

Radical #11

Radical Integration

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We're in the third month of a series called Radical Discipleship and today I want to summarize what we have done so far. I'm calling this Radical Integration...integration of all the sermons from this year so far.

My questions for you:

[What is a disciple?](#)

Someone who follows Jesus with intention, a learner, someone practicing discipline.

[To Whom are we disciples?](#)

Jesus

[What makes it radical?](#)

Here is a similar theme found in the three synoptic gospels:

Matt 16:24

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.,

Mark 8:34

34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Luke 9:23

23 Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

We lose the power of this because we've made crosses into a symbol that doesn't represent what it was. Let's go back and rephrase this:

Whoever wants to follow me must

- *take up his grave diggers shovel,*
- *take up his electric chair,*
- *carry on them a loaded gun prepared to give it to anyone for their own execution*

Be prepared daily to follow Jesus. This is a radical.

We've been looking at various aspects of this:

1. **Radical Courage:** What or who are you avoiding? Typically, these are your strongholds.

Radical courage is anchored in confidence in God and what He has previously done for us. Ex: Caleb was a scout in the Old Testament who checked out the promised land and even though it was full of giants, he said he had confidence in God to go into the land. Eric drew our attention to what God had already done for the Israelites: we need to be anchored in this confidence by telling our stories. We were challenged to tell our stories because we would be rehearsing our confidence in God, giving others an opportunity to remind us of this when we struggle. This is personal, corporate, and historical!

2. **Radical Waiting:** The radical part of waiting is active, not passive. We think of waiting as what we do in a doctor's office. I don't like it when they tell me to arrive 15 minutes early because now I will have empty time to scan my phone to distract myself from the boredom. But this is not the sense of waiting in the OT: it was an active thing.

In fact, Psalm 131 says we wait in a weird way which may make sense to breastfeeding mothers: we wait like a weaned child. Unweaned children are very anxious people who constantly need things. They cannot be content on their own and need to be rocked, ect. But a weaned child can focus on what the *parent* is doing; he is not as self-centered. A weaned child is like a well trained dog: when you tell it to sit or lie down, it will be attentive and wait for the next command from the owner. That is the way we are called to wait radically: looking for what Jesus, our master, is going to tell us to do next.

3. **Radical Following:** This may be the most important sermon of the whole series! We talked about being zombies and Eric demonstrated this: go back and listen to this! Listen to all of them! Zombies have no minds or capacity to do anything that is alive. Jesus has made us alive to the way we were meant to be. Eric also explained there are different types of followers: a soldier (Jesus is our commander), an athlete (with a coach), a student (who learns from a teacher), a servant (who serves a master), or a citizen (a subject of a lord or king). If you watch for these in the NT, you will see all of them often.
4. **Radical Evangelism:** I tried to make this evangelism a part discipleship. Paul says follow me as I follow Christ. I gleaned that we need to lead like we follow. If you follow Jesus as an athlete, you need to be an athlete. You have good things to offer your

community. I asked Paul who was chained to his Roman guards, “Who are you chained to?” which will answer who you should be evangelizing.

5. **Hospitality:** Eric said radical hospitality cares for the *unwanted* guests. It cares for people at inconvenient times for you: you are on the way to do something and someone needs you. When you help, this is radical. In fact, we should expect opportunities out of interruptions. For example, Jesus was on his way to heal a child and the child died while Jesus was interrupted by a woman who needed healing. He showed radical hospitality in a culture where this woman would have been an unwanted guest. Likewise, we are called to minister in a way that recognizes that YOU, too, are a very important pastor.

I Peter 2:9 says we are royal priests who need to be doing the things that pastors do. This doesn't mean preaching necessarily but meeting with people, assessing their health and needs, praying for them, being aware of the people around you, and attending to their needs. We learned about different criteria for helping people.

6. **Radical Parenting:** Disciplining is an important part of parenting, which is radical. We looked at proverbs and Hebrews and learned about the rod of discipline that drives out foolishness. Our children won't die if we discipline them. If you don't do this, you are saying they don't belong to you. This act claims them as yours. It produces righteousness and peace.
7. **Radical Submission:** Radical submission is deep, not just broad. You need depth in your soul and life to be submissive to Jesus, especially in the places where you would rather protect. We surrender our strongholds, the places that we want to continue to take control of and instead build walls around them and insist on being our own masters. We need to resist the devil, wash ourselves, and mourn.
8. **Radical Gender:** Eric said God created humans with bodies, male and female. You are one or the other. Maybe that seems obvious, but as I observe the world around us, I see this is radical. Furthermore, he said the creator defines his creation. We don't get to choose our identity and purpose. My role is to consider whether I can accept this or pretend to fabricate my own.
9. **Radical Marriage (and Singleness):** Marriage and singleness are both radical gifts from God. We hesitate to embrace singleness as a gift and when we do, it is radical. Single people are able to do things that married people are not as able to do. One of Eric's sermons from a long time ago said single people are the *special forces* of the church. The rest of the married people are slow to move and not as quick or free to do things. Special

forces are lean mean fighting machines with the resources to get places quickly and spend time, especially in a crisis. This is a gift and is amazing.

10. **Radical Integration:** How do we integrate this? How many things does ALL include? The book of Ephesians says Jesus is over ALL. How many things is all? I've been told there are microscopic particles called gluons and also huge things called galaxies. And everything in between: ants, elephants, people, and every aspect of me: my soul, body, mind, plans, family, friends, etc. Jesus is Lord or ruler or king of ALL and more...even angels and demons and things I don't know about or understand. Integration is bringing different things together into a whole under ONE Lord, Jesus.

Radical discipleship is following Jesus in all things. It involves discipline and service. I loved the parenting sermon which brought my attention to discipline. I recognize that athletes need much discipline in following a trainer or sport or school. It also involves discipline as well as submission to follow Jesus. There is no point in following my friend on a trail unless I submit to the belief that the friend knows where he is going. If I learn pickleball, I need to listen to someone who knows about pickleball. And Jesus is like this: we can trust him.

I love history and fantastical worlds where there are vassals, someone who is underneath a greater authority such as knights or lords. A vassal can have vassals under them. We like to think of ourselves as allies or equals who are working toward something. But vassals mean clearly underneath. Christ is OVER all. I like to think of my own personal kingdom and I get to help out in our areas when I want to. But it's not like this: Christ created me and defines me. It's not to my benefit to be left alone. Otherwise, we get strongholds.

We integrate ourselves and take our strongholds and all these are under the Lordship of Christ. We bring all of these before Him. This takes waiting and courage. If we surrender or let our stronghold be demolished, how will it be protected from the hurt and pain that could come our way? It takes courage to confront our fears, knowing God will keep us safe and protected in Him the way we need to be. This requires active waiting, not just times of distractions and entertainment.

This includes our marriages, singleness, bodies, children, parenting, possession, plans, time agendas, and money (both in what we have and how we make it). It requires ministry and disciple making. I don't like this! But I remind you what Paul says:

II Cor 10:4-5

4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. **5** We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

We take EVERY THOUGHT captive. There are many thoughts in my mind all the time: our philosophy, our thoughts, our feelings, our politics, attention, attitudes, pain, traumas, secrets. All need to be integrated and brought to Jesus. Take heart: there is a promise:

Matt 11:29

29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Some personal questions to think about:

What part of your self or life remains separate from the Lordship of Christ?

How will you submit this?

What has stood out in this series?

What is something important that I didn't review today?

How do we radically submit to all things?