



REFUGECHURCH

BIBLE STUDIES

Vision & Values Series - Week 6 "Sacrifice"

Most everyone knows who Harriet Tubman is because of her work escaping through the underground railroad, and her subsequent return to build out the networks further and free up to 70 other slaves. But what many don't know is that she continued to employ her abilities in the Union Army, as an armed scout and spy. The first woman to lead an armed expedition in the war, she guided the raid at Combahee Ferry, which liberated more than 700 slaves.

Tubman is an inspiration to us because many of us would not have used our freedom in the same way she did. Rather than risking our lives to continue to free other slaves, perhaps we would be relieved to have escaped and remained far north, away from danger. But Tubman could not. She burned with the desire to free as many as possible. It's how she received the nickname "Moses." She was committed to sacrificing her own privilege for the sake of others. She did not feel entitled to merely enjoy the freedom she had earned.

Most people are not naturally this sacrificial. **We usually feel entitled to what we receive and therefore avoid sacrifice.** In our pursuit of greatness, or whatever ambition we may have, sacrifice seems to be counterproductive, if not self-defeating. But what Jesus teaches us in Matthew 20:20-28 is that **true greatness comes through sacrifice. The way up is down.**

SUNDAY Matthew 20:20-28

1. What is "greatness" to you? What are your ambitions? What do you hope to achieve in life?
2. How are you going to get there?
3. What does our culture tell us greatness is? Does it overlap with your definition from question #1?
4. Why do the sons of Zebedee and their mom approach Jesus? Why do they make this request?
5. The seats to the right and the left were places of highest honor in a king's court. Think of a reception at a wedding, that front table with the bridal party.
6. Why do the other 10 disciples get mad? Would you have gotten mad? How have you experienced this same situation in your own life?
7. Does Jesus smash their ambition? What does he say/do (v.25-27)?
8. How is greatness achieved in the kingdom of God?
9. Are you living for the greatness of this earth or of God's kingdom? How can you tell?
10. How do you practically sacrifice for God and his kingdom on a regular basis?



11. As we saw in the first week, the church is God's vehicle for spreading his kingdom throughout the world. How do you sacrifice for the church? Here are some ways: 1) serve on Sundays, 2) give to support the mission of God through the church, 3) show up--it costs doing something else to show up on Sundays for the worship gathering, for Bible study on Wednesdays, for Family Group, 4) welcome people into your home. It may be uncomfortable. You may not like it. But the reality is that true believers in Jesus will be eating and drinking with one another for all eternity. Not time like the present to start! [Check out our website](#) for ways to get involved and begin to live out this sacrificial life in the church.

MONDAY 2 Kings 5:1-14

1. Who was Naaman?
2. What is Naaman's idea of greatness?
3. Why does God use a slave girl to get word to Naaman about a way he can be healed?
4. Why do you think Elisha sent out a servant to talk to Naaman instead of going out himself?
5. What is Naaman's issue with washing in the Jordan River?
6. What happens when Naaman finally obeys the prophet of God?
7. Naaman's love of his own prestige and greatness almost kept him from receiving God's best for him. What stands in your way of receiving God's best for you?
8. How might God have called you to sacrifice and humble yourself? Hint: what positions of humility annoy you?
9. Confess these to God so that you can live a truly blessed life of humility and greatness through service and sacrifice.

TUESDAY Hebrews 10:1-14

1. What was broken with the Old Testament sacrificial system?
2. Why doesn't God take pleasure in sacrifices and offerings? Why did he ask for them then?
3. How does Jesus' sacrifice do away with the old order of sacrifices (v.8-9)?
4. How are we sanctified (made holy) then, if not through our own sacrifices and offerings?
5. Notice what v. 11 says, that none of the sacrifices of the Old Testament people of God EVER took away any sins! That would be mind-blowing to Jews at the time. What a waste! But what was their purpose then?
6. Notice what happened when Jesus offered up himself as a sacrifice (v.12)! In the same way, true greatness comes through sacrifice. The way up is down.
7. Ok, so if Jesus' sacrifice forever sanctifies us, why do we sacrifice ourselves? Does it add to Jesus' sacrifice?



8. It's too important to leave that last question hanging. NO!!! Absolutely not! Jesus' sacrifice for sins was single and absolute, paying for all the sins of his people. We, in response, in thankfulness, in gratefulness, as his children, as the citizens of his new kingdom, serve him, sacrificing our own desires for his. We give all we are because he gave all he is. We respond by giving lordship of our lives over to our king!

WEDNESDAY Luke 9:23-26

1. What does Jesus say he expects from his followers? What does taking up your cross mean to you?
2. Notice it says "daily."
3. How do you save your life by losing it? How do/could you lose it for Jesus' sake?
4. Jesus' question in v.25 expects the answer, "Nothing!!!" Do you still find yourself trying to gain the world? How?
5. Are you ashamed of Jesus and his words (the Bible)? What truth about Jesus is most embarrassing to you? Why do you think that is?
6. Spend some time in prayer, asking God to help you with that shame you feel about him. Ask him to give you a greater "fear, respect, weight" of him so that you won't fear, respect, and give more weight to the opinions of the people around you.

THURSDAY Matthew 9:9-13

1. Why would Jesus call tax-collectors to follow him?
2. Why did that offend the Pharisees? What did they believe about who "religious people" should spend time with?
3. What was Jesus there to do?
4. What does it mean that Jesus desires mercy and not sacrifice? Should Refuge change its value of sacrifice to mercy?
5. How was Jesus showing mercy as he sat and ate with tax-collectors and sinners? Do you show the same kind of mercy?
6. Why do you think Jesus even engaged the Pharisees in this conversation?
7. Have you attracted Pharisees with the way you love the "undesireables" of the world?

FRIDAY Jonah 2:9-10

1. Why is it ironic that Jonah is talking about sacrifice here? What has happened so far in the story?
2. How does he say he will sacrifice to God?
3. Does Jonah see the salvation of the Lord yet, while he's in the belly of this fish?
4. Do you ever thankfully and preemptively praise God for his salvation?



5. Does Jonah follow through on his promise? What happens in the rest of the story?
6. How does Jonah's sacrifice lead to greatness?
7. Ask God for faith like Jonah's. That the next time you're in the belly of a fish you'll praise him believing he will deliver you.

SATURDAY Mark 14:32-42

1. Why is Jesus greatly distressed and troubled?
2. Do you pray when you're greatly distressed and troubled? Before times of sacrifice, what do you do?
3. Have you ever prayed that prayer: "Yet not what I will but what you will"?
4. What is fighting against the willingness of your spirit? How do you fight it? How does Jesus and his disciples fight it?
5. The only way to live a life of sacrifice is to daily give it back to God for whatever purpose he may have. You cannot stand in your pride, only willing to do certain things for God. He calls his children to a life of sacrifice on his own terms, and we must wait willingly with open hands. The good news is that in this sacrificial posture, in this state of humility, is where the truly blessed, happy life is found!

