



"THE WAY OF SACRIFICE"

SPEAKER: BRAD WILLIAMS

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. They can help you understand and apply the teaching.

BIBLICAL TEXT(S) + MESSAGE SUMMARY:

2 COR. 5:14-15, ACTS 8:36-38, MATT. 16:25, ROM. 6:3-4

Jesus taught that those who seek to save their lives will lose them, while those who are willing to lose them, or give them away, for his sake will save them. This is one of the most counter intuitive truths of the historically orthodox Christian faith; The way of sacrifice leads to the most lively, meaningful, and fulfilling life possible — what we might call happiness. However, that is less surprising when we consider the path that Jesus walked on his way to the Cross.

LEAN IN: *These are icebreakers and warm ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. What's something you had to sacrifice that was pretty small in hindsight but was still hard to give up?
2. What's a story of sacrifice on the part of a public notable figure inspires you and why?
3. Where would you like to see more self-sacrifice in our world and how do you think our society would benefit as a result?"
4. Has anyone had a chance to put into practice what we talked about last time we met? Has it had an impact on your life in any way?
5. What example or story stood out to you in Sunday's sermon? Why was it significant to you?

LOOK DOWN: *These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. What does Paul say controls us in 2 Corinthians 5, and why?
2. In that same passage who are we living for, and, again, why?
3. Pastor Brad ties together Exodus and Acts 8 as he talks about baptism. What's the significances of that connection and why is it important fort this message?
4. What's the irony in Matthew 16 and why do you think Jesus teaches about losing and saving our lives in this way?
5. According to Romans 6, what are we baptized into, raised from, and then walk in? Why is all of that important? Can we embrace only part of it or is it all interdependent? Explain your answer.

LOOK OUT: *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. Where do you see the greatest need for sacrifice in the world today?
2. What keeps people from living lives of sacrifice that benefits others and society as a whole?
3. Why do you think most people admire the noble sacrifices of others but avoid those kinds of selfless acts in their lives ?
4. What role does love play in all of this? How does what, or who we love influence how we might be willing to sacrifice?
5. How do you think celebrity culture plays into the expression of sacrifice in our contemporary experience? Do people who are intent on "building their brand" and building personal wealth see a life of sacrificial living as a pathway to a meaningful and fulfilling life — a life of happiness — and why or why not?

CONTINUED:

Look In: These are questions that help you consider how to engage the teaching personally. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. When you think of living a sacrificial life, what do you feel? Fearful? Excited? Adventurous? And why?
2. Paul writes to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:6) and tells him, “Godliness with contentment is great gain.” How does that make you feel? Can you be content simple with godliness, that sterling quality of character that is content in all circumstances, whether with much or little?
3. How much of what you have now could you realistically sacrifice and still live — still stay clothed, fed, and housed — and how much of what you have is actually just “extra?” It just makes you life more comfortable. What would it look like to sacrifice all of the extra for the benefit of another. Put another way: what would it look like to invite others into your abundance, to share it sacrificially?
4. When you really stop and think about it, what things in your life made you the most persistently happy and how much worldly wealth was required to secure those things?
5. What of yourself or your possessions are you holding on to much too tightly right now that you could give away? Where do you have an impoverished mindset? Where is God challenging you to be sacrificially .

LIVE IT OUT: These action steps help apply this week’s message to day to day life. Choose one prompts and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. Pick something, anything that has an unwholesome hold on you and give it away. Make an intentional prayerful, sacrificial, and loving commitment to share your abundance with another.
2. Sit down with a trusted and wise counselor — a parent, a savvy family member, or an experienced financial advisor — and make a plan to be incrementally and intentionally more generous with all God has entrusted to you. The old trope, “time, talent, and treasure” is trite but it also encompasses the major categories of God’s generosity to us. It’s helpful to consider those three areas because while practicing the way of sacrifice, we always pass His abundance to others in kind.