

East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide:

In the World but Not of It: Jesus' Radical Way of Living

Speaker: Scott Thomas

Date: October 27, 2024

Introduction:

In this powerful sermon, Scott Thomas explored Jesus' countercultural approach to life and how believers can follow His example of being in the world but not of it. Through examining key passages from Jesus' life and teachings, he demonstrated how we can live distinctively as followers of Christ.

#### 1. Rejecting Worldly Values of Power and Status:

Scott highlighted how Jesus rejected conventional power structures and redefined true greatness through service.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you see worldly values of power and status influencing the Church today?
2. In what ways can we practically embrace Jesus' model of servant leadership?

Supporting Verse:

Mark 10:42-45 - "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant."

Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: Jesus was addressing His disciples' desire for positions of power in His kingdom.

- **Theological Significance:** This passage redefines true greatness in God's kingdom as service to others.
- **Application:** We should seek opportunities to serve rather than pursuing power or status.

## 2. Redefining Relationships and Love:

Scott explored how Jesus transformed traditional understanding of relationships and forgiveness.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How did Jesus' approach to relationships differ from the religious leaders of His time?
2. What challenges do you face in extending forgiveness as Jesus taught?

### Supporting Verses:

Luke 5:30-32 - "The Pharisees and their scribes complained to His disciples, saying, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?...' Jesus answered... 'I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.'"

Matthew 18:21-22 - "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said... "Up to seventy times seven."

### Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Jesus regularly challenged social and religious barriers of His time.
- **Theological Significance:** These passages demonstrate God's heart for the marginalized and the importance of radical forgiveness.
- **Application:** We should extend love and forgiveness beyond conventional boundaries.

## 3. Embracing Sacrifice Over Comfort:

Scott discussed Jesus' call to self-denial and sacrificial living.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to "take up your cross" in today's context?
2. How can we balance personal well-being with Jesus' call to sacrifice?

Supporting Verse:

Matthew 16:24-26 - "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: Jesus was preparing His disciples for the cost of following Him.
- Theological Significance: This passage emphasizes that following Christ requires significant personal sacrifice.
- Application: We should be willing to sacrifice comfort and security for the sake of following Christ.

4. Living with an Eternal Perspective:

Scott emphasized the importance of maintaining an eternal perspective in our daily choices.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does an eternal perspective change our approach to material possessions?
2. What practical steps can we take to focus more on heavenly treasures?

Supporting Verse:

Matthew 6:19-21 - "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

#### Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: Jesus was teaching about true wealth and lasting significance.
- Theological Significance: This passage challenges our tendency to focus on temporal rather than eternal values.
- Application: We should evaluate our priorities and investments in light of eternity.

#### Conclusion:

Scott Thomas' message reminded us that following Jesus means embracing a radically different way of living that often contradicts worldly values and practices. Through service, authentic relationships, sacrifice, and an eternal perspective, we can truly live as people who are in the world but not of it.

#### Reflection Questions:

1. Which aspect of Jesus' countercultural lifestyle challenges you the most?
2. How can you begin to implement these principles more fully in your daily life?
3. What would it look like for our church to more fully embrace Jesus' radical way of living?

#### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for Jesus' example of how to live distinctively in this world. Help us to embrace Your values over worldly ones, to love and serve others sacrificially, and to maintain an eternal perspective in all we do. Give us courage to live radically for You, even when it means going against cultural norms. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

#### References:

#### Primary Sources:

"In the World but Not of It: Jesus' Radical Way of Living," East Hill Church, 10/27/2024.  
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Chan, Francis. "Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God." David C. Cook, 2013.

Platt, David. "Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream." Multnomah, 2010.

#### Collaborative Contributions:

LLM Contributions: Based on a mixture of licensed data, data created by AI models, and publicly available data, synthesized for the study of the provided sermon notes and biblical passages.

#### LLM Training Data:

LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to April 2024.