

(Radical Jesus) 2 Radical Jesus

by Glenn Meldrum

The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding Jesus as a radical and humble figure who came to rescue rebellious mankind from their sins.

Duration: 26:02

Scripture: 2 Peter 1:3

Topics: "Radical"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the revolutionary power of God's wisdom in a fallen world. He warns against degrading the teachings of Jesus into mere moral lessons devoid of supernatural power. The preacher urges believers to embrace the radical truth of Jesus, which has the power to turn the world upside down. He emphasizes the importance of living out the truth of God's word, and warns against false prophets and teachers who distort the word of God. The preacher encourages listeners to strive to build their lives upon the firm foundation of the word of God, and promises to present practical applications of biblical truths that can revolutionize their lives.

Transcript

This message by Glenn Meldrum was originally produced by In His Presence Ministries for the Radical Truth Podcast. You can listen and subscribe to the Radical Truth Podcast by going to www.ihpministry.com. You are welcome to reproduce this message for free distribution. This message is part of a series entitled, The Radical Jesus.

Last week we began a new study titled, The Radical Jesus. This series comes out of my most recent book that I wrote with the same title. In last week's lesson, we began laying the foundation of this teaching series by defining the word radical and how I will be using it in this study so no one would misunderstand what I am saying.

Unfortunately, the word radical has been hijacked by the secular media and applied to violent religions, ideologies, and political groups. They have done this to such an extent that it is hard to use the word in a positive way without somebody labeling you as a violent fanatic, ready at any moment to commit horrendous crimes against humanity. Contrary to the negative pop use of the word, I speak about Jesus being radical from a very positive standpoint.

Plain and simple, Jesus was radical and he never called for his disciples to instigate the violent overthrow of wicked governments or to kill people that belong to false religions or to take vengeance upon their enemies. As we progress in this study, in which is an examination of the person, character, and work of Jesus, we will clearly see that violence, hate, bigotry, and destruction did not have any part of his teachings, therefore it cannot have any part of the faith he founded. After I defined the word radical in the last episode, I went on to describe some of the challenges finite beings inherently have in comprehending the person and work of an infinite God.

There is still much that needs to be said in laying the foundation to this study before we can dig into its meat. There is a very important point I want to make about this study. I am not bringing to you a new revelation about Jesus or the plan of salvation.

Here is a simple fact that can help us to remain faithful to the Lord in these last days. Any new revelation about God, his sojourn on this planet as the Lamb of God, and his kingdom are actually false revelations. They are lies that come from the pit of hell.

People that claim to have a new revelation must add or take away from the revealed truth, which clearly means that the revelation or prophecy did not come from God. Any revelation or prophecy that adds to or takes away from the revealed truth of Scripture either came from hell itself or out of the fleshly mind of a person or both. We were warned by Jesus, Paul, Peter, John, and Jude that there would be false teachers and prophets in the last days.

Why should we then be surprised that such things unfold before our very eyes? Paul in very specific terms told us in 2 Timothy 4.3, for the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. This prophecy addresses both the world and the church.

The world will reject the sound doctrine Scriptures teach on morality to pursue with hellish aggression the lust of the flesh. Many in the church will abandon the truth of Scripture that reveals the person and work of Christ so she can practice a perverted faith that sanctions lukewarm, watered-down religion that is actually hostile to God. Paul was preparing true believers to face the flood of lies that hell will spew at the church so we will not be taken by surprise and perish with the rest of humanity.

I have said all this to establish that I am not presenting anything new, so if you are looking for the newest prophecy or revelation to tickle your itching ears, then you will need to find a false prophet to listen to because you will not get such stuff from me. What I am teaching in this study is sound doctrine that is in keeping with the apostles' teaching and that of the early church. Peter said it wonderfully in 2 Peter 1, verses 3 and 4. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. Notice that the Lord through Peter declared that he has already given us everything we need for life and godliness. There's nothing lacking in God's Word.

It contains every truth we need to be an on-fire follower of the radical Jesus so that we can make heaven our home. Let me set the record straight. Jesus is not absent-minded.

He did not forget to give us something special that is needed for our survival in these last days. What the early church needed to live godly, victorious lives in the face of severe persecution is exactly what we need in the final days before the second coming of our Lord. Anyone that claims to be a prophet or teacher that adds or takes away from the Word of God is a false prophet or a lying teacher sent by hell.

Like everyone else, I have to stand before God and give an account of how I lived and used the Word of God. It is my desire to be faithful to God by being faithful to his Word, so I promise you that in this study I will strive to the best of my ability to build upon the firm foundation of the Word of God. When God's Word is properly ministered, it will always present practical application that all believers can live out.

As we look more closely at the Jesus of Scripture, we will be forced to look at ourselves in light of such knowledge. At times this may be very disturbing. The only way we can rightly understand our humanity is by looking at Jesus in the Word of God.

To use anything else by which to define our present situation and reason for being is to use a false measuring rule that will surely cause us to greatly err from the truth. We need to have sound biblical knowledge about Jesus, but if we do not grow in relational knowledge about him, all the head knowledge we gain will not profit us in the least if we fail in our heart knowledge with him. Paul wanted to gain all the intellectual knowledge he could about the Lord, but it was his heartfelt cry, I want to know Christ, that truly made him a man of God.

Right doctrine about God is essential to having a right relationship with him. People can faithfully hold to right doctrine while having a wrong life because they miss the importance of knowing Christ on a personal basis. By seeing Jesus more clearly, we will see how far we miss the mark of what it means to be like Jesus.

The study we finished two weeks ago was titled, Character and God's Power. In that study we did an in-depth investigation into the necessity of developing godly character and how godly character is an integral part of seeing the power of the Holy Spirit work in and through the church. Yet in this study of the radical Jesus, we will once again have to deal with the subject of character.

Any teaching that does not in one way or the other address the need of conformity to God's word and the development of Christ-like character grossly fails the very purpose for which preaching and teaching was given to us by our precious Lord. The practical application of biblical truths that are taught through this podcast and will be presented in this particular study has the potential to revolutionize our lives. The spiritual and moral revolution that our Lord wants to work in and through us can only come when the word of God is applied to our lives by living out the truths to the fullest.

Hell has never been threatened by lukewarm, namby-pamby, weak, self-absorbed, churchy people. But the hordes of hell tremble when Christ's followers lay hold of the truth and live it out, for then we will take from the devil and his minions what rightfully belongs to the Lord. I pray for you, dear listener, like Paul prayed for the Ephesian church in Ephesians 1 verses 18 and 19.

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. Last week I stated the simple thesis of this study, and to this I want to turn our attention for the remainder of today's lesson. The thesis is this, Jesus was and is absolutely radical.

Such a thesis may make you very uncomfortable because your view of Jesus has been way too small, but just keep listening and I hope that that will change. Everything about Jesus is radical, and this is why hell has relentlessly attacked the person and work of Christ to degrade the majesty and splendor of our great and mighty God. If the hater of our souls can degrade the majesty of God in our minds, then he will surely weaken our passion and pursuit of God, which in turn will corrupt our faith.

This is the very strategy the devil used against mankind from the beginning, and he has effectively propagated the lies necessary to warp a vast number of churches across this land. Many individuals and churches have exchanged the glory of God for a weak man-made deity of cheap grace that is little concerned with the moral and spiritual decay in the western church. No matter what mankind does with the truth of God's word, we cannot alter who God is in the slightest degree.

God will always be faithful to himself, even if we are unfaithful to him and to what he has created us to be. All the opinions of man about God will not cause God to cease being who he is. Foolishly and dangerously, many people declare that the times are changing and that homosexuality and fornication are no longer condemned by God.

Such opinions are absolutely contrary to the word of God. They are the anti-biblical rantings of people who are enemies of God and prove by what they believe that they do not know the word of God or its author. They will never change the nature of God who established the moral standard for mankind that is based upon his infinitely holy character.

If we would honestly search the scriptures, then we would inescapably come to the conclusion that the church in general, and believers specifically, are in desperate need of a fresh vision of Jesus. We do not need a new vision of Jesus, as I stated earlier, for a new vision of Jesus will only be a false lying vision of him and will take us further away from him. We are in desperate need of a fresh vision of the revealed truth about Jesus.

To believe lies and illusions and mere opinions about God is extremely dangerous since our eternity hangs in the balance of what we do with Jesus. Left to ourselves, we will take the glorious God of creation and recreate him into a worthless, frail, and faulty deity that looks just like us. Mankind has done this since the fall, so it is nothing new.

We have not learned from history, so we keep repeating the same foolishness mankind has committed for six millennia. Now we just do it with technology. To create in our minds a false God that conforms to our opinions, religious traditions, moral beliefs, and philosophical ideas will spawn idols that can range from the tyrannical to the irrelevant.

The only God that can do us any good is the true and living God, for all the idols of men are the creation of men instigated by devils and are absolutely powerless to save us. Jesus refuses to comply with our wishes, to conform to our opinions, or change to fit our fanciful notions. He is the timeless, changeless, infinite Almighty, before whose judgment we will all stand.

As it is written, as surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow before me, every tongue will confess to God. One day every human will see God with clarity, and they will know that he is not Allah, Buddha, or Krishna, that he is not a mere personal belief or philosophy. They will see that he is the ultimate and final lawgiver that none can argue against.

He is greater than we could envision, mightier than we could dream, majestic beyond imagination, glorious outside of comprehension. He is infinite in all of his attributes, endless in all of his wonders. His love is infinitely greater than our sin, and his wrath infinitely worse than we could fathom.

Only the devil and the basis of men would want to degrade the infinite glories of God. It is in and through the ultimate power of his presence that we were created to know and experience his wonder. The tame religion that defines most of the American church is a disgrace to the boundless majesty of God.

He deserves more from mankind. He deserves the radical pursuit of mankind after his love and fellowship, for he owns us twice, first as our creator and second as our redeemer. Do we understand how lukewarm religion is an insult to the glory of God? Do we comprehend how our apathy in pursuing him is an offense to the limitless love that he has lavished on us? Everything about Jesus is radical.

Who he is, what he did, what he taught, what he is doing, and what he will do in the future. There's never been a person like Jesus, nor could there ever be another, for he was the great I am that took upon flesh and blood. He is the only man that had pre-existence before he was miraculously conceived in Mary's womb.

He is the only man that was not created because he is eternal. He is the only man who has no beginning and no end. Yes, as to his humanity, there was a beginning, but as to his divinity, he has always been and will always be.

He is the only man that was omnipotent, which means he is all-powerful, omniscient, which means he is all-knowing, and omnipresent, which means he is everywhere at once. As to his humanity, we are told that he emptied himself so he could be fully human, but that does not mean that he ceased in any way, shape, or form to be almighty God. C.S. Lewis was right when he said that God is not safe, and so we should be very thankful that he is good, or such a God could make hell itself seem like a pleasure cruise if he was not good.

Most of humanity does not understand how radical a work Jesus performed to purchase our salvation. The self-proclaimed church in all of its creeds and denominations does not comprehend Christ's radical work of salvation. Even true followers of Jesus do not grasp the awesome nature of salvation so that we could be adopted as sons and daughters of God.

Angels with their superior minds, experience, and understanding long to look into the work of salvation that their God did for rebellious humanity. Many people have experienced physical suffering to a similar degree as Jesus did. No one but Jesus was the Lamb of God that took upon himself the sins of the world.

His suffering as the atoning sacrifice is beyond anything that we could imagine. We have had a terrible time bearing the weight of our own sins, much less taking on our shoulders the sins of mankind. No one has faced the wrath of the Father like Jesus did.

Multitudes will face the Father's wrath and then suffer forever the horrors of hell. The wrath that they will experience will only be a fraction of what he could administer and only a portion of what they deserve. But Jesus took the full force of the Father's wrath.

He did not receive the wrath that one man deserves, but the wrath that all mankind as a whole deserves. There's no man, angel, or demon that can fathom what that wrath must have been like. The only one that could withstand the full force of God's wrath was God himself.

Only God could conceive and achieve the feat of redeeming mankind. The uncontainable God willfully allowed himself to be contained in a human body so he could be the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. What love divine! What radical love! Now I want to look for a moment at Christ's humility that is absolutely radical.

We will look at this more closely in coming lessons, but I want to make a couple of points here. We will never apprehend the tremendous humility in what it means for God to become man. Though we are created in God's image, for God to take on our image is degrading beyond human comprehension.

We are told in Philippians 2 that God lost nothing of his majesty and glory by becoming human to rescue mankind. He did not enter this world as a full-grown man, but went through the path all humans must take to be conceived in the womb of a woman. This is absolutely mind-boggling.

He was not born in a palace wrapped in soft clothes and bedding, but in a barn, and his first bed was a manger filled with straw, which is a feeding trough for animals. His home was not filled with sweet smells of incense because he was surrounded by smelly animals, urine-soaked hay, and piles of manure. The kings and princes of this world did not bow down and adore him.

The men that visited Jesus the night he was born were shepherds coming from the peasant class of society. The God that literally owns everything and everyone came into this world in extreme poverty so he could give mankind the tremendous wealth of himself. Mankind should have adored the infant savior who slept in that manger.

They should have placed him on the greatest throne this world has ever known. We do not comprehend what it means to be worshiped and adored by angels and to have archangels prostrate themselves before us, but Jesus did. Yet he grew up in obscurity with people never knowing he was the one that marshals the starry hosts and orchestrates their fantastical dance.

Throughout his life he remained the meek and lowly savior even though he had formed the earth with his hands and knew mysteries that mankind could not even fathom. The one that created out of his own infinite imagination the elements of the cosmos, stars, and planets worked as a common carpenter fashioning the wood and stone he had created. Jesus is the only man in history who could have justifiably looked down upon depraved humanity and boasted of his uniqueness and wondrous accomplishments.

The Almighty came to this rebel planet in meekness and lowliness to be the remedy our sin-laden souls so desperately need. Jesus did not come into the world for self-glorification, though if he did it would not have been wrong because he is the one and only God. Jesus came into the world to glorify the Father and to rescue rebellious mankind.

For Jesus to be the perfect example of what it means to be human, he yielded to the Father every desire a human being can have. So we find in Jesus the perfect expression of what our surrender should look like. His surrender was not with lip service but in reality.

Every word, deed, thought, and ambition flowed out of his loving surrender to the Father. Every aspect of why Jesus came into the world was surrendered to the Father so the work would be accomplished solely through the will of the Father. As a young man, Jesus restrained his burning passion to minister to sin-plagued mankind suffering under the wages of sin until the Father declared the day of his showing to Israel.

We cannot grasp the gravity of this. When he looked at the lame, blind, and demon-possessed he knew he was the remedy to their lives of pain and agony. Yet his compassion was so fully surrendered to the Father that it would only be unleashed upon mankind to do them good at the right time.

Every dimension of his ministry was surrendered to the Father's will. He did not disobey the Father even once, even if in our eyes such an action would have been perceived as noble or good. Authentic good can only come out of our loving obedience to God, which is an act of surrender.

Jesus came into this world to save his people from their sins and that impossible feat could only be accomplished through absolute submission. We rebels have a hard time understanding this next point, but it is true nonetheless. Jesus found infinite joy by surrendering to his Father everything.

We would taste of greater joy if we would learn to surrender more fully like Jesus. When we look at Christ's obedience we find that it is also absolutely radical. When the Father spoke the Son listened and obeyed.

We have a very hard time with this concept of total obedience because we are rebels down to the very core of our being. Conquering the rebel self is one of the hardest things we will ever have to do. Jesus made a very radical statement when he declared, for I did not speak of my own accord, but my Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

The obedience that Jesus lived out was not just in outward actions but also in the inward life. He said only what the Father told him to say and he said it in the exact way the Father willed him to say it. Such utter obedience is incomprehensible to us rebels.

We think that partial obedience is acceptable to God, but it isn't. For some crazy reason we think that if we obeyed Jesus to such an extent that we would lose something of our identity or that we would have to forfeit having a supposedly fun time. What deception! We would find joy unspeakable through total obedience and power to advance Christ's kingdom more than we could ever imagine.

It is not just that Jesus did everything the Father told him to do, but he did it with a burning zeal. A parent can tell a child to take the trash out and he will do it while he grumbles and complains the whole time, but that is not obedience, just submission to the powers that be. True obedience can only come out of love or it ceases to be obedience.

The obedience Christ lived out perpetuated the perfect unity within the triune Godhead as he walked this planet. Our finite minds can easily be overwhelmed with such an incredible mystery. Christ's touch was absolutely radical.

It is a mystery how Jesus could be 100% God and at the same time be 100% man. This can only be accomplished through the mind and will of God. This means that Christ's touch is absolutely radical because it was not the touch of a mere mortal, but of Almighty God.

The hands that touched hurting humanity were the same that measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and with the breadth of his hand marked out the heavens. When those hands touched the deaf, their ears were open. When they reached out to prostitutes, they were transformed.

When his fingers fell upon lepers, they were thoroughly cleansed. Those hands possess inexhaustible power, not power that came from an outside source, but that which was inherited within his very nature as

being God. With those hands he formed the universe and fashioned Adam out of the dust and with those hands he blessed little children with gentle affection.

Yet those gentle hands of tenderness can also be instruments of terrifying justice. Jeremiah told us in chapter 15 verse 6, you have rejected me declares the Lord, you keep on backsliding, so I will lay hands on you and destroy you. I can no longer show compassion.

If the Lord lays hands on you, I guarantee that you will know he laid hands on you. In this verse, we see that such action is an expression of his wrath and would be terrifying to say the least. We must grab hold of the reality that the radical Jesus is not a manageable deity.

It's not just that his touch was radical, but his voice is also absolutely radical. David joyfully declared in Psalms 29 4, the voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is majestic. David is here stating a fact about God that when an all-powerful being speaks, phenomenal things happen.

The psalmist saying in chapter 46, nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall, he lifts his voice, the earth melts. With poetic beauty, the psalmist speaks about how God can with a word set nations in chaos or cause the earth to melt. When the Lord speaks to his children, they will never be the same.

When the wind tore the mountain Elijah was on, it must have been alarming. When the Lord shook the earth under the prophet's feet, he was shaken deep within. And when fire engulfed the land, Elijah must have been stunned into silence.

All it took to fill the man though with dread and cause him to cover his face in overwhelming fear was for the great I am to whisper to the prophet in a still small voice. This was the radical voice of Jesus Christ and one day that voice became human. It had all the qualities a human voice normally has, yet there was something more to it, infinitely more.

When God incarnate spoke, radical things happened. How could it be otherwise? With a word he caused the dead to return to life. With a word demons shuddered and fled the bodies they possessed.

With a word repentant sinners were delivered from lifelong enslavement. And with a word multitudes were fed and healed. This was not a different voice from the one that spoke light into existence.

It has always been the voice of Jesus, the radical creator God. The same voice that birthed the starry host spoke the Sermon on the Mount. This means that Christ's teachings are absolutely radical because they flowed out of the limitless mind that created everything out of nothing.

From Christ's spectacular wisdom came his revolutionary teachings on the kingdom of God. Jesus spoke words in human language that are the realities of a kingdom not of this world. The truths he declared have the power to transform and empower sinners to live in his heavenly kingdom in true holiness while they are traveling through this life.

Since Jesus is radical in everything that he is and does and is yet to do, then it stands to reason that his teaching is equally radical. In this fallen world his wisdom is revolutionary. It disturbs men, shakes kingdoms, and leaves devils cowering in deep recesses of hell.

If we do not understand this truth then we will degrade his world-shaking life-changing teachings into nothing more than tame moral lessons void of supernatural power. The hordes of hell will gladly help in

this endeavor, but if we will embrace his radical truth we will find that it superbounds with all the power necessary to turn this world upside down. The Lord is waiting for those simple people that are willing to live out the truth no matter the cost.

Then men and devils will know that there is a God and that his name is Jesus.

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