

Living The Sacrificial Life II

Not My Will, But Yours

Matthew 26:31-45 (39) "Going a little farther, He fell with His face to the ground and prayed, My Father, if it is possible may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will."

Background

Jesus is in the final hours of his life on earth, and facing the toughest challenge to His life of self sacrifice. He has just finished having Passover with the disciples, and the reality of all that he has been preparing for has now come to a head. It is decision time, press ahead, or shrink back. For Jesus, this was such a hard time that he called for his closest friends to pray with Him. Through Jesus' openness, we see just what the sacrificial life is supposed to be

Sacrifice Defined

The surrender or destruction of something prized or desirable for the sake of something considered as having a higher or more pressing claim.

Facing Sacrifice

We cannot be successful in having a sacrificial life without preparing for it long before the actual time of sacrifice. We tend to think of sacrifice as the exception to the rule, something we do that is not the norm for us. Jesus, however, did not think that way. His life was an example of living with a sacrificial attitude

*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility **consider others** better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:3-5)*

What did Jesus do? / How did He live?

- Jesus knew who He was, but didn't have to push that with anyone, including God (Philippians 2:6; John 13:1-5)
- Jesus became like those who He wanted to be with (Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:10-18)
- Jesus was willing to go to the ultimate length to save the most lost (Philippians 2:8; Matthew 18:12-14)

We are told that our attitude is to be like that of Jesus, so we need to test ourselves in this:

- 1. Are we comfortable with who we are, or do we find ourselves trying to promote ourselves to others around us?**
- 2. Are we willing to fully give ourselves to those we are trying to bless, or are they a project that ends when the person makes a decision?**

3. **Are we willing to follow this through to the end, regardless of what the end is? (s/b through the end, as that begins something new)**

Relating up, Relating out

Very often, we separate the spiritual from the natural, making distinctions between each world. We look for spiritual answers to so called spiritual situations, and physical answers to physical situations.

People's faith is tested, not by their own convictions, but by people who feel there is only one way to approach or way to look at a situation.

Jesus pulled his closest friends aside and exposed his heart

"...he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me" (Matthew 26: 37-38)

Jesus needed his friends' support to enter this last phase of self sacrifice. Not only did he have to "relate up", spending time with his Father and cultivating that relationship and vulnerability, but he had to be equally open and transparent when he needed to "relate out" to his friends.

"... and let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage each other – and all the more as you see the Day approaching (Hebrews 10:24-25)

When God calls us into something, He not only calls us into deeper relationship with Him, but also with those around us

"If I share the journey, I won't feel alone, and that's huge" ([Jclementwall](#))

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2)

New Perspectives

Jesus prayed 3 separate times in the garden, however, something changed between prayer 1 and prayer 2: His perspective.

- "...if it **is** possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will" (Matthew 26:39)
- "...if it **is not** possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done" (Matthew 26:42)

What is the difference? The first prayer was focused on his internal struggle, facing the hardness of the sacrifice. The second, focused on the sacrifice itself, and what was needed from him.

Why is this important? **Because the seed has to be willing to die in order to cause new life to come**

What is interesting to note, is that each time he came away from the prayer, he went right to his friends. The life of self sacrifice is most successful when you have the support of those close to you.

Consideration Questions

1. Are you in a place where God is calling you to some level of self sacrifice? What does that look like?
2. What are you doing to prepare yourself for a life of self sacrifice? For a challenging sacrifice?
3. What do you see that is on the other end of the sacrifice? Do you need a new perspective?
4. Does the hardness of the sacrifice cause you to shrink back?
5. Do you have people in your life that can both cheer you on and support you as you go through the process of giving yourself to this?