

GOD'S RADICAL PEOPLE

Week 6

These weekly studies are loosely based on the previous Sunday's sermon. If you missed it, you will find a recording on our website (www.knaphillbaptist.org.uk). They are designed for both Home Group discussion and/or personal reflection. Don't necessarily try to cover all the questions and discussion topics in your group at one sitting. You may like to think about them later in your own time.



Read Acts 2:45; 4:32-37

This is the sixth in our series of studies entitled *God's Radical People* from Acts 2:37-47. God wants us to be a Radical People - getting to root of things... and our roots lie in the New Testament Church! It is here that we see the principles by which we learn what sort of church God wants us to be. What was important to them is the same as that which needs to be important to us. Following on from last week's study on Community Living, again linking our passage in Acts 2 with Acts 4:32-37, we see these were a people who were sacrificial in their giving. These are difficult verses because we are challenged about how we view our possessions and our money, the importance we place on our giving to God, how we consider the needs of others and what we offer to God in the light of the ultimate sacrifice he made for us.

Questions and pointers for discussion/reflection

1. How can we reconcile the needs of the poor with the wealth of the Church (worldwide)? Does it compromise our integrity as God's people following Jesus who came to preach Good News to the poor and needy. See Luke 4:18,19; Matthew 19:16-21.
2. Trevor Huddleston was the Bishop of Stepney, a missionary and anti-apartheid campaigner. He wrote *'The young want to be challenged by something sacrificial. They are rejecting phoney values and standards. The only hope is to create a community that doesn't live by false values'*. Discuss.
3. The NT church 'sold their possessions and gave to anyone who had need' so that 'there were no needy persons among them.' How do you feel about this level of sharing? This distribution of wealth could be considered to be the basis of the Trade Union movement and the Labour Party in the nineteenth century. It is relevant or appropriate for us to think in these terms?
4. Following Jesus can be costly (see Luke 9:23). In what ways do you think that this is true. Is it costly for you? In what way/s?
5. What does it mean to 'take up our cross daily'?
6. Read Romans 12:1,2. What does the word 'sacrifice' mean to you? What does it make you think of? What does it mean to be a 'living sacrifice.' Read Luke 9:24,25. How by losing ourselves can we find ourselves?
7. We all struggle with self-denial. Is there anything in your life that you think God might be asking you to give up or give away? Would this be costly to you?
8. Read 1 John 3:16-18. Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice for us showing us what love is – not a 'feeling' but a 'doing'. Laying down his life for us was THE act of sacrificial love. C T Studd the missionary, wrote 'If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.' What is your response to this? Is there anything you need to do?

In order to support the work of the church, members are encouraged to tithe their income (giving 10%) – see Malachi 3:10. Is that what the NT teaches? What is your understanding of Christian Stewardship? If all we have and are comes from God and is just on loan to us, then we own nothing, it all belongs to him. How might this change the way you spend your money and live your life?