

# The Radical Christ: A Radical People

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It's easy to say, 'We should all be like Christ', but what does that really mean? Someone once said that 'Jesus put a face on God' by coming amongst people and touching, lifting, embracing and caring for them in their hurts and needs. As we embrace Christ's radical mission, recognising that the Father sends us even as he sent Jesus, [John 20:21] then we too can wear the face of God in the 21st century. It's still God's intent to step into the cities, towns and rural areas of the nations to touch and lift the fallen, broken, hurting and dying of humanity. We must refuse to fossilise if we're to avoid becoming a church 'having form without power'. [2 Timothy 3:5]

In reality Christ, the supreme restorer, was the most radical man that ever walked the earth. Jesus' radical actions were not moments of human weakness or intolerance, but expressions of God's heart.

The radical Christ is at all times the perfect image of God the Father. Radical Christianity will always be passionate, jealous as well as zealous, and white hot for the divine interests involved. Being radically committed to the restoration of the church to God's full intention for it brings us into inevitable conflict with custom and tradition. Restoration challenges any misplaced sense of loyalty to religious heritage, or sentimental attachment to a religious past. Radical commitment to the restoration of God's church keeps us moving forward in the direction of the Spirit in our day, and prevents us from falling by the wayside with the religiously comfortable. Any student of church history will acknowledge that all gains in the progress of the church were as a consequence of someone radically breaking through the restraining religious walls and forces of their time.

Tomorrow's world will be ruled by the radical men and women of today's world, who live - as their spiritual forefathers did - in the light of God's purpose.

## Radical Changes

The paradigms of many things are changing in this generation, and are no longer sufficient for what presently is, or for what is coming. We must escape the ruts of settling for the average, of accepting conventional wisdom, of falling prey to 'group think'. We must do more than merely think of changing; we must change our thinking. The kingdom of God is the dynamic reality of God's government and rule in this time/space world. And life in the kingdom of God is a very radical experience.

## We are being radical when:

- **We** embrace the gospel that joins us to others and their need, and cuts us free from the destructive influence of our independent self-will.
- **We** embrace the consequences of following his direction and Spirit regardless of possible consequences, which frees us from self-preservation.
- **We** maintain a pioneering attitude rather than settling in self-comfort zones; we are pilgrims, not settlers.
- **We** live free of the slavish domination of the material and the temporal. Money can enslave; decisions, actions, directions, relationships, even ministry can be controlled by the desire for the temporal or money.
- **We** confidently confront the powers of darkness that oppose us rather than allowing them to paralyse us in fear.
- **We** do not wait for others to do for us what we can and should do for ourselves. It is not for others to cause something to happen but for you to make it happen.
- **We** refuse to compromise the truth to accommodate religious externalism, or protect any position or status we may have gained.
- **We** remain resolutely committed to Christ as head of the church and refuse to fossilise in religious institutionalism.

As restorers we are called to work out a vision not live in a dream, freed from the intimidation and restricting opinions of others.