

Jesus in the Gospels - How radical was Jesus?

Key terms	
Parable	A story with a special meaning
Pharisee	At the time of Jesus, a Jewish person who thought that sticking to the rules was very important.
Radical	Supporting complete change or a totally different way of doing or thinking about things
Rebel	Someone who resists or opposes authority or the accepted way of doing things
Samaritan	At the time of Jesus, a group of people from Samaria who lived near the Jews but had different beliefs and ways of life. Jews and Samaritans did not get along.
Sinner	Someone who breaks God's laws
Street Pastors	A group of Christians today who go out at night to help people who get drunk or in trouble on nights out
Tax collector	At the time of Jesus, a Jewish person who worked for the Roman authorities, collecting taxes for the government from ordinary people
Temple	At the time of Jesus, the main place of worship for Jewish people

Jesus eats with sinners and tax collectors

Jesus shocked the religious leaders at the time by spending time with sinners and tax collectors, rather than with good, religious people. He said that this was because they need his help more.



Street Pastors are Christians who follow Jesus' example and go out into towns at night time to help people who are in trouble because they are drunk or have got into difficulty. They will stay with people and look after them, help them to find their friends or get home safely, call for ambulances if they are needed and even give out flip flops so that people who are struggling in high heels can walk more safely and comfortably.



Jesus criticises the Pharisees

Jesus gave a speech in which he criticised the Pharisees because they

- Tell people to do difficult things but don't help them
- Do everything for show
- Want to be treated as if they are very important

Jesus said that people should think of only him as their teacher. He said that a good leader will be humble and serve others instead of putting themselves first.



Jesus cleanses the Temple.

Jesus and his disciples came to Jerusalem and visited the Temple. Jesus was angry to see that the outer court of the temple was like a marketplace instead of a place of prayer. People were trading animals which could be used for sacrifices and were exchanging ordinary money for Temple coins which could be given as an offering. He took a whip and drove out all the animals and overturned the tables of the moneychangers. He shouted, 'This is a house of prayer and you have turned it into a den of thieves!'



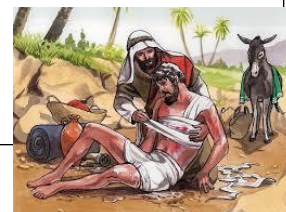
The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

A man asked Jesus what he needed to do to be saved (go to Heaven). Jesus said 'You must love God and love your neighbour as yourself'. When the man asked who was his neighbour, Jesus told a story to help him understand.

A Jewish man was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was attacked by robbers and left for dead. Two religious leaders passed by but did not stop to help, then a Samaritan man came along and stopped to help the man, even though Jews and Samaritans did not get along. He bandaged his wounds and took him to an inn, where he paid for him to be looked after.

Jesus said that it was the Samaritan man who acted like a true neighbour, since he stopped to help, even though he did not know or like the injured man.

He told the people listening, 'Now you go and do the same'.



Christians today have followed Jesus' example and rebelled against things they thought were wrong.

The Archbishop of Canterbury criticised the UK Government for its treatment of asylum seekers and refugees. He was called 'disgraceful' by some members of the Government



Dietrich Bonhoeffer helped the resistance in Germany and helped to smuggle Jews to safety during World War 2. He was also involved in a plot to kill Hitler. He was imprisoned and executed by the authorities.

Some questions to think about:

Was Jesus a rebel?

How radical were his teachings?

Would the world be a better place if we followed Jesus' example?

How important is it to speak out about things we think are wrong?

Is it ever right to use violence in a protest?

