

# Be Extra Ordinary

John M. Buttrey II

The word "ordinary" is not generally used in a very complimentary way. If you were to tell someone they were very ordinary, they might be offended. The word basically means to be normal or common. It is often used to describe someone who is plain and possesses no special qualities.

With the idea of being ordinary in mind, what if I told you, there is a sense in which we as Christians are to be *extra ordinary*? No, I am not suggesting we be extra plain and commonplace, extremely lacking any special qualities. On the contrary! What the Scriptures reveal concerning us would say quite the opposite. To see what I am talking about, let's put the two words, extra and ordinary, together, to form one incredibly descriptive word: *Extraordinary*.

One resource defined extraordinary as being "very unusual." Typically, if someone is extraordinary, they are *very unusual* in a good way. Here is a word that is complimentary. Tell someone they are extraordinary (as opposed to being ordinary), and watch their face light up.

As Christians, we should be extraordinary. In regards to our being extraordinary, the apostle Paul wrote:

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

Romans 12:2

Paul says we are not to be "conformed" to this world. According to Vine's Expository Dictionary, the Greek word he uses means "to fashion or shape one thing like another." In other words, as it pertains to the world's thinking and conduct, we are not to be ordinary or commonplace. Rather, we are to be "transformed."

To be transformed means to be changed. This change comes about by renewing our mind. We change our thinking, and thereby our actions, to be in conformity to the will of God. When we do this, we become, extraordinary.

Let's notice some Scriptures which illustrate just how extraordinarily different we are to be from the world.

In His "Sermon in the Mount," Jesus illustrated a variety of extraordinary characteristics we ought to possess. Let's notice a few of them.

## Extraordinary Joy

*"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

Matthew 5:11-12

What an extraordinary response to persecution for the cause of Christ! Rejoicing! This is anything but ordinary or commonplace.

### **Extraordinary Love**

*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.*

Matthew 5:43-44

Loving one's enemies? What an extraordinary type of love!

### **Extraordinary Self-Control**

*"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."*

Matthew 5:5

The Greek word that is translated "gentle" speaks of keeping one's power under control. For us as Christians, it is using our power and strength for God's service, not for personal retaliation of some kind to harm another, but rather, to help them.

### **Extraordinary Commitment to Avoid Sin**

*"If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell."*

Matthew 5:29-30

The fact that we enjoy the blessing of grace should not cause us to take sin lightly (cf. Rom. 6:1ff). Jesus tells us we are to take extraordinary measures to avoid sinning.

### **Extraordinary Commitment to Keep Your Word**

*"But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil."*

Matthew 5:37

Far too many people make promises and commitments they cannot keep, and in some cases, never intended to keep. We have all had empty promises made to us. Jesus says we are to have an extraordinary commitment to keep our word.

### **Extraordinary Benevolence**

*"But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing."*

Matthew 6:3

Our acts of benevolence are extraordinary because they are to be from the heart, and with no motive of praise from others. Once again, this is anything but ordinary.

### **Be Extraordinary**

These are just a small sampling of the teachings found in the Scriptures, which instruct us to avoid being ordinary. Let us all strive to be *renewed* in our mind, and *transformed*, from ordinary worldly thinking and actions. Let us "*prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*" By so doing, we will be extraordinary.