

# RADICAL

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1 & 2

Chapter 1—“We as Christ followers in American Churches have embraced values and ideas that are not only unbiblical, but that actually contradict the Gospel we claim to believe” (p. 3). Our temptation is to rationalize why we do not obey the radical call of Jesus upon our lives, as we often give in “to the dangerous temptation to take the Jesus of the Bible and twist Him into a version of Jesus we are more comfortable with. A nice, middle class, American Jesus. A Jesus who doesn’t mind materialism and who would never call us to give away everything we have... A Jesus who brings us comfort and prosperity as we live out our Christian spin on the American dream” (p. 13). The reward of a Gospel-empowered life of obedience to the all-satisfying Christ is stunning, while “the cost of believers not taking Jesus seriously is vast for those who don’t know Christ and devastating for those who are starving and suffering around the world” (p. 16).

Chapter 2— Throughout the world Christians face persecution, danger, discomfort, and hardship simply to gather and study the Word of God in order to know Him. God’s Word/the Gospel is enough for them, as they hunger to know more of who He is, who we are, and what or Who we really need. But, do we in America truly love the Gospel and understand its’ implications? “In the American dream, where self reigns as king (or queen), we have a dangerous tendency to misunderstand, minimize, and even manipulate the Gospel in order to accommodate our assumptions and our desires” (p. 28). Thus, we need to hunger for and explore the Gospel, which illuminates for us the glory and holiness of God, the utter sinfulness and helplessness of man, and the beautiful sacrifice of an all-satisfying Savior. We’ll see that this true “Gospel evokes unconditional surrender of all that we are and all that we have to all that He is” (p. 37). Understanding the Gospel leads us to “want Him (Jesus) so much that we abandon everything else to experience Him” (p. 39).

## Leaders remember our monthly goals

1. Prayer- around gospel encounters, pains in the group, praises of our great God.
2. Encourage intentional living (gospeling in the everyday)
3. Verbally inform about church life- announcements (or prayer about - facility, prayer regarding pressing issues in your group or in the church- see point one)
4. Apply the word
  - a. Scripture memory
  - b. sermon application
  - c. Putting off the old self and putting on Christ
    - i. confession leading to repentance through
    - ii. accountability- we want people to be suspicious of their own hearts and learn to apply the gospel with adults and children.

## 5. Joy in all you do ☺

### Refresh everyone’s memory of the chapters by reading the summary:

1. Talk about interesting or convicting quotes from Chapters 1 & 2. What questions do your group members have pertaining to these first two chapters?
2. Remind our people that self-denying love for others does not earn us right standing before God, but rather is a fruit of the heart that sees the beauty and all-satisfying nature of Jesus. The Gospel must be our fuel and motivation for living intentional lives of love and sacrifice where God has us.
3. Which of Jesus’ radical commands (p 8, 10-11) make us uneasy or nauseous, because they infringe on our comforts, desires, etc? What idols are exposed by our uneasiness in these areas? Remind each other of the present/future reward of an all-satisfying Savior who loves us & enables us to sacrificially love others
4. Read the quote: “the cost of non-discipleship is profoundly greater for us than the cost of discipleship”(p. 18). Discuss the cost of discipleship (Ex: it’s messy, inconvenient, etc.), and then discuss the cost of non-discipleship BOTH for us and others (Ex- We miss out on present & future joy in Christ; those without Jesus & without life’s necessities are neglected). Discuss how much greater the reward of joyful Gospel-motivated discipleship is than the cost (See Matthew 13- “the hidden treasure” explained on pages 17-18).
5. Discuss whether or not God’s Word is enough for us (p. 26). Do we hunger to know God through it? Discuss what we can learn from our brothers and sisters in other contexts who don’t have the comforts we do, yet who are often much more satisfied being the people of God with only the Word of God and prayer.
6. Discuss the magnitude & implications of the Gospel discussed on pages 28-36. We are shown to be helpless and needy, while Jesus is held up as “the infinitely glorious Son of God, who endured the infinitely terrible wrath of God and who now reigns as the infinitely worthy Lord of all” (p. 37). In what area of your life is meditating on God’s holiness & grace moving your heart from “American Christianity” to total surrender?