

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice, something we all have to do, but don't necessarily want to do. Many times sacrifices bring about difficult decisions in our lives. We have to prioritize and decide what is the most important thing to do at that particular moment in time. While in school, we have to decide if studying or spending time with friends is more important. If we decide that studying is more important, then we have to decide to sacrifice time and possibly memories with our friends. However, if we decide that spending time with friends is the most important thing at the moment, then we are sacrificing time to study and possibly achieving a better grade on our assignment. Just about any thing we are devoted to or are committed to, requires some sort of sacrifice. From school, to sports teams, to the youth choir at church, they all require sacrifice.

In the Old Testament, sacrifices were offered as a sin offering. Usually it was a choice lamb from the flock or if a lamb could not be afforded, two pigeons would suffice. The lamb, would need to be the most perfect lamb that a person could find, one without blemish or defect. God deserved the best and so the individuals would try to find the perfect lamb and sacrifice the best of the flock. These sacrifices were slain as only the shedding of blood could ensure the remission of sins. These sacrifices were made often, as the lamb could not take away all of a person's sin for all time, but yet for only a short while. The individuals would have to take their lamb to the high priest in order for him to sacrifice it on their behalf.

Jesus Christ changed all that. He came into this world knowing He was going to be the Redeemer and the Sacrifice for all mankind. Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice. He was without blemish or defect, as He had walked this earth as a sinless man. He chose to sacrifice Himself so that we would not have to offer daily sacrifices anymore. He was the perfect sacrifice and shed His own blood so that we might have. He took our punishment for our sins and gave His life for us. While the other priests had to make sacrifices daily, He made one sacrifice for all time. Jesus Christ gave the ultimate sacrifice; He gave His life. No one could give any more for us. Will we accept His sacrifice and allow Him to be the Redeemer of our heart and life? And then will we sacrifice our time and talents to glorify Christ?

Mark 14:12-26

In today's lesson we are looking at Jesus as He eats His Last Supper with His disciples right before He sacrifices Himself for us.

The Ultimate Host

Jesus Found Them a Place to Eat

Jesus and His disciples were looking for a place to hold their Last Supper together. Jesus told two of His disciples to go and look for the man carrying the water jug and follow him to his home. In his home would be the place that they would share the Last Supper. It would be very easy to find a man carrying a water jug since usually women were the ones who carried those throughout the town. The disciples found the man and the room where the Supper would be held. Eventually, the other disciples and Jesus arrived at the home. Jesus knew that spending quality time with His closest disciples would be vital to their faith in the days to come. He would soon be giving His life for sinners everywhere and He needed to know that they would have the faith to live for Him the rest of their lives.

Jesus Showed Hospitality to a Betrayer

Jesus Christ was all man, but He was also all God. As He sat down to eat supper with His disciples, He knew who would be the one to betray Him. While they were reclining and eating, He told the disciples that one of them who was breaking bread and eating with them would be the one to betray Him. Jesus sacrificed a lot by sharing that supper with Judas. As a human being, we can only imagine what it must have felt like to share a meal with the man He knew would turn Him over to the high priests to be crucified. Sometimes when we are mad at our friends for talking bad about us, we refuse to sit with them! Jesus knew this man, Judas, would be the one to lead the way toward His crucifixion. Jesus showed extreme hospitality and extreme sacrifice by continuing on with supper without even telling the others who the betrayer would be. Jesus could have told the others, but He knew this was part of God's divine plan and He only warned Judas without telling others.

Jesus Told the of the New Covenant

Jesus knew that these men had studied the scriptures and knew the regulations and conditions of the Old Covenant. As they were eating, He took the cup and the bread and blessed them signifying His blood and body. In the past, the bread and blood had been broken and drank in remembrance of God's provision for the Israelites in the wilderness. Jesus' words were opening the eyes of the disciples to the New Covenant He was about to make. The bread was used to show how Jesus' body would literally be torn for us on the cross of Calvary. The cup would be used to represent Jesus' blood poured out for our redemption and salvation. The New Covenant would be a covenant of love and commitment to Christ. Jesus Christ became our sacrifice and our Redeemer in order that we would not have to follow the rules and regulations of the Old Covenant, but rather a New Covenant of love! Today, when we participate in the Lord's Supper, it is in remembrance of our Covenant with Jesus Christ, the sacrificial Lamb, who became the Redeemer for ALL!

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