



Radical Together

David Platt

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Take the next step. From radical followers of Christ to radical communities of faith.

In *Radical*, David Platt's plea for Christians to take back their faith from the American Dream resonated with readers everywhere, and the book quickly became a *New York Times* bestseller. Now in *Radical Together*, the author broadens his call, challenging us to unite around a gospel-centered vision.

How, he asks, might such a vision reshape our priorities as the body of Christ? How might well-intentioned Christians actually *prevent* God's people from accomplishing God's purpose? And, how can we best unleash the people of God in the church to carry out the purpose of God in the world?

Writing to everyone who desires to make an impact for God's glory—whether you are an involved member, a leader, or a pastor—Dr. Platt shares six foundational ideas that fuel radical obedience among Christians in the church. With compelling Bible teaching and inspiring stories from around the world, he will help you apply the revolutionary claims and commands of Christ to your community of faith in fresh, practical ways.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Radical Together Details

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From Reader Review Radical Together for online ebook

AddyF says

I've never read "Radical," and, to be honest, I wouldn't have chosen to read this one either if it hadn't been an assignment for the discussion group I'm in. I balk at the idea of being "radical," because I fear the danger of being out of balance, of letting a book call me into something God isn't calling me into. Nevertheless, I think this was a good book, and I think, for the most part, the author kept things in balance. The book could've just as well been called "Intentional Together" and I think the message would've been the same--though the book probably wouldn't have sold as many copies. I love the idea in chapter 4 that "building the right church depends on using all the wrong people." I think it's extremely important to evaluate church ministries to determine whether they are really fulfilling the goals of our mission. I loved the chapter on international missions and the idea of focusing more on "the ends of the earth" and the most unreached areas of the world.

Kelley says

I can't imagine being able to read this book without starting to examine parts of your life - and service and giving and location - with an eye toward change. My husband is reading the original Radical. I'm eager to see what we might change as we come out on the other side.

Sometimes I resent the comfort I've been born into. I long to be challenged, forced to rely on God in a deeper way than I have before. I feel like there's great risk in even thinking that, much less writing it. But I can't help feeling like there's more out there for us. Maybe the questions Radical asks will take us a few steps further down the path.

Steve says

Imagine two churches. The first is seeker-sensitive.

Newcomers are welcomed at the door and provided with a latte and croissants. They settle down in a large auditorium, astounded by the hundreds if not thousands of others who have joined them. Their children are taken care of and entertained in an adjoining room. They listen to a professional band play amazing music accompanied by sensational graphics on HD screens around the auditorium. There are no obvious Christian symbols on display, no cross or crucifix, no stained glass windows, no Bibles. It could be any theatre in any town. The pastor then stands up and gives an excellent and inspiring talk again accompanied with amazing projected graphics on the screens.

The second church is also seeker-sensitive.

But for this church it's a different seeker. This seeker is the one who seeks worshippers (Jn 4:23). There is very little entertainment, but what takes place is worship and praise to the God who is the creator of all things, the music may not be note perfect, but there is honesty, integrity and sincerity in the singing. This church is attempting to show people the love, justice, holiness, grace and character of God - no gimmicks.

In which place is God most glorified? How can we be radical together and not succumb to the American dream? That is the question that David Platt asks in this book. Platt's previous book Radical was a bestseller.

This book takes shows the next step - it provides ideas and examples of how we can be radical together.

It is a challenging if not uncomfortable read. It will challenge you to consider how the radical impact of the gospel affects church life. Platt is refreshingly iconoclastic. Here he wants to consider what could happen if 'we apply the revolutionary claims and commands of Christ to our communities of faith'.

He has six key ideas:

1. The good things of church can become the enemy of the best - programmes, as good as they are, may not be the best thing for a church.
2. The gospel saves us from work so that we can work. We don't earn God's acceptance.
3. The Word does the work - the Bible is our guide and motivation. Living according to God's word will mean making big changes.
4. Building the right church depends on using the wrong people - God is interested in people. Dedication to church programs is not the same as 'devotion to kingdom purposes'. The issue is not performance in church, it is not professionalism but as he puts it 'Performance has nothing to do with it. People have everything to do with it'.
5. We are living and longing for the end of the world - by this he means that we need to take the gospel to the ends of the earth (Mt 24:14)
6. We are selfless followers of a self-centred God. All this is done not because God needs us - God is self-sufficient, he needs no ones help - but he wants to involve us because he loves us.

These he claims are radical claims. By following these we can be 'radical together'. I was particularly pleased to see the emphasis on the self-sufficiency of God; otherwise the book can become yet another programme to follow, something more for us to do. But at essence what Platt is calling for is for each of us, for the churches, to seek what God call us to do and to do it - and that may be very different from what his church at Brook Hills, Alabama, or our prevailing culture call us to do.

He provides some concrete examples which his congregation in have followed. These include reducing church budgets so that more money can go to mission, lifestyles rearranged, downsizing, a large adoption programme in the church and reallocating resources.

One needn't agree with all that Platt is advocating, but it makes for an interesting read. It will challenge each one of us and each congregation to think what can we do to make sure that we are being sensitive to the right seeker. It is a message that the rugged individualism of evangelicalism needs to hear.

Laura says

This book will challenge you to think deeply about how we worship and follow God. It created an excitement in me because of his honesty and truth that he expressed showing the reader that we need to shake up our traditional and comfortable forms of the church and realize what's truly important. It might make you uncomfortable because his ideas make sense, yet often that's not how we are truly living.

Cory Saint-Esprit says

Very Platt-like. A great message with a great heart behind it. Sadly, if you've read enough Platt, there is nothing mind-blowing or Earth-shattering as far as "new information," yet the message of worldly reconciliation and Gospel-driven mission to the Earth shouldn't be anything short of mind-blowing and Earth-shattering.

Krista Stevens says

I read this before I read "Radical" but it didn't really matter - much of what Platt espouses here I've been thinking and/or reading about for years. To be viable, churches really must change. I'm not sure the way my denomination is heading is the right direction, for a number of reasons, but Platt (33 years old - check out his videos) adds more fuel to the fire. For example: we really do need to look at what and how we do things and then decide what is truly necessary, what needs to change, what needs to go and not be afraid to let go of things. In all ways, the church needs to honor God and do His will, not make the people who come to church necessarily feel better about themselves. This will require sacrifice - something many American Christians have not been encouraged to do nor has it really come up in conversation because honestly, change can be hard, frightening, and full of conflicts. For example, why are we building larger and more luxurious churches when so many in the world are suffering and/or have never heard of God?

Platt's words are presented very carefully and logically and always without any sense of his own importance (as opposed to most other popular evangelical leaders - the fact that his face does not show up on the book is indicative to his sensitivity that this is not about him.) But his words are somewhat like being drenched with a large bucket of ice-cold water. "...The assumption is that God is somehow obligated to bless the plans we create. Yet no where in Scripture has God promised to bless my plans or any one else's in the church, no matter how innovative or creative they may be. Neither has God promised to bless us based solely on our motives. Sure, we are supposed to do everything for the glory of God, but that doesn't mean everything we do for his glory is assured of his blessing...There is only one thing God has promised to bless, and that is his plan."

Barb Terpstra says

If you enjoyed "Radical: Taking Back Your Faith From the American Dream" as I did, then this book is for you. Once again, Platt does not allow you to become complacent in your walk with God. He challenges us to really follow the faith practices that Jesus modeled for us while here on earth.

He reminds us: "Don't sit in a classroom; share your lives. Don't build extravagant places; build extraordinary people. Make disciples who will make disciples who will make disciples, and together multiply this gospel to all peoples."

Platt has a passion for igniting people to really take the Bible and God's message seriously. He uses God's word to convict us of the message of God (go and make disciples) and bring it to all people. He brought to my attention a verse that I had not considered before. Matthew 24:14 "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." Platt explains that the original word for "nations" in the New Testament is "ethne" and refers to all the ethnic peoples of the world.

What Jesus is telling us in the Bible is that "the end of the age will come when people from every single ethnic group have come to Christ." Platt tells us there are eleven thousand people groups in the world and more than six thousand of them are still "unreached". This is an awesome responsibility that God has given us, and one that I personally need to grow in.

In the beginning of the book, Platt shares a story of a man who had spent most of his adult life involved in programs and serving on committees in his church. When he began to become active in discipling and leading others to God he realized that "I have spent my life doing all the stuff in the church that I thought I was supposed to do. But I'm realizing that I have missed the most important thing: making disciples". Isn't that just true for most of us? We do all the "right things" from a world point of view, but are we really following God's commandment to "make disciples".

This book will make yourself wonder - am I fully surrendered to God. It will make you ask - God, what do you want me to do.

Jennifer Rodewald says

A quick read, but one that will be swimming in my heart and mind for some time to come. Things that need pondering, prayer, and then action.

Dara says

A failed attempt to clarify Radical. Another reviewer put it this way: "Platt has not learned from his earlier missteps. He is not teachable." I am inclined to agree.

I was a member of Brook Hills during the Radical Experiment. I was relatively new to my faith then. Like many people at Brook Hills, I made the mistake of believing every word David said, as if it came straight from the Bible. I will never make that mistake again. After 4+ years of trying to be "Radical," my faith had changed into nothing but a tired to-do list of good works. It has taken many years to untangle from that, and finally begin growing in Christ again.

David has heard concerns from people like me, and took them to heart - or so I thought. In Radical Together, he attempts to address these problems. He describes "Ashley," a hypothetical person representing many who struggled with Radical: "She wants to please God, and she works hard at putting Christianity into action. Yet she never feels as if she has done enough, and she is never sure of her salvation. Trying to live out the Gospel is wearing Ashley out.... I get frightened when I think about Radical in Ashley's hands." So at first it sounds like David finally gets the problem. Not everyone responds to Radical the same way - some feel God teaching them through it. Many, however, feel pushed into endless works to earn (or keep) their salvation.

But despite this nod to "Ashley," Radical Together ultimately reiterates the same problems as Radical: in one paragraph David says only Jesus can be Radical. If he'd stopped there, I would give this book 5 stars. But in the very next section, he falls right back into his previous rhetoric: "the same Gospel that saves us FROM work, saves us TO work."

That sounds great on paper, but what does it look like in real life? He never really explains. Instead, he

describes a foster program he started at Brook Hills, where people trained to become foster parents based on James 1:27. We were close friends with a couple who signed on to foster a young child. They didn't have kids yet, and hoped to get a preschooler or baby. Instead, they were assigned a 12-year-old with major emotional and developmental problems. Within a year, the child was in a rehabilitative home, and the couple was divorced.

David was this couple's pastor. And yet, I'm honestly not sure if he's even aware of what happened to them. I don't blame him personally for the divorce, but I have a major problem with his approach in Radical Together. He jovially describes his discussion with a rep from Alabama DHR about the foster program: "I didn't decide to do this. God decided this was important for his people. And he is the one who is compelling us to participate." Really? Because I never felt compelled to foster a child. What I did see was marriages (more than one) end in divorce over unrepentant adultery during Radical, and hundreds of others leave in protest because of Radical's exhausting and impossible standard.

Radical Together, like Radical, exists in a world that does not resemble reality for many Christians. It does nothing to address the very real despair many people have felt as a result of the Radical Experiment at Brook Hills. David pays lip service to these problems, but he ultimately falls right back into the same rhetoric that "if you don't adopt or foster kids, go on overseas missions every year, downsize your home/car, etc., you're not a Christian."

Beware of this book.

Glenn says

A smaller version of Radical, but packed with a large punch... If you read Radical, then this book is a must... Now where to from here...

John says

Radical Together is a helpful follow up to Platt's 2009 bombshell Radical. Perhaps 'toned down' isn't quite the way to describe the book, but certainly it is more nuanced and prescriptive than the original. In particular Platt goes out of his way to right two misperceptions that could result from a reading of his first book: that the radical call is an individualistic call, and that we are saved by our radicalness (for want of a better word), not saved to radicalness. Platt does a good job of righting both of those problematic readings. The second issue is handled particularly adeptly in his second chapter where he gives us two parishioners – one predisposed toward legalism and the other toward liberty – and pastorally communicates his concern for both. It is a very helpful corrective.

I do remain concerned about the impact Platt can have on a significant chunk of Christian readership. Despite the second chapter, there remains an edge in Platt that can be problematic. It seems Platt has a fairly uniform audience in mind as he writes. It's the kind of audience that occupied the mega-church he became pastor at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama. That is, a huge church with top tier facilities and large programs in a heavily Christianized area. Having grown up in a mega-church in a moderately Christianized area, I resonate with his message to the average person in this group. But the problem is that Platt tends to universalize this audience as THE American Christian audience. Not only do I think that's not accurate, I

think it can cause some real problems for churchgoers who go to small churches or who struggle with legalism and grace or who are challenged daily with judgmentalism. In the past six months I've had two lengthy pastoral conversations with congregants who struggled with the guilt they felt upon reading Platt. While all would do well to have their consciences pricked by Platt, there remains a danger that what occurs is a prick that leads to repentance and godliness and not an overwhelming burden that leads to legalism or depression.

Finally, even though I understand it isn't Platt's project, I wish he would provide more space for those who would be called to radical lives in much more mundane ways -- remaining in the marketplace and corporate world and living out the gospel powerfully, but perhaps at times subtly, in that context.

All of this said, I am grateful for Platt and his prophetic voice. I was pricked at many points and need the voices of humble and searching men and women like Platt in my life.

Matthew says

David Platt came basically out of nowhere with his first book, the New York Times Best-Selling Radical. His themes of abandonment to Christ and calls for serving God in any way possible connected with people across most demarcations we could use to describe them. As many people's "American Dream" (i.e. 401k, large home, etc.) crumbled around them, the call to a larger purpose that rejected living for those things seemed to resonate with many.

Now, Platt has followed up that book with Radical Together, intended to help people live out the vision cast in Radical within the context of the church. What does it look like for a congregation to really be "radical"? How can church leaders guide their people in serving others? What does it really look like to live a life of all-out relinquishment of self and submission to God's call on our lives?

I hadn't heard of Platt before his first book, but I gave a very positive review to Radical (it actually ended up being quoted in the reviews section at the front of this book). I was motivated by Radical to re-examine my life, values, and goals for what I wanted my life to look like. I enjoyed the book, operating on what I'll call "the assumption of the gospel." I know that I'm saved by faith alone by grace alone by the work of Christ alone and that nothing I do for God earns me anything. I filtered everything said in the book through that lens. It wasn't until my wife read the book that I noticed how much of what Platt said could be taken, and how it could feel so burdensome to people. It can sound like works-righteousness, like you can never measure up, be "radical" enough, and that God is continually disappointed by your life and your ability to live a blessed life while others perish from lack.

Platt doesn't believe that. But I do think he assumed others knew that when writing Radical at times. I assumed that. I think lots of churches assume the gospel a lot. The result is sermons that provide numerous practical ways to serve God and/or live moral lives, but never mention the imputed righteousness of Christ that enables us to serve. People might feel motivated to obey, but when they fail (as we will), they feel guilty. That's not the gospel.

With this in mind, I was so happy to see Platt give a full chapter to "The Gospel Misunderstood" where he explicitly writes to people who read Radical and came away with a low-level guilt that condemned and paralyzed them. He makes it clear that Christ saves us from work and to work. As he states, only Jesus was

“radical enough.” He gets the indicatives and the imperatives right and explicit here. We serve in response to grace and salvation, not to earn it. This is vital and without it, everything else said in the book would just be more weight around weary sinners’ necks. With it, we can be empowered to live lives that glorify God and serve others in response to the grace of Christ.

Like Radical, Radical Together is full of stories from Platt’s church (and others who have shared stories in response to the first book) of people responding to the gospel by doing amazing things for God. He lays the groundwork for discussions within churches by simply asking questions about budgets, programs, missions trips, etc. He doesn’t condemn many things churches do, he just points out that we need to be willing to ask the questions. Is that program really the best use of the resources God has provided? It might be, but are you willing to seek God’s answer?

In many ways, Radical Together is very similar to the first book, just taking a more macro view. I think Platt learned from the feedback he received and didn’t assume the gospel this time around. This book is a great resource for church leaders looking to glorify God with their churches, and it’s a must read for anyone who came away from Radical feeling condemned and not inspired. Platt is a fantastic, humble, gospel-driven, young pastor who is still learning and is a much needed voice in American evangelicalism today.

Kerry says

I had finished reading David Platt's first book "Radical" a few weeks ago, and was amazed at how little of substance the book had. And since I had the sequel, "Radical Together", I thought I would go ahead and read it too. Certainly it would flesh out more of what Platt was trying to say in the first book with more detail, I thought. Alas, such is not the case. Every once in awhile Platt says some good things. But for the most part, this book, like its predecessor, is fairly vapid. Adoption, which he promotes, is a great thing. Missions is important. But there is little actual Scriptural exegesis, and almost no theology to speak of. He goes on and on about the importance of making disciples. But I have yet to figure out from him what we are supposed to be teaching those disciples, other than that they are supposed to then go make disciples too. Almost absent is any of the teaching actually found in Scripture.

I respect the way Platt has devoted himself to missions work, teaching, and preaching. He has obviously been diligent in his service for God. And maybe the place to find any substantial teaching would be in his sermons and the classes on Scripture he teaches. But with the lack of clear thought I see in his books, I'm not too hopeful. I can't for the life of me understand why some Reformed people have saddled up next to him the way they have. Maybe there's more that I'm not seeing. As far as his books go, there's just nothing there.

Elizabeth says

I never reviewed Radical because there were too many thoughts and no way to get them on paper (or I guess I should say screen). But I just finished his book Radical Together which takes the themes of Radical and shows how to live them out in the context of the church. Great thoughts (really because they are from Jesus, he just spells them out neatly) and if really taken into practice could totally change our lives (but isn't that the point of being a new creation and making disciples of all nations) and our churches.

Put everything on the table to find the best (what's commanded) and examine the just good.

Disciples should do the work of evangelizing while the church should equip (many today have it the

opposite).

Our money should reflect Christ's heart for the poor and oppressed (he talked a lot about downsizing, intentionally moving, adopting etc, along with Jen Hatmaker stuff our generation is preaching)

The church should reach their city with their eyes on the ends of the world.

Among others, and its a quick read and short book, so I recommend it!

Jeanie says

I really enjoyed reading this book. It was honest and to the point. His ideals for radical living for church is the following.

- 1) One of the worst enemies of the Christians can be good things in the church.
- 2.) The gospel that saves us from work saves us to work
- 3.) The Word does the work.
- 4.) Building the right church depends on using all the wrong people.(my favorite)
- 5.) We are living, and longing for the end of the world
- 6.) We are selfless followers of a self-centered God.

Does Platt make this easy, no but it takes a commitment to bringing Glory to God. It takes prayer.

Fundamental prayer not a supplemental prayer. "You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth". It takes a self-denial. It takes a people who are desperate for the Spirit of God. It takes a believe that says and lives that God's Word is true. His Word says the gospel will advance thru persecution and sufferng and to say that I am good with that. It takes a church to realize that there is no one that seeks God, so why are we calling ourselves seeker friendly churches. God is doing the seeking. We need to be faithful that when a unbeliever comes into a worship gathering He will be convinced by all (he is hearing) that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. That he will fall down and worship God exclaiming..."God is really among you!. When that happens we are being sensitive to the right seeker!

There is so much gold in a little book that will at least get you thinking about yourself, your church and what you need to change.
