

What Would You Give Up?

Ready:

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” – Ephesians 5:1-2

Set

For the sake of a teammate, a competitor can be asked to sacrifice. A basketball player screens her opponent. A football player blocks for the quarterback. These sacrifices require a competitor to put themselves in a position to take a hit and save their teammate from the blow. When you are on a team, you understand the significance of personal sacrifice as it relates to a total team victory.

Jesus held nothing back in His demonstration of love for you. He offered up His reputation, His relationships and ultimately His physical body. He saw the value of laying one thing down to gain something better. Isaiah 53:5 reads, *“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”* His sacrifice was the fulfillment of all prophecies and burnt offerings that had been happening for hundreds of years among the Jewish people.

The experience of the cross caused Jesus great grief in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:42). Nothing about His suffering was easy. Yet, it says in Hebrews 12 that He still held onto joy. It was the love of people that compelled Him with joy to endure the cross. On the other side of death, He knew the power of resurrection, peace, healing and relationship with the Father.

No teammate likes getting knocked down when the coach says to make the screen for the point guard, but a true competitor understands the importance of the sacrifice. In fact, this competitor could even choose to see the joy in it. Jesus chose this sacrifice to carry out the ultimate victory and usher in the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He laid down His life that we all may be resurrected with Him.

Go

- Has your coach ever asked you to sacrifice something for the sake of another teammate?
- Jesus willingly laid down His life. How is that different than if God would have commanded Him (without choice)?
- How would have Jesus been able to experience joy in sacrifice? What can we learn from that?

Workout

Isaiah 53:12; John 10:17-18; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 12:1-3

Overtime

“Father God, thank You for sending Your Son Jesus to sacrifice His life. He did not just die, but He showed us how to live. His life, death and resurrection provided the fulfillment for all sacrifices. I’m no longer bound by sin and sacrifice, but I get to offer my heart and life to You. You have set me free into the ultimate victory—‘Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’”

Bible Reference:

Ephesians 5:1-2

Isaiah 53:12

John 10:17-18

Philippians 2:5-8

Hebrews 12:1-3



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