

Fundamentals??

Radical, Moderate or Nominal ??



INTRO:

Late twentieth century and the secular agenda:

A very Western Agenda towards Humanism and Materialism. *(Nothing to do with science)*

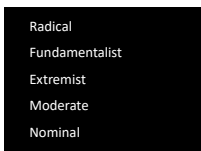
After fall of Communism there was hope this aspect of the global program would be inevitable.



BUT Then, 9/11

Religion was suddenly a world issue and most people struggled to speak about it.

In the West words once familiar with Christianity were then applied to Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists.



Radical, Fundamentalist, Extremist, Moderate, Nominal etc.

The basic media scheme is that Radicals, Fundamentalists and Extremists cause trouble whatever.

Similar things were tried with 'Right Wing' and 'Left Wing' but that has become too complicated.

We Christians always need to be thinking of ways to relate our faith and need to be clear about the language.

So here is my contribution to this and perhaps some food for thought.

Development:

Words explored:

Radical = 'Root' So a radical is someone living from the deep grounded root of something.

The technical version of this organic metaphor is **Foundation**

Q1: So before we decide for ourselves about being radical,

What is the Root or Foundation of Christianity?

Towards this we note that Christianity can involve many things.
But which actually is the life-giving, anchoring root?



We recognise it as

- **Faith** in God's character and actions,
- **Social Ethics** based on love. *Contrast to Koran*
- **Social life** - Church community and beyond
- **Values**
- **World view**
- **Politics?**

Q1. What is primary and what is secondary or derivative?

My Answer:

A1. Faith in a faithful God of love recreating humanity in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is Lord, Adam 2.0.

That is -for me- the foundation and root of Christianity.

A radical is someone who seeks to seriously live in and out of that.

The Ethic of love, Social life, Values, World view, & Politics are all secondary at best.

A Radical will take Jesus very seriously even, more seriously than themselves.

For the radical, Jesus is Lord.

Jesus' distinctive teaching will be core business for the radical.

- Love God, love your neighbour
- Love you enemies
- Forgive those who offend you
- Give to the poor

And all his direct teaching found in the Gospels

A Moderate will take these to heart and practice as they can.

These people in committees take up all the time processing how much they can follow before bringing in concerned born of their reservations.

Jesus will be on their committee but they may not always follow his lead.

While a nominal will wear the T shirt but mainly give lip service as Christmas and Easter.

Q2 So let me ask now: Where do you think you are:

Are you a radical, a moderate or a nominal Christian?

I want to be radical but frankly its hard in the Church today. Its moderate at best always blending or putting the cart before the horse!

I can illustrate this as confusion at the highest level:

Archbishop's Submission on Conversion Practices Prohibition Legislation Bill 2021

1. "We do not consider that this Bill impacts upon the ability of the Christian community to continue to promote the teachings of peace, love, and justice that are foundational to our Christian faith."

The Most Reverend Philip Richardson

Tikanga Pākehā - Archbishop and Primate/ Te Pīhopa Mātāmua, Senior Bishop for the seven tikanga Pākehā Dioceses, and Bishop of Waikato and Taranaki.

The Most Reverend Don Tamihere

Tikanga Māori - Archbishop and Primate/ Te Pīhopa Mātāmua, Te Pīhopa o Aotearoa/ Senior Bishop for the five Tikanga Māori Hui Amorangi (regional bishoprics), and Bishop/Te Pīhopa o Te Tairāwhiti.

Are the "teachings of peace, love, and justice" foundational??

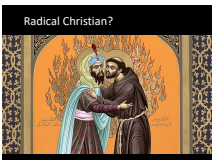
No! Jesus is foundational

This is much easier to work out with Islam.

If you want to see Radical Islam just remember ISIS or Daesh where the Koran was literally read and practiced..

To develop this, let me ask:


What would an Extremist Christian look like? Any extremist Jesus followers here?



Beyond Jesus the best answer I can think of is St Francis.

One story is that we went to the Sultan faced by the 5th Crusade in order to convert him. They spent a week together.

The crusaders were annoyed Francis has gone in peace and returned in peace from their enemy.



Radical
Fundamentalist
Extremist
Moderate
Nominal

So finally and once again:

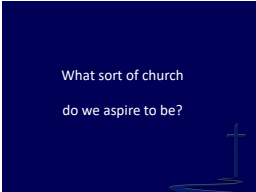
Understanding Radical, Moderate and Nominal

What sort of Christians are we?

1. What is the core of our 'Religion'?
2. Is this the root we draw on when it matters?

If the root for us as radicals is God's saving work in Jesus Christ then the teaching of Jesus are paramount.

We might even consider the words of Jesus so important that we stand in respect and attention when these words are read on Sundays?



What sort of church
do we aspire to be?