

RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP (LESSON 18)

For radical disciples to preserve and pass on the truths of the Kingdom, they must live according to principles given by the Savior Himself. These are principles Jesus lived by. They are the principles radical disciples live by. There are four requisite principles that define radical discipleship.

THE KINGDOM FIRST PRINCIPLE. A Christian who wants to dictate the terms of discipleship is not a radical disciple and cannot be a radical disciple until he yields to the principle of Matthew 6:33 – “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.” Discipleship is a matter of priorities, and the disciple is not the one who sets them. J. Oswald Sanders comments, “This verse is to be taken at face value, and acted upon accordingly.” Matthew 6:33 begins with “But.” It connects the verse with the subject that preceded it, which is the worries of life. Things we worry about fall into the category of “things that shall be added” when a person seeks God’s kingdom first. In short, as long as we worry about food – what to eat (25), fashion – what to wear (28), and the future – what will happen tomorrow (34), we are not putting the Kingdom first. Yielding to worry puts “things” first, not the kingdom. “But” marks a contrast in what preceded it. It cancels the previous idea. The point of Matthew 6:33 is that putting the Kingdom first cancels out the need to worry, because faith trusts God to provide the things we worry about in His time, in His way, and in His measure. Yielding to worry cancels faith, and “Without faith it is impossible to please Him” (Hebrews 1:6). Radical disciples put God first and don’t worry about the worries. They believe. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, “Only the obedient believe.” The Kingdom First Principle puts Christ’s kingdom before every earthly endeavor. Kingdom first becomes the rule of faith. The Kingdom First Principle puts God before convenience. When a scribe came to Jesus saying he would follow Him anywhere, Jesus told him. “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). Jesus did not ask this man to be His disciple; it was the man’s idea. He volunteered and was not chosen. People who are overly concerned about convenience are not radical enough for Jesus. People who worry about inconvenience are not disciple material. Jesus denies them.