

## **Taking One for the Team**

### **Ready:**

“For our present troubles are small and won’t last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!” -- 2 Corinthians 4:17

### **Set**

Sports are a great tool to develop one’s character. Sports is a great laboratory for this development and daily youth all over the world are molded, hopefully into men and women of great character. One character trait that is developed is sacrifice. Sacrifice is all about giving up oneself for the benefit of another. In the game of baseball, a batter will intentionally hit the ball to a spot that will no doubt lead to an out. However, the goal is to move their teammate into a more advantageous position to score.

On this day we celebrate the legacy of Jackie Robinson, the man who is celebrated for breaking the Major League Baseball color barrier in 1947. We also celebrate Branch Rickey the team owner who had the guts to sign Jackie Robinson, against all societal norms. Briefly, Jackie Robinson was very outspoken about any racial injustice that he encountered or that his teammates encountered as he played for the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Leagues.

So much so that he was court martialed for refusing to give up his seat on a military bus to a white man. He won the case. So, when you put Jackie’s conviction in the context of breaking the color line in professional baseball, you can see how sacrifice may not be his first thought. However, through his faith and Branch Rickey’s coaching, Jackie learned to take one for the team. He sacrificed his dignity so that others who looked like him would get to play in the Major Leagues. On April 15th every year, every major league baseball player wears the number 42 to commemorate the life and legacy of Jackie Robinson.

The Apostle Paul reminds of in 2 Corinthians 4:17 that our affliction is but for a moment and is working in us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. Like our Savior, Jesus Christ, Paul understood what it meant to take one for the team. Just like Jackie Robinson, it’s worth it to sacrifice for the glory of Our Heavenly Father.

As you celebrate the remembrance of Jackie Robinson and what he stood for, think about what this sacrifice means to you. As you think through this, remember the perfect example set by Jesus Christ—His sacrifice opened the gateways to Heaven so that we may experience His eternal Kingdom forever.

Knowing this sacrifice was made for you, how do you respond?

### **Go**

- Describe or journal a time where you were led to sacrifice for another?
- Share about someone (besides Jesus) who represents sacrifice in your life.
- What does Jesus' sacrifice mean to you?

## **Workout**

Romans 8:18; Ephesians 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 5:10

## **Overtime**

"Father, in the name of Jesus, thank You for the sacrifice of Your Son Jesus for me. Please help me to serve others through sacrifice by putting their needs ahead of mine. May my coaching, playing, parenting and being with others emulate the sacrifice of Jackie Robinson, the Apostle Paul, but more importantly, of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen."



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