

Date: 2014-02-02

## RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP COMMUNION MEDITATION

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Today we are starting a series on **Radical Discipleship**. We are going to be asking the question over and over again in this series...**What does it really mean to follow Jesus?**

I know that many of you have been Christians for a long time, and for me, sometimes I just start to poke along in my faith.

I kind of get complacent and self-sufficient. Its not that I don't want to follow Jesus, but I get weary and sometimes I just need to be challenged and recharged.

When I start poking along in my faith, my prayers kind of revert to "Lord help me with this or that...the stuff I am already doing.

I am not really seeking the Lord for what his will is...I'm just asking him to come down and fit into my agenda. And I start getting too comfortable. *And in doing that, I stop getting excited about my faith because I have it all figured out.* I don't really need God so much anymore...but its nice to have him when he fits into my life.

I only have a few minutes for the message this morning so I have to be brief.

But by doing a series on Radical Discipleship, (and I am loosely following the book Kevin P. is using in adult ed) I want us to stretch and grow as we make our way through this series.

I want us to learn to trust God more, and put our selves in situations where if God doesn't come through for us, we are going to be toast. Some of you are in a group that is studying FC book crazy love...and FC says

**God doesn't call us to be comfortable. He calls us to trust Him so completely that we are unafraid to put ourselves in situations where we will be in trouble if He doesn't come through."**

— [Francis Chan, \*Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God\*](#)

Ever been in a difficult situation where you think...I don't know what I am going to do?

I guess I am just going to have to trust God (like it's a last resort...not a first resort)

I'd like us, as we work through this series, to consciously and prayerfully begin to choose situations as the Holy Spirit leads us where we have to trust God...in order to build up our spiritual muscles...ever done that?

Where we must trust him – where we put ourselves out there in ways that if it were just up to us, we would fail...that's when we learn how faithful and good he is... We are ordinary people, but as we do this we learn that we have an extraordinary God

David Platt that Author of Radical Discipleship states,

***“You and I can choose to continue with business as usual in the Christian life and in the church as a whole as defined by our culture...or we can take an honest look at the Jesus of the Bible and dare to ask what the consequences might be if we really believed him and really obeyed him.” (Radical Discipleship, David Platt)***

I can't tell you how out on a limb I have been with this Service Worship Conference I thank you for all of your help, those of you who have volunteered countless hours on this...and all of you who have signed up

But I have never done this before! I don't know what I am doing really When Francis said he would come, I was happy but underneath I panicked I really did – like Gabe who is the pastor at SF said, “Kim, that's like having the president come.”

Oh my gosh...thanks Gabe for that. It makes me panic more.

And I continue to panic about the whole the thing

You can ask anyone in this church who is working on this – they keep saying “Kim its going to be OK”...people will come

I have to trust God...I have no choice

See how faithless I am? But this whole experience is exciting, and its strengthening my faith.

I honestly felt prompted by the Holy Spirit it to do this. It wasn't my will at all.. I didn't want to do a conference...I don't even go to conferences that much myself... I'm a horrible conference goer...but I did what I thought God was asking me to do and I was kicking myself

It would have been so much easier NOT to do this...really it would

So I had a long prayer session with God the other day

God we need more sign ups...we need more people at this thing.. what am I going to do...and how come I listened to you and did this...

HELP! Forgive me for my lack of faith, but God I am panicking

Well, after this long prayer session where I was so desperate and pleading for help

I was in my office the next day and...

Matt comes in and tells me that **out of the blue**...the ministry director of KFOX wants to take our Service Worship conference on and promote it for the next month

Because it is so compassionate, Christ centered, and because we are a small church, he wants to do an ad campaign for us over the next month to get as many people to the conference as possible.

This comes out of nowhere people...

He thinks he can get us a corporate sponsor to pay for the ads; he is going to start yesterday...

So we go out there on Thursday to meet with him

He takes us to lunch, - to Thai food

We sit and we chat and we share our faith...and then

During lunch he shares with us his vision and it is the exact same vision that inspired Service Worship to begin with...amazing...

He said, "I just felt the Holy Spirit urging me to take you guys on."

Our extraordinary God comes through every time we stick our neck out for him.

I know this.

Time after time God has come through...and I still don't trust him. What is wrong with me?

This series on Radical discipleship will be an exciting and challenging series for all of us

It is going to ask us to take some risks, to trust God in new ways but I think it will re-energize your faith like never before.

When I left KFOX I was so excited. I was jazzed. I thought this is awesome. I can't even believe it.

When you get out there, following the HS, and start taking some bold steps for God God shows up

And I think this series will help us all learn how to do that - recharge our batteries - build our faith

Now why even do this? Why put ourselves through the trouble of taking risks? I mean I am going to heaven. I love Jesus. Why not just stay comfortable?

The first step in all of this is, that ***if we are going to be radical disciples of Jesus Christ we first have to understand how extraordinary his love and sacrifice is for us.***

Our response in saying yes to putting ourselves out there as he leads us, is gratitude for his enormous grace!!

We've got to get that deep down inside us – that this is the essence of who God is... a radical lover – and its this extraordinary Love that we are responding to when we become his radical disciples

As much as when you fall in love...you can't stop thinking about what would please that person, how you can bless that person...and you will go to any lengths to be with that person...and you will suffer for that person.

When we fall in love with God in that way, that's when we are ready to stick our neck out in faith for him...and nothing can hold us back.

So the first thing in all of this is to fall in love with the God of Jesus Christ  
If we aren't motivated that way, we will just be doing things out of guilt, or should, or ought and that burn us out real fast.

That radical love is demonstrated at this table this morning.

This table reminds us that although we are ordinary people  
We have an extraordinary God who loves us in an extraordinary way. Lets say that together

**We are ordinary people who have an extraordinary God who loves us in an extraordinary way.**

Do you believe that? You know there are a lot of religions out there and I am telling you most have some good stuff that we can learn from.

But no other religion even approximates the extraordinary God of the Christian faith.

David Platt author of RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP shares a time when he is sitting outside a Buddhist Temple. Men and women are filling the temple grounds where they daily performed their religious rituals.

Meanwhile, David said, I was engaged in a conversation with a Buddhist leader and a Muslim leader in this particular community.

They were discussing how all religions are fundamentally the same and only superficially different. "We may have different views about small issues," one of them said, "but when it comes down to essential issues, each of our religions is the same."

This is a very common thing that people say today. You probably have heard it. I hear it again and again everywhere I go

David says.

I listened for a while to them, and then they asked me what I thought.

David said, "It sounds as though you both picture God at the top of a mountain. (IMAGE OF MOUNTAIN WITH ARROWS GOING UP) It seems as if you believe that we are all at the bottom of the mountain and I may take one route up the mountain, you may take another and in the end we will all end up in the same place.

They smiled as I spoke. "Exactly! You understand!" they said.

I leaned in and said, "Now let me ask you a question. What would you think if I told you that the God at the top of the mountain actually came down to where we are? (IMAGE OF MOUNTAIN WITH ARROW GOING DOWN) What would you think if I told you that God doesn't wait for people to find their way up to him, but instead he comes down to them?"

They thought for a moment and responded, "That would be great. (see the gospel, when you really understand it is very compelling and desirable...it fits hand and glove with the deep longings of the human spirit) Then we wouldn't have to climb the mountain"

I replied, "Let me introduce you to Jesus."

Don't let people tell you all religions are the same. They aren't. It might be politically correct to say that, but it isn't true. It isn't even respectful to any religion to simply lump them altogether to say they are all the same. They are all unique.

**The uniqueness of the Christian faith? No other religion has a God who has come down the mountain to meet us where we are, except the extraordinary God of the Christian faith** *whose name is Jesus and whose grace is sufficient for all of us who are sinners.*

**We are ordinary people with an extraordinary God**

That's why we sing praise.

That's why we worship, pray, generously give, and do these series with the word RADICAL in it ...because out of gratitude we want to respond with all our being to this amazing God...

We can't respond to that kind of love with a lukewarm "ho-hum"

We just can't...and if we do, we don't understand the gospel

There's a reason why we do communion in the pew...

By doing it this way it emphasizes the extraordinary grace of God...***that he would come to us where we are***

You don't have to get up this morning and go anywhere right now;, God gets up and comes to you  
God comes down the mountain to where you are

As you wait for the elements to be passed to you, right where you are, think about that – you aren't doing anything...to strive, to stress ...Christ's body and blood is coming to you...he's right with you...

You haven't found him this morning, he's found you  
And fall in love with the God of your salvation all over again this morning

By taking and eating the bread and the juice you take him in and receive him again – and say YES...I want you in me...Thank you for saving me! Thank you for forgiving me! Thank you for living inside of me...**the extraordinary of YOU in the ordinary of me is a miracle**

I love you Lord for coming down the mountain. Empower me to radically follow you as your disciple and radically trust you in all that you call me to do.

**LORD,**  
**May I learn to radically follow you with all of my strength**  
**May I learn to radically trust you with all of my mind**  
**May I learn to take risks in your name,**  
**You who made that radical descent, down the mountain**  
**To where I am...all the way down...even to a cross.**  
**So that I could be radically forgiven**  
**Your grace is sufficient for me**

God ...You are extraordinary in your love for us – ordinary sinful people – . Bless these elements of bread and juice and set them apart from a common to a sacred use. Thank you God for showing up for us....for comin' down the mountain... help us learn how to respond in love to you with all that we are... to your amazing grace... even when it means sacrifice, because you sacrificed everything for us...even to the death.

**AMEN**