



Session 7: Jesus Could Be Dangerous

October 21, 2019 • Rev. Doug Gray
First Church of Squantum

Bible Study Based on
Leonard Sweet's *The Bad Habits of Jesus: Showing Us How to Live Right in a World Gone Wrong*

I. Introductions and Prayer

- A. Leonard Sweet writes: "...true faith that walks the talk and toes the line of true discipleship can be downright dangerous. This is the line that Jesus regularly walked and it is the same line that he still calls his followers to find and walk today. Jesus really scared people. When was the last time you made a faith choice that frightened anyone, yourself included? Is your faith too safe?" (p. 92)

II. The Upside-Down Kingdom Turns Our Lives Upside Down

- A. Read Matthew 5:17–20. Does Jesus want those listening to abandon the Law? Then why does Jesus heal on the Sabbath, talk to women and Gentiles, and hang out with tax collectors and other "unclean" people?
- B. Read Matthew 5:21–26. Jesus starts with "You shall not murder," one of the Ten Commandments. How does Jesus broaden its meaning? To take Jesus at His word, what person or situation do you need to "settle with?"
- C. Read Matthew 5:38–48. Given the pattern so far in this section of the Sermon on the Mount, how do you think Jesus broadens the idea of "an eye for an eye" to better the relationships between people and between God? How does this reflect Jesus' ethic of grace as seen in v. 44–45?

III. Jesus Brings Light to the Darkness

- A. Read John 3:1–5. What are some things you notice? Why do you think Nicodemus comes to Jesus when he does?
- B. What do you think Jesus means by "born again" or "born from above"?
- C. Jesus talks about the Spirit "blowing where it will." How is Jesus challenging Nicodemus' understanding?
- D. Read John 3:16–21. What do you notice here? According to Jesus, why did He come? Did Jesus come to condemn people? So how is it that some people choose to walk away from the Truth?

IV. Conclusions — Jesus is dangerous to us too!

"Jesus has the bad habit of shoving a mirror in your face so that you can actually see how beautiful God made you and how much better the way of following him is. In the midst of your indignity, whatever it is, Jesus bestows dignity. He has the bad habit of seeing the good in others." (p. 93)

"We live in a culture where truth does not matter...my opinion and your opinion, equally valid and true. The church is now even mirroring the culture, more fixated on rights than right...the church loses its way when it forgets that what it's about has something to do with truth and that what's at stake is nothing less than everything, even life itself. The ultimate heresy is the reduction of truth to an opinion...In order to be truthful, you have to constantly admit that you can never tell the whole truth—you don't know it, and you don't own it." (pp. 97–98)