

RADICAL FAITH

Contributed by administrator
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A Bible Study on Economic Justice

By Jim Jordal

- CONTENT: READ ALOUD THE FOLLOWING QUOTATION:

"The great Christian revolutions come not by the discovery of something that was not known before. They happen when somebody takes radically something that was always there."

H. Richard Niebuhr, as quoted by Philip Yancey in *What's So Amazing About Grace?*

- DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Radical: Extreme, thoroughgoing; favoring drastic political, social, or economic reforms; a person who holds or follows extreme principles; a person who advocates fundamental political, economic, and social reforms by direct and often uncompromising methods; goes beyond moderation or even to excess in opinion, belief, action; to use extreme measures.

From The Random House College Dictionary

USING NIEBUHR'S STATEMENT AND THE DICTIONARY DEFINITION OF "RADICAL,

DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS:

1. Was Jesus a radical? Were the apostles? What about the Old Testament prophets?

- Name some Christian revolutions that Niebuhr might be referring to?
- Why don't we as modern Christians act in a more radical manner concerning our interpretation of and obedience to Scripture?
- The concept of "radicalism" has a component of acting on one's beliefs. Are we then radicals or reactionaries?
- Discuss what actions we would take today toward economic justice if we took the following scriptures in a more radical manner? Discuss each one separately. (Scriptures from NASB).
- Therefore whatever you want others to do for you, do so for them, for this is the Law and the

Prophets (Matt. 7:12)

- Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matt. 6:19-21).
- Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors (Matt. 6:10-12)
- Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I command you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matt. 28:19-20).
- For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings (Hosea 6:6, KJV).
- And to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as himself, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices (Mark. 12:33).

PRINCIPLES FOR CONSIDERATION:

- Merely knowledge is not sufficient for the type of Christianity toward which Christ calls us.
- God values obedience to His commands more than sacrifices and offerings.
- Radical Christianity demands that we act upon what Scripture proclaims.
- If we only did what Jesus said, our selves, our church, and our world would be revolutionized.

REFERENCES:

Matt. 25:14-30; Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46-49.