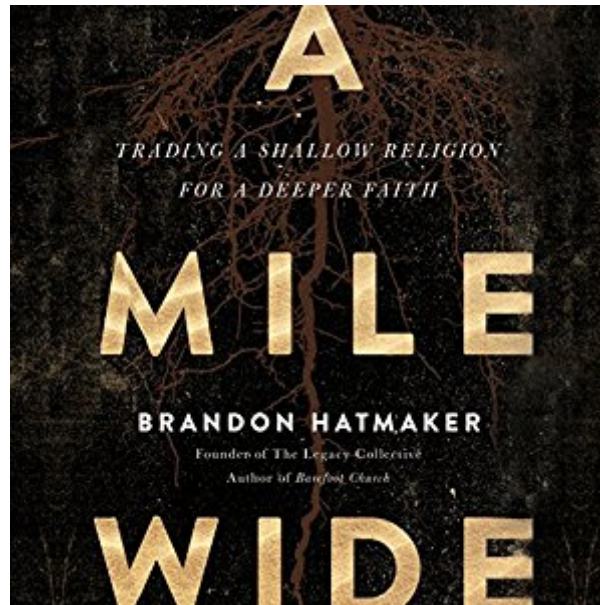


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# A Mile Wide: Trading A Shallow Religion For A Deeper Faith



## Synopsis

As cohost of HGTV's My Big Family Renovation, Brandon Hatmaker understands what it takes to rehab a home. But as a pastor (and husband of best-selling author Jen Hatmaker), he's more interested in rehabbing faith. And in *A Mile Wide*, he helps listeners transform an anemic spiritual life based on a limited understanding of God into a faith of true depth, intimacy, and power. Offering fresh perspective on eight essentials of Christianity - the Gospel, identity, Scripture, discipleship, kingdom, mission, community, and justice - Hatmaker provides practical applications that tap in to the richer life Christ promised his people, individually and as a community. God wants more than simply to save us: He's also determined to transform us, restore us, and use us to reveal the coming of his kingdom right here, right now.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In the book *A Mile Wide* Brandon Hatmaker states (about Jesus' parable of the soils), "...the quality and depth of the soil represents our heart's receptivity to his truth. Our receptivity determines the fruit, not the other way around. Instead of focusing on more fruit, we're challenged to focus on the condition of the soil." With that, he proceeds to aid the reader in turning over the fallow ground and the topsoil of the heart. Seed that falls on hardened soil cannot take root and grow and is left to the birds. Seed that falls on good soil eventually becomes fruit-bearing trees. Brandon states, "...we're better at being and making converts than we are at being and making disciples." We are invited to consider discipleship through a new set of lenses, all of which are critical in our formation. He spells

out, in everyday language how to go about deepening our relationship with God and with our neighbors. He offers a fresh perspective on loving others, calling them: The Outcast, The Outsider, and The Insider. This book left me hungering for greater depths in my faith and with an action plan to make it happen. I received an Advance Reader Copy from the publisher in exchange for my honest review.

If someone wants to read a book full of "churchy" language or wants to have an emotional pat on the back, this is NOT the book for them. If, on the other hand, a person wants to feel challenged in putting feet to their faith right where they are, then this book will give them pause, cause them to reread sections to mine them for their many treasures, and provide them with practical tools for living fully as a child of God. Hatmaker challenges his readers to be vulnerable so the gospel can do its work. This book is about living out one's faith missionally as we go rather than limiting "mission work" to mission "trips," be they foreign or domestic, and "shin[ing] light into the darkest places and bring[ing] hope into the most desperate moments" (162). My first "encounter" with Brandon Hatmaker was in his "interruptive narratives" in his wife's book, appropriately titled "Interrupted." His voice throughout Jen Hatmaker's book made me want to get to know his own work better. This does not disappoint. He challenges his reader to live with a heart full of God's mercy, finding their identity in Jesus alone, and living a life of discipleship. The language is simple yet profound; as a reader, I felt like I was sitting in the Hatmaker living room and enjoying a personal conversation with him. I heartily recommend this book!

In his latest book, *A Mile Wide*, Brandon Hatmaker addresses the believer's "struggle between shallow religion and deeper faith." Even for the believer who feels they are in a good place spiritually, he acknowledges the reality of wanting to go deeper still "into the goodness" that has been found. Through the following chapters we are taken on a journey with the author to change the way we view our own faith...to dig deeper into the soil of our hearts and ready it to receive the truth of the Gospel. The true Gospel that plays out not only within the localized body of believers but out into the world. We find ourselves going deeper and gaining a new perspective into our faith walk...in the meaning of true discipleship...as we follow through the authors own discoveries of faith, from identity to community, justice, the Kingdom of Christ and more. I would recommend this book to anyone looking to reassess what it means to stop 'playing church' and actually BE the church. I received an Advance Reader Copy in exchange for my honest review.

"Church can be weird." How do we bridge the gap between believers and non-believers? How do we make 'church' a judgment free zone? How do we meet people at their greatest [physical] need as a way to address their spiritual needs? Brandon Hatmaker meets these questions head on in *A Mile Wide*. *AMW* is a field guide for true discipleship, showing the world Jesus and following the mission He left (which, BTW, doesn't include preachy holier-than-thou lives). Hatmaker, already an accomplished author, has delivered an honest, focused, missional book meant to be dogeared, underlined, and kept with you on the journey. I received an Advance Reader Copy in exchange for my honest review.

Brandon Hatmaker uses an age old phrase "mile wide, inch deep" to challenge all believers (and those exploring their faith) to go deep. With authenticity being a buzzword these days, the action it requires to live out this definition is sadly a rarity. Hatmaker fights for the Bride of Christ by calling back the disenfranchised and reminding those residing behind the walls of the church of the true purpose of the gospel. The gospel transforms every part of our life. Every part. And it moves us to live out this transforming experience in every day of the week. "True Christianity is lived along the way, between the church services and Bible studies." Each chapter provides discussion questions that help the reader turn these inspiring words into action. This book needs to be in the hand of every pastor, small group leader, parent, teacher and student. I received an advanced reader copy in exchange for my honest opinion.

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