

UNTO THE END

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"BUT HE THAT SHALL ENDURE UNTO THE END, THE SAME SHALL BE
SAVED" (MTH. 24:13)

Radical Christianity

By Bro. Jim

Ministering to professed believers over the years I've heard a certain term over and over again: "Radical Christianity". That is to say, they listen to the ministration and then conclude that what I ministered was "radical" and that I practice and preach "Radical Christianity". They are using the word "radical" as found in the dictionary to mean "extreme". Many times they say they have never "heard that before" and so sometimes radical not only means extreme but also obscure. Of course this is said in such a way to dismiss what has been ministered so they can continue on with a clear conscience with their own "version" of biblical Christianity. The question that begs to be asked and answered at this point is, "What exactly have I been ministering that people are calling extreme and obscure"? The answer: that Christians should obey the Word of God. There are many professing believers that just don't like to be told that they must obey God's commandments as found in the Holy Bible and that God expects them to be obedient children. It's a popular doctrine to say that Jesus did it all on the cross and so all we have to do is believe. This statement is not found in the Bible. Yes, we must have faith but the Bible makes it clear that faith produces action (obedience). I can say with assurance that God did not save us from our sins and certain destruction in the lake of fire only for us to continue in sin. Rather, God saved us to be holy if we continue in the faith and be not moved away

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from the hope of the gospel (Col. 1:20-23). In Jude God commands Christians to "*keep yourselves in the love of God...*" (Ju. 21). Emphasis here is for the Christian to KEEP himself or herself in the love of God. How do we do this? We will see later in this article. God saved us so we could be holy and obedient to His Word. From here I could give specific examples of obedience to the Word of God as in how to obey God in every day life but that is not the scope of this article. Let's just start with the basic premise that God expects us to obey Him. Once we have established this, we can look at specifics of obedience and God's expectations for our lives. Amen. With that, let's look at the Word of God and this "foreign" idea of "radical" Christianity.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecc. 12:13-14.

Here, the wisest man in the world in his day declared that his conclusion about life is that man should obey God for this is man's whole duty. I would think that if a man with this much wisdom

concluded that we should obey God, it's probably not that "radical" of an idea.

"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." 1Sam. 15:22-23.

Why does the Prophet Samuel declare that to obey God is better than sacrifice? He makes such a statement because if you obeyed God in the first place, then you would have avoided sin. Remember, sin is transgression of the law (1Jn.3:4). Hence, since you obeyed rather than disobeyed, you didn't sin, so you would have no need to perform a sacrifice for your sins under that law. Therefore, it's better to obey to begin with than sin through disobedience and have to perform a sacrifice. Also, please note, Saul was yanked from being king because of *disobedience* to the Word of God. So far, this idea really doesn't seem that "radical" to me.

Alright, that's two Old Testament Scriptures and we now live in the New Testament Church. No problem, God's expectations have not changed because God doesn't change (Heb. 13:8). Let's now turn to the "radical" words of the brothers in the New Testament.

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Lk. 6:46.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Mth. 7:21.

Right here Jesus declares that you cannot even call Him Lord unless you are obeying Him. He said again in the passage from Matthew that not everyone that calls Him Lord will enter into heaven. In fact, if we were to keep reading Mathew chapter seven, we would find that Jesus goes on to say that *many* will call Him Lord and even do mighty works in His name but still not enter into heaven. Why? The answer is because of disobedience to His Word. I don't think this is too radical; it's just the simple Word of God.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Jn. 14:21.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father

will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Jn. 14:23.

“He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.” Jn. 14:24.

Here Jesus suggests a pretty “radical” idea that 1) A sign that you love Him is that you obey His commandments. 2) If you obey His commandments, then both He and the His Father will love you and manifest Himself to you and make His abode with you (dwell in you). 3) Those that do not love Jesus do not keep His commandments. This is all so very simple. Have you noticed that the theme here has not changed from the Old Testament to the New? Have you noticed that a sign you love God isn’t some warm fuzzy feeling you get in your heart or a teary-eyed reaction to some song? The litmus test if you love God is if you **obey his Word/commandments/sayings**. Let’s look at a few more scriptures.

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” 1Jn. 2:3.

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1Jn. 2:4.

“But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.” 1Jn. 2:5.

We have essentially read the same thing here that we have read all along in our study; that you know God if you keep His words. Those that say they know God and are not obedient to His commandments are *liars*. Wow, that’s a strong word! It could be said that as Christians, if we do not obey God, we will not get into heaven. How? Because if you disobey God and say that you know Him (like many Christians do) then the Bible calls you a liar. All liars, ALL liars will have their part in the lake of fire, (Rev. 22:15). Also notice that those that keep God’s word, God will abide with them. That’s exactly what we read in John 14:23. God’s Word is consistent! Let’s take one more scripture.

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Rev. 22:14.

Again we see this “radical” idea that we must obey God to make it into heaven. Of course all the verses we just read were *written by Christians FOR Christians* so if the Word of God is telling Christians that they must obey God’s Word to make it into heaven, then by default the damnable heresy of eternal security is blown completely out of the water. But that is for another time by God’s grace. Amen.

What we have seen so far clearly tells Christians that God's expectation for them is obedience to His Word. In Fact, Jesus was obedient to God's Word and He is our example.

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Jn. 15:10.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1Jn. 2:6.

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." 1Pe. 2:21-23.

The above scripture shows that Christ was our example and among the things He did that we are to emulate is that He obeyed God and did no sin. Praise the Lord! The Bible calls Jesus our example. God is not going to give you an example you cannot emulate or copy. He is not going to tell you to be obedient to His Word when it is impossible to do so. That would be unrighteous but praise God, He is not unrighteous! Amen.

Finally, let's look at a few scriptures that talk about disobedience.

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks." Eph. 5:3-4.

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Eph. 5:5.

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." Eph. 5:6.

I have broken this passage down to three sections so we can look at each section carefully. The first passage is Paul warning the Christians (the Bible is written by Christians for Christians) to not let any of the sins he names even be once named among the Christians. In verse five Paul then warns the Christians that if they do those things they will not make it to heaven because NO PERSON SAVED OR NOT who does those things will be allowed into heaven. Why? The answer is because God is not going to allow sin/disobedience into heaven. Finally Paul, in verse six tells the Christians that those who do such things are the "children of disobedience" and God's wrath falls on such children. Why is Paul warning Christians of this? Because if Christians who are

supposed to be the Children of Obedience begin doing these things, then they will become the Children of Disobedience and as such, God's wrath falls UPON ALL the children of disobedience, saved or not. Amen.

“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:” 2Thess. 1:7-8.

Here Paul tells us that Jesus will at His second coming destroy all those that 1) Know not God (remember the verse we have already looked at -those who know God are those that obey His Word 1Jn. 1:3) and 2)obey not His commandments. Pretty “radical” idea isn't it?

“For the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;” Heb. 2:2-3.

Again, clearly the Bible is warning Christians not to be disobedient and neglect their salvation for in doing so, they shall not escape. Escape what? Hell!

In conclusion, although many people have heard me say that Christians must obey the known Word of God and called that “Radical Christianity” the truth is, Samuel, Solomon, John, Jesus, Peter, Paul, and the writer of Hebrews have clearly shown that God's people **MUST** obey His Word for it is how you know you love God, it's how God makes His abode with you, and it's How God will allow you into heaven. If that's “radical” then I suppose the men of God who wrote the Bible where “radical” people. Count me in with them! Amen.

There is **no** such thing as the “unconditional love” of God. The Bible clearly says that you can fail the grace of God (Heb. 12:15) and that those that cast God off, God will cast them off forever (1 Chr. 28:9). This is why Jesus warns the CHURCH in Revelation 3:4 that they better repent before He spews (casts) them out. In addition, Paul was worried about the Church in Corinth because he didn't mean to offend them but he knew that God, in his mercy, would not forgive them if they didn't repent. It means that at some point, they had to choose between their salvation and their sin. Paul said they were “falling away” but this was not because they were being “cast away” but this was because they were being “cast away” from God. It has been revealed to you that the duty of man is to fear God and to keep His commandments. Thus saith the Lord. Amen and

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