

I hope you're able to read through *Radical* with 1Mosaic this winter. In it David Platt wrote "Somewhere along the way we had missed what is radical about our faith and replaced it with what is comfortable." (p. 7) I'm really challenged by the idea of being comfortable. I hate to admit it, but I like being comfortable. I like knowing I can pay my electric bill or go out to eat. I like volunteering at a homeless shelter, then going home to my warm bed. I like my job and my lifestyle.

The other night in our M^group, we talked about why it's difficult to follow Christ. Part of the difficulty, I believe, is because sometimes it's uncomfortable. When we see others hurting, our hearts break and sometimes we feel helpless. We often don't know what to do or how to pray. We want to fix other's problems and sometimes they won't let us. We hear statistics about the thousands that are starving or suffering from AIDS. All around the world children are orphaned. We get overwhelmed by all the heartache. There's too much suffering. We feel uncomfortable and it hurts.

I know a single mom who lives in what I would call a constant state of being uncomfortable. As a homemaker she had to find shelter and food for her kids when her husband left. But her husband's abandonment has forced her to fully rely on Christ. When her family has a need, she asks the Lord and then tells her children how He provides. She has learned to rely on God for everything. Her faith has grown through this trial, and my faith has grown by watching her. Her heart has been broken, but she is not bitter. I am in awe of her peace and amazed at how God has taken care of them.

Platt wrote regarding his relationship with Christ: "But I want to know him. I want to experience him. I want to be part of a people who delight in him like the brothers and sisters in underground Asia who have nothing but him. And I want to be part of a people who are risking it all for him." (p. 19) Over the years when life got hard for me, I didn't delight in God like Platt describes. I didn't rely on Him like my friend does. Instead I cried out for my circumstances to change, and when they did, I went back to being comfortable. I don't think I can be comfortable and know him more. I'm going to have to choose.

Questions to Consider:

The Greatest Commandment is "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39) How is *Radical* challenging my idea of loving God? Do I really love Him with all my heart, soul, and mind? Do I love God more than my other relationships? Am I putting Him first? How much time do I spend on my relationship with God?

The book first asks two important questions: Am I going to believe Jesus? Am I going to obey Jesus?

From p. 5 . . . What are my prayers like?

What is the American 'church' dream? How do I define a successful American church?

When my Father speaks, do I listen?

Do I believe that Jesus is worthy of all my devotion? Do I really believe he is worth abandoning everything for? Do I really believe that Jesus is so good, so satisfying, and so rewarding that we will leave all we have and all we own and all we are in order to find our fullness in him? Do you and I believe him enough to obey him and follow him wherever he leads? Have we actually turned away from Jesus? (p. 18-19)

What do I risk, if anything, to be a Christ follower? Do I want to risk it all? (p. 19)

Am I willing to live out the gospel? (p. 20)

The Holy Spirit will whisper different things to different people. Am I going to commit to believe whatever Jesus says? Am I going to commit to obey what I have heard? (p. 20)

This month's memory verse: "Anyone, then, who knows the good they ought to do and does not do it, sins." James 4:17

Additional verses: Luke 9:57-62 and 14:26

Reminders:

1.15 –The Gathering at SHU at 10am!!! "R A D I C A L -chapter 2"
Too hungry for words...discovering the truth & beauty of the gospel!

1.22 –The Gathering at SHU at 10am!!! "R A D I C A L -chapter 3"
This week we look at relying on God's power...often the true beginning of our spiritual journeys won't happen until we are at the end of ourselves.
Also, stay tuned for our "4 the City" January project details!

1.29 –The Gathering at 10am & FAMILY FUN DAY!!! "R A D I C A L -chapter 4"
The great 'why' of God...God's global purpose from the beginning till today.