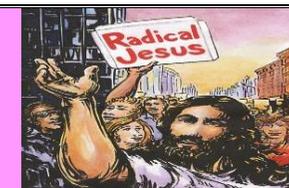


TOPIC: What is so radical about Jesus? (Gospel)

The concept of Gospel encompasses the idea of Jesus as being '*good news*' both in his person and in his teachings. Jesus is the perfect example of how to live in accordance with God's will. One example of this is how Jesus treated society's least loveable people, the 'outcasts', the powerless and the challenge this offers to Christians today. Jesus is radical because he argues with the authorities, the powerful. But he also challenges our ideas and traditions. He makes all of us sit up and question the way things are. He wants to make the world a fairer and more just place.



Key Ideas for Christians

Quotes:

'sinners'	Sinner is a term for someone who does not follow the Law, a distance from those who observe the Law and those that do not. e.g. Tax collectors were seen as 'sinners' as they made their living extracting money from their own people for the hated Romans.	Mark 2. 17	'Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. I didn't come to invite good people to be my followers. I came to invite sinners.'
Jesus as a rebel	The stories of Jesus point to why he was executed –he represented a real threat to the political and religious establishment. Crucifixion was the punishment for criminals and troublemakers. He wasn't killed for being nice but for demanding real, radical change in the world	Matthew 23. 11-12	'Whoever is the greatest should be the servant of the others. If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you humble yourself, you will be honoured.'
Faith in action	Basically a call for loving action. You cannot be a Christian if you do not engage with work for the poor, dispossessed or marginalised.	Mark 11. 17	"My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations"? But you have made it "a den of robbers".'
Love and Justice	The biblical concept of justice goes beyond fairness and equal treatment. Justice which comes from God is intimately personal. It must involve love as it is meant to serve people, to foster their well-being. People are at the heart of true justice. But justice is not merely personal and individual – relationships are at the heart of justice.	Matthew 22:37-40	Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."
Literal vs non-literal	Much of the Gospels (and scripture in general) can be read in two ways: Either it is literally true OR it is a metaphor/story to help us understand or give meaning. Christians still debate this today.	Luke 4:18-19	'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

KEY VOCABULARY:

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Gospel	'The gospel' is a Greek word meaning ' <i>good news</i> '. The Bible teaches that the <i>good news</i> is for all people and should free people and transform their lives. Used about the first 4 books of the New Testament, thought to be written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.	Literal	The Bible and Genesis are a true and accurate explanation of how the world was created.
Radical	To make great change or reforms to the way things are.	Non-literal	The Bible and Genesis are holy stories to help mankind understand God but are not literally true.
Rebel	A person who resists authority, control or convention	Liberation	Means to set free.
Marginalised	Vulnerable groups. Marginalisation – sometimes also called social exclusion – refers to the relegation to the fringes of society due to a lack of access to rights, resources, and opportunities.	Sin	The word means to separate, create distance. It is an act considered to go against Gods rules creating a gap between people and God.
Extremist	A person who holds extreme political or religious views, especially one who advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme action.	Pharisee	The 'separated ones', a group who believed in keeping the Torah, every detail of the Law, and so being pure, was central to Jewish Life
God	The creator and ruler of the universe	Justice	Being fair, treating people equally