



Time to Redefine April 15: Sacrifice

Series Summary: There are a lot of words that we hear and use as Christians, whether that be inside or outside of church walls. We use some terms loosely, lose the original meaning, or use certain words in a way where we want them to mean what we selfishly want them to mean. We need to get back to the original meaning if we truly want to understand the Lord, and our faith, better.

Big Idea: The concept of a sacrifice is all throughout scripture. For the most part we understand the concept and weight of a sacrifice because of its recurring theme in scripture, but what does it mean for us?

Schedule:

- Live teaching
- Small group

LIVE TEACHING

Tonight: The concept of a sacrifice is all throughout scripture. For the most part we understand the concept and weight of a sacrifice because of its recurring theme in scripture, but what does it mean for us?

BACKGROUND OF SACRIFICES

Genesis 3:21-23 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. **22** And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us,

knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” **23** So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

Every sin needs a response. It needed a form of atonement, and this is symbolized in verse 21. This sin that Adam and Eve committed brought sin into the world, and yet God covered them in their shame. There were still consequences to their actions (banishment and grueling work), but God still covered them.

- This is a recurring theme all throughout scripture. From the beginning of time, God was pointing to the importance of sacrifice.
- Every sacrifice was a response to a sin that the individual committed.
- So then why don't we see sacrifices done anymore? This is where Jesus comes in...

JESUS AS THE SACRIFICE

The concept of Jesus being sacrificed wasn't about him simply being like the thousands of sacrifices performed by Jews before his sacrifice, but being THE sacrifice. Look at what Hebrews 10 says about Jesus as the one, true sacrifice.

Hebrews 10:1-4 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. **2** Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. **3** But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. **4** It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

- To summarize: All of those sacrifices that were performed over hundreds of years never saved a soul. Otherwise we would've stopped a long time ago.
- Rather, the sacrifices reminded us that we needed to still be wholly delivered from our sins from a perfect offering.

Hebrews 10:5-10 Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; **6** with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. **7** Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll— I have come to do your will, my God.’” (Jesus knew he was the perfect offering, and had been sent to do as such) **8** First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them”—though they were offered in accordance with the law. **9** Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the

second. **10** And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- "Once for all"- This is the reason we don't sacrifice anymore. Because Jesus was the only perfect and blameless offering possible (fully man and fully God).

Hebrews 10:11-14 Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. **12** But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, **13** and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. **14** For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

- This goes into an additional theme in Hebrews where it talks about Jesus being the perfect High Priest for us.
- The high priest would perform the sacrifices for all the people to atone for their sin. Jesus does the same for us by his sacrifice on the cross. We find our full atonement by his sacrifice and by being our high priest.
- All in all, this is why sacrifice is no longer seen or needed. (If you still sacrifice things on altars, then no offense but I don't want to hang out with you. And if I do then I will bring another person with me...in case I need a witness.)
- So then what does that mean for us in terms of sacrificing?

OUR SACRIFICE

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Because we no longer have to take the penalty of death, whether that is on a cross or another form of sacrifice, we should DESIRE to sacrifice every breath we have for the God who died me. It should feel like an honor to do so.

- There's often an issue with being a sacrifice though...it's often uncomfortable, and we know when it's uncomfortable because we tend to walk away from the altar.

Evangelist, D.L. Moody- “The problem with a living sacrifice is that it keeps crawling off the altar.”

- This is the issue we find with being living sacrifices. We say ‘yes and amen’ until we start to feel the discomfort. Then we try to crawl away and live the way that WE want to.

Imagine in the pain and suffering on the cross Jesus looked up and said “actually this is enough sacrifice, I’ve given enough of myself. I’ve had enough of this.” And got down from the cross, walked away, or disappeared back to heaven. We would see a very imperfect and unfinished example of sacrificing.

- In other words, disobedience and prideful motives are the stumbling blocks when it comes to living sacrificially.

Dying to ourselves is not a one time decision. This is a daily decision. This is a moment-to-moment decision. When your feet hit the ground in the morning that decision needs to be made for that day. And every situation, regardless of what it is, needs to be made at that moment.

Transition to groups: We love it when others sacrifice for us, but how do we respond when we need to do it for others. Do we love it as much or do we view it with groaning and an obligation?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

What areas of life do we partially sacrifice, or only sacrifice when we feel like it?

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

How does “in view of God’s mercy” put this verse in perspective?

Leader Note: remember that God’s mercy is a gift to us. It’s not deserved. In other words, because of God’s mercy we have the freedom to live for Him. Because of His

mercy we are able to walk in relationship with Him which allows us to offer our lives as living sacrifices.

What perspective is added, or corrected, when we read “holy and pleasing to God”?

How does living for His pleasure end up translating to our pleasure?

Leader Note: Our lives aren't necessarily for our own pleasure. Our lives are gifts not to be taken for granted. Every breath we take is a privilege given to us by God, and we should use each breath to bring Him honor and glory. The more that we walk with Jesus through life, and the closer we walk with him, reshapes our hearts. Our hearts and minds are transformed in a way where our focus shifts away from ourselves and more towards living life for the Lord.

What do you think it looks like for your mind to be transformed by God's will?

Leader Note (Two Parts):

- (Part 1): When we think of 'God's will' we tend to make it all about ourselves; what college I go to, what job future-me will have, what friends I should have, etc. None of these are bad things, and are worth praying about, but this isn't necessarily what God's will is talking about here.
- (Part 2): God's greatest will for us to live in His image and to live godly lives in all we do. In short, and in context of the passage, we won't be willing to make excuses to please our flesh. Our perspectives will be completely changed in regards to only living for our pleasures vs living for God's pleasures. We won't be satisfied with living out partial sacrifices. We will find joy in living out our lives as sacrifices in full.

Why do you think we enjoy it when others sacrifice for us, but we hesitate to sacrifice towards others?

John 15:9-13 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. **10** If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. **11** I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. **12** My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

Leader Note: Jesus, in vs 13, is foreshadowing the sacrifice he was eventually going to make for all mankind. He was literally referencing laying down your life for someone else. However, we can still apply this to how Jesus always put others before himself, and how we need to do the same.

Vs 10- How does living sacrificially unto others keep us remaining in Jesus's love?

How does living sacrificially towards others (putting others before ourselves) bring us joy and make it complete?

Introspective question (Wrap-up):

- **What area of your life have not been living sacrificially to the Lord? Does this part of your life need to be there or do adjustments need to be made? (this isn't a guilt trip question, this is genuine evaluation)**
- **If living sacrificially towards others hasn't been present in your faith then what steps need to be taken in order to live in this fashion?**