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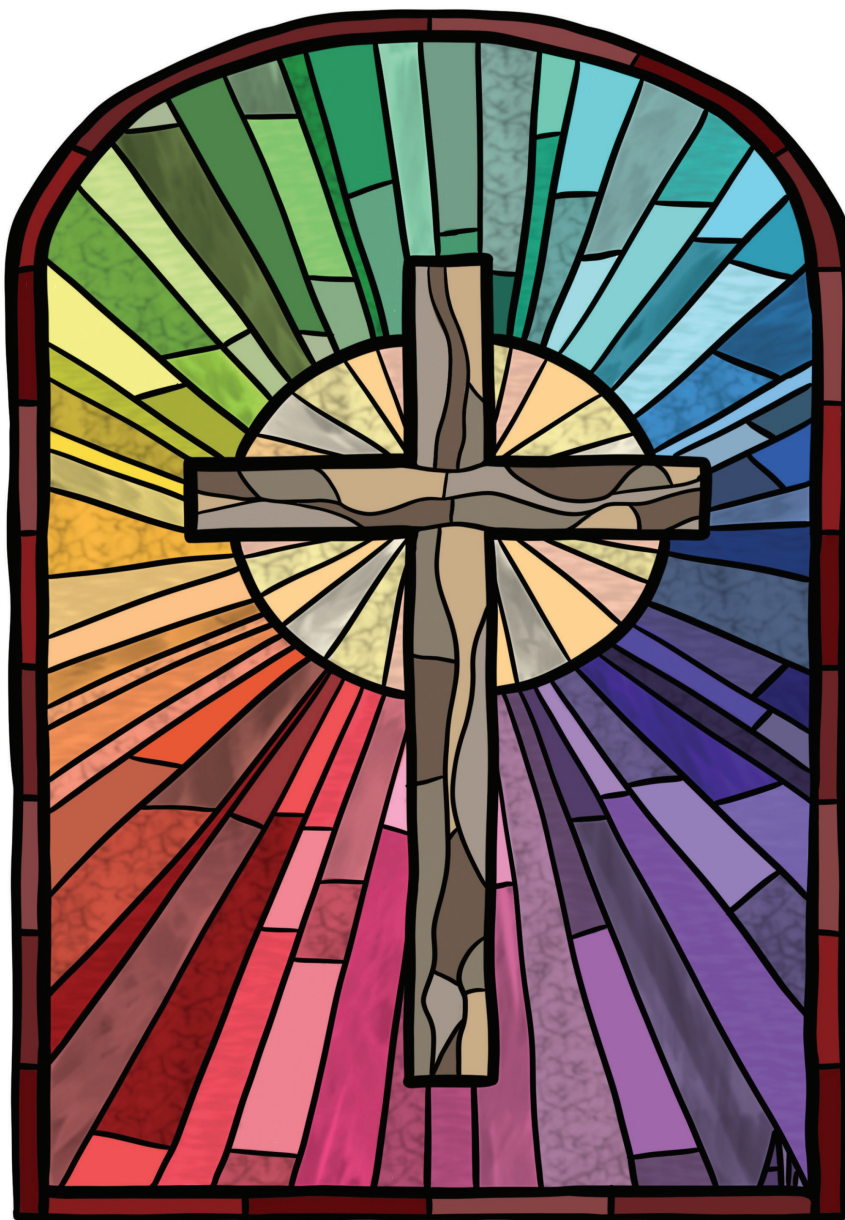
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Finding Jesus...

available on Amazon

RHM's Free Resources



"Above all, love one another" 1 Peter 4:8

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Thank You!

We want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who supports the work of Renewed Heart Ministries. Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue our mission of love, justice, and compassion, even in a time when ministries like ours are being called to do more with less.

Your support means the world to us. Whether we're speaking into the broader society, engaging within our faith communities, or working one on one alongside others endeavoring to follow Jesus' teachings of love and justice, we remain committed to advocating for a world that is inclusive, just, and safe for all. **Your partnership helps keep our work alive.**

From all of us at Renewed Heart Ministries, **thank you.** We are so deeply grateful for you, and **we couldn't do this work without you.**

If you'd like to join them in supporting our work, please go to renewedheartministries.com and click on "Donate."

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A podcast where we talk about the intersection of faith and social justice, and what a first-century, Jewish, prophet of the poor from Galilee offers us today in our work of love, compassion and justice.

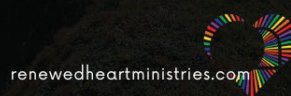
Find The *Social Jesus* Podcast at:

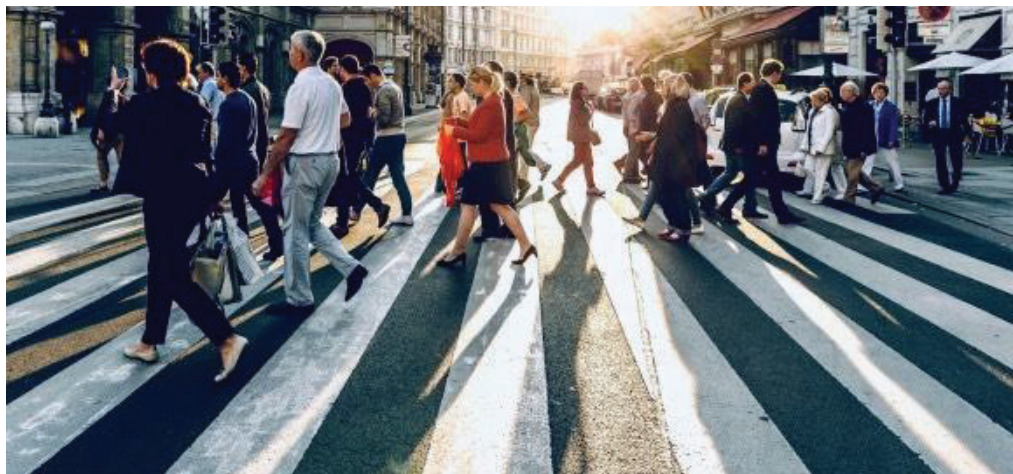
<https://the-social-jesus-podcast.simplecast.com/>



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**Healing justice work calls us
to recognize and honor the
wisdom embedded within
different cultures rather
than erasing those cultures
in the pursuit of domination
and homogeneity.**





A Tax Collector, A Marginalized Woman, and A Sleeping Girl

by Herb Montgomery

Our reading is from the gospel of Matthew:

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”...

While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.” And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well. When Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, “Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. And the report of this spread throughout that district. (Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26)

Our reading this week includes three stories. First, is the calling of Matthew, the tax collector. Matthew’s calling is more than a story of personal conversion. It is a radical social and political moment that reveals the justice-centered character of Jesus’ ministry. In the Roman world, tax collectors were widely despised because they worked within an exploitative imperial system that extracted wealth from ordinary people. They were often viewed as collaborators with oppression, who benefitted from economic injustice while their neighbors suffered. Matthew’s tax booth therefore symbolizes a social order built on exclusion, hierarchy, and economic exploitation.

When Jesus sees Matthew and says, “Follow me,” he does not offer mere private spiritual salvation. Jesus interrupts the social boundaries that defined who was worthy of dignity and belonging. In calling Matthew, Jesus demonstrates that transformation is possible even for those entangled in unjust systems. Yet the story is not about excusing exploitation.

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Weekly HeartGroup on Zoom Every Wednesday Night!

Each Wednesday evening, Renewed Heart Ministries hosts a Zoom-HeartGroup led by Herb Montgomery. Our discussion each week will focus on the content in RHM’s weekly eSight articles and the *Social Jesus* podcast. The time of each Zoom session will be on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Pacific/10:00 p.m. Eastern.

To receive the link for the Zoom meeting, email us at: info@renewedheartministries.com





Recommended Reading for June

Practising Justice

by Nathan Brown

“Practising Justice is an inspiring call to action for all who seek to embody faith through justice, embracing justice as a lifelong journey of growth and commitment. As we engage with its insights, we are reminded that true justice requires unwavering dedication and a heart open to continual learning.”
—Dr. Dilys Brooks, Campus Chaplain, Loma Linda University

Those who practise justice see wrong and work to right it—to replace oppression with freedom, disadvantage with equity, evil with good. Historically, many campaigns for justice had strong roots in faith, but more and more movements are now seeking change apart from this foundation for transformation and resilience.

Practising Justice is an invitation to consider how faith can help make sense of the need for justice and how the roots of faith can ground and sustain this necessary work. Drawing insights from the Bible and the Civil Rights Movement, this book explores “Ten Commandments” for practising justice—getting better at it by doing it repeatedly over time—and overcoming intractable injustice with hope and love.

“Any book can be judged by the consequences it brings about in the thoughts and actions of the reader. In *Practising Justice*, Nathan has achieved a book that is capable of both challenging and encouraging my thoughts and actions in equal measure. In short, it is consequential.” —Mark Webster, Chief Strategy Officer, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)

A Tax Collector... continued from page 3

Instead, it reveals that the work of justice includes restoration, reconciliation, and the creation of new community beyond the divisions imposed by empire. Jesus called Matthew away from his tax booth to follow the path of the kingdom.

The meal that follows is equally important. Jesus eats with “tax collectors and sinners,” people considered morally and socially unclean in respectable society. In the ancient world, table fellowship carried deep political and social meaning: to share a table was to recognize someone’s humanity and worth. Jesus’ actions challenge systems that separate the pure from the impure, the righteous from the marginalized, and the powerful from the rejected. His ministry consistently moves toward those pushed to the edges of society.

The criticism about Jesus’ fellowship with the marginalized reveals a competing vision of holiness based primarily on separation. Jesus responds to it by quoting Hosea: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” Mercy in this verse is not sentimental kindness. It is covenantal justice, faithful solidarity, and compassionate action that restores human dignity. Jesus teaches that true faithfulness to God cannot be separated from the way people are treated in society.

In the context of our justice work today, this passage challenges communities to examine who is excluded, demonized, or denied belonging. It also asks whether faith communities merely preserve respectability or actively participate in healing the socially, politically, economically, and even religiously wounded. Jesus does not ignore injustice. Neither does he abandon people to the identities oppressive systems assign to them. Instead, he creates a new community where transformation for those entangled in unjust systems, whether as oppressed, oppressor, or both, become possible together.

Matthew’s calling reminds readers that the gospel is not only about individual morality. It is about rebuilding human relationships and reshaping society according to compassion, liberation, and radical inclusion.

Next, we encounter the story of the woman with the issue of blood. Like the calling of Matthew, this story is also far more than a private miracle narrative. It is a profound confrontation with systems of exclusion, purity, power, and human dignity, and this brief encounter reveals Jesus standing in solidarity with a woman pushed to the margins of society.

According to the purity laws of the ancient world, a woman experiencing continual bleeding was considered ritually unclean. Her condition was not merely medical; it also carried devastating social, economic, and religious consequences. She would have been excluded from normal community life, likely isolated from worship, avoided in public, and treated as a source of contamination. Her suffering was therefore physical, economic, emotional, and spiritual. Matthew’s Gospel presents her not simply as sick, but as socially displaced too.

What makes the story radical is that the woman acts with agency. In a culture where women often lacked public power, she pushes through the crowd and reaches for the fringe of Jesus’ cloak. Her movement toward Jesus is an act of courage and resistance against a system that had taught her she was untouchable. She refuses to accept exclusion as the final word over her life.

Equally important is Jesus’ response. Rather than rebuking her for violating purity expectations, Jesus publicly restores her dignity. He turns toward her, calls her “daughter,” and affirms her faith. This language matters. In a society that had defined her by impurity, Jesus redefines her by relationship and belonging. He does not treat her as a problem to remove, but as a person to honor.

In the context of justice, this story challenges religious and social systems that exclude vulnerable people in the name of order, purity, respectability, or tradition. Jesus

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Social Jesus

Recent Social Jesus Blog Posts on Patheos:



Love Expressed in Actions Related to Justice (Part 1 of *The Promise of the Holy Spirit*)

Love here is not abstract, but an expression of relational justice confronting harmful systems in solidarity with the oppressed.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/love-expressed-actions-related-justice/



Spirit Advocate and Social Injustice (Part 2 of *The Promise of the Holy Spirit*)

An advocate is most needed where there is injustice; where voices are silenced, where systems marginalize, where truth is distorted.

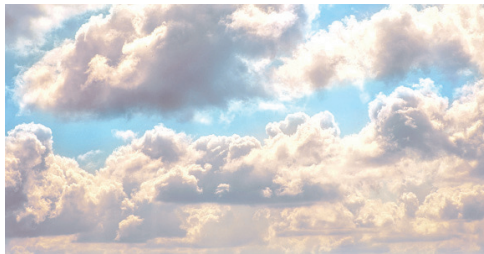
patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/spirit-advocate-social-injustice/



Encountering the Divine in Working for Justice (Part 3 of *The Promise of the Holy Spirit*)

As people engaged in justice work are grounded in love, we come to experience a deeper awareness of the Divine.

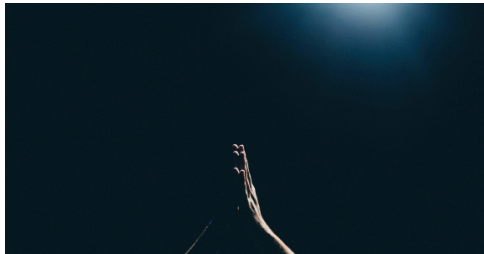
patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/encountering-divine-working-justice/



Luke's Ascension Story and Our Justice Work Today (Part 1 of *Luke's Ascension Story and Our Justice Work Today*)

Luke's ascension narrative demonstrates a common interpretive technique used during the contemporary time of the interpreter.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/luke-ascension-story-our-justice-work-today/



When Repentance Becomes Societal Rather than Personal (Part 2 of *Luke's Ascension Story and Our Justice Work Today*)

In this context, repentance is measurable not by private or personal confession, but by transformed societal practice.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/repentance-societal-personal/



The Complimentary and Competing Endings of Luke and Matthew (Part 3 of *Luke's Ascension Story and Our Justice Work Today*)

This version in Luke offers a different yet complimentary understanding of how the narratives grew and unfolded.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/complimentary-competing-endings-luke-matthew/



A Lesson On Diversity (Part 1 of *Lessons from Pentecost*)

This week's reading offers a powerful vision of diversity rooted in inclusion, shared humanity, and collective transformation.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/lesson-diversity/



Diversity Embraced Not Erased (Part 2 of *Lessons from Pentecost*)

This reflects a radical embrace of our human diversity rather than an attempt to homogenize or erase.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/diversity-embraced-erased/



Pentecost and Justice (Part 3 of *Lessons from Pentecost*)

Our Pentecost story reveals that the Spirit of God is not confined to the powerful, the privileged, or the religious or political elite.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/justice-lessons-pentecost/

continued on page 6



Both Great Commissions

(Part 1 of *The Great Commission, Doubt, and Post-Colonialism*)

Together, these two commissions reveal complementary truths of both moving beyond boundaries while practicing continuity.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/both-great-commissions/



Room for Skeptics

(Part 2 of *The Great Commission, Doubt, and Post-Colonialism*)

Our story does not rebuke or exclude the doubters. It does not wait for perfect certainty. It rests in the simplicity of love and justice.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/room-skeptics/



The Great Commission and Post-Colonialism

(Part 3 of *The Great Commission, Doubt, and Post-Colonialism*)

A post-colonial world where all humans find around them a safe, compassionate, just space where even the most vulnerable presently can feel at home.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/05/great-commission-postcolonialism/

consistently moves toward those whom society pushes away: the poor, the sick, women, foreigners, sinners, and the oppressed. The healing of the bleeding woman demonstrates that the kingdom of God is not built around protecting social boundaries, but around restoring human beings to fullness of life and community.

The story also speaks powerfully today. Many people still live at the edges of society because of illness, poverty, gender, disability, race, orientation, or stigma. The woman with the issue of blood reminds readers that justice is not merely charity or private compassion. Justice involves restoring dignity, breaking systems of exclusion, and creating communities where those once considered “unclean” or unwanted are fully welcomed and valued. Matthew’s Gospel presents Jesus as one who transforms not only bodies but social realities as well.

Lastly, we read the story of Jairus’ daughter in our reading this week. Jairus, a synagogue leader, comes to Jesus in desperation because his daughter has died. At the same time, Matthew intertwines this story with the healing of a woman who had suffered from chronic bleeding for twelve years. Together, these stories reveal Jesus confronting systems of exclusion, restoring dignity, and affirming the value of lives society often overlooks.

Jairus is a respected religious leader, someone with status and influence. His position cannot shield him from grief, though. Meanwhile, the bleeding woman represents the opposite end of the social spectrum. Because of purity laws, she would have been considered ritually unclean, marginalized from worship and community life. Jesus responds to both people with compassion.

In Matthew’s telling, social status neither elevates nor diminishes a person’s worth. The raising of Jairus’ daughter is especially significant because Jesus touches the hand of a dead girl. According to purity customs, contact with a corpse brought ritual uncleanness. Yet Jesus consistently prioritizes human restoration over social systems that isolate and stigmatize. In our story, Jesus brings life where death has ruled. This reflects the heart of justice in Matthew’s Gospel: Matthew’s Jesus continues to work toward dignity, inclusion, and hope.

The young girl’s restoration, too, reminds us that children in Jesus’ society, especially girls in the ancient world, often possessed little social power. Yet Jesus centers her life as precious and worthy of communal attention. The kingdom Jesus announces is one where even the most vulnerable are not ignored, but restored to fullness of life.

The story of Jairus’ daughter and the woman with the issue of blood carries multiple layers of meaning that reveal the deeply social and political dimensions of healing. Placing the synagogue leader beside the bleeding woman in this story teaches the Jesus community to practice a preferential option for those pushed to the margins of society. In a world where we are often tempted to prioritize the Jairesses in our world who have positions of power and influence, Jesus responds to the respected religious leader only after he has fully healed an unnamed and excluded woman whose suffering had rendered her invisible within her community.

There is another layer, too. In the Gospel of Mark’s version of these stories, for example, both females are connected through the repeated number twelve. The woman has suffered from bleeding for twelve years, while Jairus’ daughter is twelve years old. This literary connection invites readers to interpret their stories together. Both are experiencing forms of death shaped by the patriarchal and purity structures of their society.

The woman with the issue of blood has already endured years of exclusion. According to purity laws, her bleeding rendered her ritually unclean, cutting her off from normal religious, social, and economic life. She lived in isolation, shame, and vulnerability. Jairus’ daughter stands at the threshold of entering that same world.

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The work of helping people find life-giving ways to live out their faith through love, compassion, and justice are needed now more than ever. At Renewed Heart Ministries, we provide resources of faith and healing with the aim of renewing hope and inspiring action as we allow the Jesus story to inform each of us as we work together to shape our world into a compassionate, just and safe home for everyone.

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Renewed Heart Ministries is a 501(c)3, grassroots ministry on the margins that prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities, especially those who have been the recipients of misinformed, faith-based harm. Your support enables us to be a life-giving, healing light in our faith communities and continue to be a voice for desperately needed change.

You get to decide what shape our faith communities take and what voices get to be heard.

You can support Renewed Heart Ministries with a one-time gift or by becoming one of our monthly contributors. Your donation can be made online at: **renewedheartministries.com** or by mail at:

Renewed Heart Ministries
PO Box 1211, Lewisburg, WV 24901

**Whether you give \$5 or \$5,000,
every amount helps us to continue our work.**

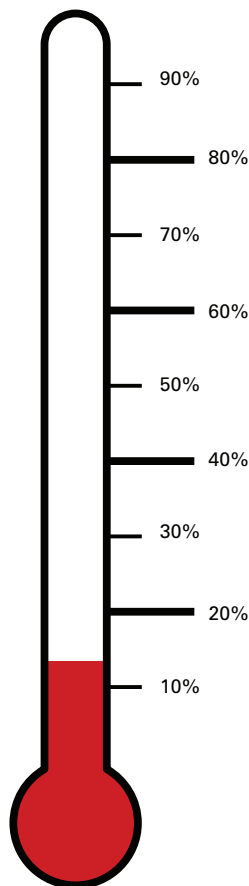
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And **THANK YOU** for reading, listening to, sharing and supporting RHM's work. Thank you for the decisions you make every day to make our world a safer, compassionate, just home for everyone. Thank you for your dedication to engaging our world and the care you demonstrate, and for being such an important part of our community.

2026 Projected Budget Goal:
\$150,000.00

2026 Donations Received:
\$21,170.25

Thank You!



A Tax Collector... continued from page 6

Jesus' actions challenge these systems directly. He allows the bleeding woman to touch him without condemnation, restoring her dignity and publicly calling her "daughter." He then takes Jairus' daughter by the hand and raises her to life. In both scenes, Jesus crosses purity boundaries and resists structures that devalue women's bodies and lives. Matthew's and Mark's Gospel presents Jesus as a liberating force who restores women not only physically, but socially, spiritually, and communally. ■

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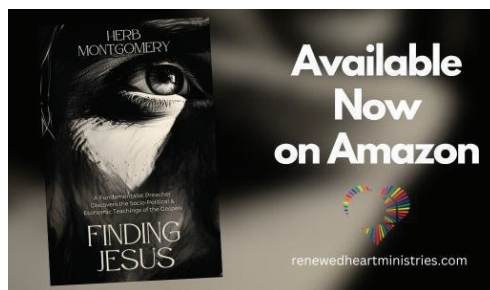
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-  renewedheartministries.com



Upcoming Events

JUNE 20, 2026
Good News Fellowship
Toronto, Ontario Canada

For info or Zoom link, email:
info@renewedheartministries.com



Finding Jesus: A Fundamentalist Preacher Discovers the Socio-Political & Economic Teachings of the Gospels

by Herb Montgomery

In *Finding Jesus*, author Herb Montgomery delves into the profound and often overlooked political dimensions of the gospels. Through meticulous analysis of biblical texts, historical context, and social discourse, this thought-provoking book unveils the gospels' socio-political, economic teachings as rooted in a profound concern for justice, compassion, and the well-being of the marginalized. The book navigates the intersections between faith and societal justice, presenting a compelling argument for a more socially engaged and transformative Christianity.

Finding Jesus is not just a scholarly exploration; it is a call to action. It challenges readers to reevaluate their understanding of Christianity's role in public life and to consider how the radical teachings of the gospels can inspire a renewed commitment to justice, equality, and compassion. This book is a must-read for those seeking a deeper understanding of the social implications of Christian faith and a blueprint for building a more just and inclusive society.



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