



Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream

Written by David Platt

Reviewed by Ron Eberhardt

About this book:

This book has been read and is being read by several members of Valley Ranch Baptist Church. The Mission Leadership Team made a decision to read it as well. The book was written by Dr. David Platt who is the pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama. The title is a good indication of the focus of the book, Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream.

Get ready to be Challenged!

The book starts out with a description of Dr Platt on a mission trip to Asia. He is asked to give a discussion to a group of believers in a small home church. This brief discussion quickly changes to several days in length covering a discussion of the Old and New Testament. His point is a small group of believers that meet in secret in less than perfect conditions (no air conditioning, one light bulb, no chairs and participants were at risk in attending) have such a hunger for the Word. He then compares this to the American Church Culture. The members of the Asian Church are willing to follow Jesus, at great risk and inconvenience. Dr Platt challenges the American church with not only believing in Christ, but being willing to obey Christ. "We are approaching a point where we take the Jesus of the bible and twist him into a version of Jesus we are more comfortable with." This brings up the question; do we really believe He is worth abandoning everything for? Here we stand amid an American Dream dominated by, self-advancement, self-esteem, self-sufficiency, individualism, materialism and universalism.

We need Christ. Christ reconciles us to God. Dr. Platt is concerned, looking out over his congregation, about those who will be shocked on judgment day as they stand before Christ and He will not know them. We need to be aware of spiritual deception and to consider whether we have truly authentically trusted in Christ for our Salvation (Matt 7:21-23). There are several chapters that address, who we are, who God is, who Christ is and the importance of our relationship with God.

The American Dream is compared to the essence of the Gospel. The American Dream basically states that we can do anything that we set our minds on. We have to remember to rely on God's power and not depend on what we have to achieve something great.

God's Global Purpose - Spread the Good News to all Nations

God created human beings, not only to enjoy his grace in a relationship with him, but also to extend his glory to the ends of the earth. Jesus commands us to go! Dr Platt addresses the common phrase "I am not called" and gives several arguments. For example we often say that Matthew 28 is for other people, but Matthew 11:28 applies to all people. Also Acts 1:8 applies to other people, but John 10:10, abundant life, that's for me! Every Christian should be concerned with how they can make Christ known in the entire world.

How much is enough?

One billion people live on less than one dollar a day. Two billion live on less than two dollars a day. Twenty six thousand children will die today due to starvation or preventable disease. Dr Platt states, "Literally millions are dying in obscurity, and I have enjoyed my affluence while pretending they don't exist." This chapter is a must read as I find it very convicting. He is speaking to all, himself as well.

Why I Recommend This Book:

This book is very rich in content and I cannot do it justice with a one page report. I like this book very much! I would say I enjoyed reading this book, but the book hit me square between the eyes, and brought up the need to review my own thoughts and opinions. This book addresses our relationship with God, our salvation, caring for the poor, materialism, God's love for us and suggests a one year experiment for the reader to put these concepts in practice. The book "When Helping Hurts" has made an impact on the way I think about missions, this book impacts not only how I think about missions, but challenges me to reflect on how I live my life.