

“Jesus: Radical, Renegade, Rebel”

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

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If I were to ask how many here want to follow Jesus, my best guess is that most everybody here would raise their hand. C'mon Dave, why else would we be here. During this Lenten season we will be challenged as to what it really means to follow Jesus. It means more than Sunday morning Christians, it means more than coming to special services like an Ash Wednesday service, or Christmas Eve, or Easter. What does it really mean to follow Jesus?

Let me define some words. First of all the word **Radical**. Radical is, well, a radical word. We think of someone who is radical and we think they are out of the norm, perhaps even a weirdo or a freak.

Here's the definition of **Radical: a person who holds or follows strong convictions or extreme principles**.

Now typically when we think of Radical we have a negative connotation with it. They are extremists. Don't raise your hands, but if I were to ask you if you wanted to be classified as a Radical....I'm not sure that many hands would go up.

Let's look at another word. The word is **Renegade**. Again we associate this with negative feelings. We wouldn't want to be a renegade. Here is the definition of **Renegade: a person who deserts a cause for another (changed allegiance)**. Certainly we have causes we are avid and enthusiastic about. We certainly do not like people who change allegiance.

Here's the third word to try and digest. **Rebel**. This in particular evokes negative feelings. In U.S. History the “Rebel's” were those fighting against the North. Fighting against the Union. We certainly don't want to fight and be known as a rebel. Here is the definition: **a person who refuses allegiance to his or her country**.

To have people be Radicals, Renegades, and Rebels sound so outlandish, unlawful and disrespectful.

What would you think if I told you that I believe that Jesus was a Radical. How many want to be like Jesus? What would you think if I told that that Jesus was a Renegade? How many want to be like Jesus? What would you think if I told you that Jesus was a Rebel? How many want to be like Jesus. Yes.....Jesus the Radical, the Renegade and the Rebel.

Do we really want to be like Jesus? Do we really want to be radical, to be a renegade and to be a rebel?

(Video)

Whoa....radical. Are we ready? I mean really ready when we realize that from dust we were made and dust we will return....can we really make a difference?

On Sunday we begin the sermon series and church wide Bible study series “Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus.” The author, Rev. Mike Slaughter pastor of Ginghamburg United Methodist Church says this: **Jesus didn’t come to start a religion. The rebel Jesus came with a renegade gospel to start a revolution.**

So as we begin our 40 days of Lent so we begin our revolution. Our internal revolution that begins here in your heart.

Paul in his letter to the church at Corinth says (vs. 26) “Consider your calling.” Now 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 The Message (MSG) **26-31 Take a good look, friends, at who you were when you got called into this life. I don’t see many of “the brightest and the best” among you, not many influential, not many from high-society families. Isn’t it obvious that God deliberately chose men and women that the culture overlooks and exploits and abuses, chose these “nobodies” to expose the hollow pretensions of the “somebodies”?**

God chose us nobodies...creatures made from dust to be the ones to cause a revolution. To be radical. To be renegades. To be rebels. We weren’t powerful. Not many from noble birth. Most of us are weak. We may even feel low and despised. When you realize who you are we are humbled....and then we realize that God has called us....we can only boast in God not in ourselves.

God was once approached by a scientist who said, “Listen God, we’ve decided we don’t need you anymore. These days we can clone people, transplant organs and do all sorts of things that used to be considered miraculous.”

God replied, “Don’t need me huh? How about we put your theory to the test. “Very well, how about this? Let’s say we have a man-making contest.” The scientist agrees, “But,” God added, “we’re going to do this just like I did back in the old days with Adam.” “Fine” says the scientist as he bends down to scoop up a handful of dirt.”

“Whoa!” says God, shaking his head in disapproval. “Not so fast. You get your own dirt.”

Genesis 2:7 Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

We are God breathed. We are living with the breath of God in us. Or as Paul says in verse 30--- “You are in Christ Jesus.” And let me add and Christ Jesus is in you!

So we are from dust, we are nobodies...but because of Christ He became to us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

The New Living Translation puts it this way: ³⁰ **God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy and he freed us from sin.**

Because we are made right with God, because He has made us pure and holy, and because He has freed us from sin....we can be the followers and disciples He needs us to be.

We can be **radical....that is a person who holds or follows strong convictions or extreme principles.** Those are Biblical principles. Those convictions or strong convictions based on God's word. Those extreme principles follows the example of Jesus Himself who said that He "was the way, the truth and the life." Go ahead call be radical....xxxx I want you to be radical too.

We can be **renegades....that is a person who deserts a cause for another (changed allegiance).** I want to desert the cause of this world, I want to give up my selfish ways for His ways. I want to change my allegiance to the way of prosperity, luxury and a life of ease to a way where my allegiance is "seeking first the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33) Where I mean it when I pray in the Lord's Prayer.... "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done." Do you want to be a renegade?

We can be **rebels: that is a person who refuses allegiance to his or her country.**

Now let me put on the brakes big time....I am proud to be an American. I pledge allegiance to this United States of America. I am blessed to be living here with all of the rights, privileges, and blessings that we are able to have. The freedom we have in many ways is because it was sacrificially fought by our military. However....in reality...a spiritual reality....I am not of this world. I am in the world, but not of the world. My true allegiance is a heavenly allegiance.

Jesus was before Pilate and notice this conversation as recorded in John 18.

John 18:36-38 Contemporary English Version (CEV)

36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom doesn't belong to this world. If it did, my followers would have fought to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. No, my kingdom doesn't belong to this world."

37 "So you are a king," Pilate replied.

"You are saying that I am a king," Jesus told him. "I was born into this world to tell about the truth. And everyone who belongs to the truth knows my voice."

38 Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?"

Let me tell you what truth is....truth is Jesus and what Jesus says....that is who has my utmost allegiance. Are you with me? Xxxxxxx

We are to be boasting in the Lord and for the Lord...not because of what we have done. Remember we were made from dust....we are nobodies.

23 The Lord says: Don't brag about your wisdom or strength or wealth. 24 If you feel you must brag, then have enough sense to brag about worshiping me, the Lord. What I like best is showing kindness, justice, and mercy to everyone on earth.

Contemporary English Version (CEV) 9:23-24

We are only who we are because of what Jesus Christ has done for us....especially during this Lenten season may we focus on the power of the cross. Boast on Him.

Mama Lena, Sarah's mom....my favorite mother in law, and I'm her favorite son in law....you know why....her only son in law. She says when she hears somebody bragging.... "Toot toot toot." When I first heard her say that I didn't know what she was doing. She said it's because they are blowing their own horn..... "toot, toot, toot."

Didn't realize it at the time that my favorite mother in law was quoting scripture....check this out...**Everything that we have—right thinking and right living, a clean slate and a fresh start—comes from God by way of Jesus Christ. That's why we have the saying, "If you're going to blow a horn, blow a trumpet for God." The Message (vs.30-31)**

If you are going to blow a horn...toot, toot, toot.....don't blow it about yourself....but blow your trumpet for God.

Beloved....I am searching what it means to be like Jesus. I am exclaiming this Lent that I want to be a Radical for Jesus in a Biblical sense. I am examining what it means to be a Renegade like Jesus was. And I am exploring what it means to be a Rebel like Jesus and make sure my truest allegiance is to Almighty God.

I invite you to join me in this Lenten journey.