

OHO 11.23.19

I. THE SACRIFICES OF THE LAMB AND OUR SACRIFICES

A. Before His sacrificial death, Yeshua made many sacrifices:

1. Gave up His life in heaven and took the form of a Man and lived/tabernacled amongst us in this world, with all of its suffering, hardships, and evil.
2. Why? So that we could know Him, He could minister to us, share the Gospel Message, and give us instructions and powerful teachings and insights into Scriptures—the Sermon on the Mount, the Great Commission, etc..
3. Performed many miracles. Healed the sick (blind could see, lame could walk), calmed the Sea, walked on water, raised Lazarus from the Dead, etc.
4. Jewish literature written by non-Believers confirms His miracles. They attributed it to sorcery. We know better.
5. Traveled throughout Israel to share the Good News
6. Hand-picked and trained His 12 disciples—picking Matthew, a tax collector, was unpopular—tax collectors were as unpopular as the IRS is today.
7. His sacrifices started well before the execution stake.
8. They started when His wisdom and gentle reminder prevented an adulterous woman from of being stoned, even though he knew what he said would not be popular.
9. They started when He raised Lazarus from the dead and the plots to kill him started to swirl.

10. They started back when He proclaimed He would tear down the temple and raise it up again in 3 days. But they didn't understand Him and were angry with Him for saying such things.

11. The point is, Yeshua laid down his life all along the way.

12. The ultimate demonstration was on the execution stake. But the reality is, it started way before that. The execution stake was the natural progression of a life that was already sacrificed for others.

13. Not only did He make the ultimate sacrifice, He suffered immensely from persecution and not being understood before His death! (I can relate to that, how 'bout you?)

14. His life of ministry was one sacrifice after another. Mine is not but I die to self, more and more each year.

II. **NO GREATER GIFT THAN TO LAY DOWN YOUR OWN LIFE! YESHUA LITERALLY DID THAT! WOW!**

A. John 15:12-13 "This is My commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this: that he lay down his life for his friends."

B. I think most of us would literally do that for our spouse, for our children, for our grandchildren, maybe some very close friends, ?rabbi, etc.

- C. In fact, we do lay down the DESIRES of our life and sacrifice for our spouse, kids, etc.
- D. I think that is the thrust of this verse—to sacrifice daily--not to make the ultimate sacrifice. Many scholars agree that it is not saying to make the ultimate sacrifice.
- E. If it was instructing us all to make the ultimate sacrifice of dying for others, there would be no one left to fulfill the Great Commission, to disciple new Believers, to take care of widows and orphans, to do charitable works, to pray for others, love one another, etc.
- F. I AM NOT ADVOCATING, OR EVEN SUGGESTING THAT ANYONE LITERALLY DIE FOR OTHERS.
- G. RATHER TO SIMPLY MAKE SACRIFICES (TO SET ASIDE OUR OWN FLESHLY DESIRES) FOR THE SAKE OF OUR FRIENDS—TO LOVE OUR FRIENDS/NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES.
- H. I want to let love rule my life.
- I. What a great act of humility that is and what a great witness it is—The love of Believers provoked me to jealously to want what Believers had. Thank you all who did that! One day I will be able to thank them personally as we dance together on the streets that are golden.

III. It is easier to sacrifice if we are expecting and reasonably confident of receiving something in return.

A. Example 1. Helping someone move... so they will help us.

B. Example 2. Being kind so people will speak well of us or like us or do business with us.

IV. But, we are called to be more selfless, more Messiah-like. That includes loving, giving, sharing, etc expecting nothing in return—otherwise it is a *quid pro quo* (“This for that”, Tit for tat/favor for a favor).

V. **What you eventually learn through life, is that you can spend your whole life chasing what you want and never find it, or you can put God and others first and find that often times WHAT YOU WANT CHASES YOU DOWN-FALLS INTO YOUR LAP.**

VI. How many have unfulfilled dreams that you have longed for and even prayed for? But God knows best.

VII. There’s an old country song: Thank God for Unanswered Prayer. Many times we sing such a tune when we go to a high school reunion and see and visit with the person we longed to marry back then.

VIII. **How do I live out this sacrificial life, as a friend, as a co-worker, as a parent, and as a spouse?**

A. For 39 years, my amazing wife has shown me how to sacrifice and to put others 1st. I used to think marriage was 50-50. Let’s each pull our share. She demonstrates to

me daily that it is 100-100. That makes me want to do the same.

- B. It all starts by making Yeshua first in my life. **In Him is the power to love others unconditionally. Yeshua is the source of all love. He is the epitome of love. He is the perfect one Who is an example for us all. WWYD!**
- C. Even with Yeshua and the Holy Spirit in us, love can be very hard work. Sometimes, I have to push myself to put others 1st. Maybe I am the only one like that. Maybe not.
- D. **Oswald Chambers**: In My Utmost for His Highest: **“It is much easier to die than to lay down your life day in and day out with the sense of the high calling of God.”** (1st trip to Israel during the 2nd Intifada, not afraid of dying. What if I’m maimed?!?)
- E. (1 John 3:16). “And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren”
- F. This can be contrary to human nature
- G. But we are wired with an innate sense of morality. We help the downtrodden and those less fortunate and have a sense of morals and justice built in us...but usually with strong fleshly limitations. This sense of morality comes from God—it did not evolve.
- H. Ironically these same morals given to us by God are what causes us to judge God’s ways which sometimes causes us to reject God. God’s Not Dead famous line describing many atheists: God doesn’t exist...and I hate Him. We judge God with the morality HE gave us.

- IX. We are kinda sorta loving others to repay Yeshua for what He did for us.
- A. Yeshua didn't just die. He suffered immeasurably both before the execution stake and on the execution stake. Brutal scourging, then hung on a tree with spikes into portions of his limbs. We sacrifice to show our love for Yeshua and to show others the love Yeshua gives.
- B. Laying down my life for Him is a difficult thing to do. But realizing that it is to thank Him makes it easier.
- C. Exhibiting my salvation in my life is difficult. God saves a person, fills him with the Holy Spirit, and then says, in effect, "Now you work it out in your life, and be faithful to Me, even though the nature of everything around you tempts you to be unfaithful."
- D. Remain faithful to your Friend, Yeshua and remember that His honor is at stake by your actions.
- E. Sometimes the biggest stumbling block for Not Yet Believers is the behavior of Believers.
- F. **Scripture instructs us to behave admirably. Titus 3:2 and 9: "...to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people... avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless."

G. No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care!

H. 1 John 3:18 “Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”

I. I try to remember that laying down myself for others is about how I value people and how I see myself—I try to be humble! That can be hard...very hard! (I came from dust, a while back, and will return to dust. Gen 3:19)

J. As a young believer in Messiah I quickly learned that humility was among the greatest of virtues, and that God abased the proud and exalted the humble. I heard a prayer from my friend Sheldon Kallevig via his Agape Fellowship friend, Lee Mitchell that tickled me: “O Lord, teach me humility that I might be exalted above all of my brothers.” In fact, I was so humble that the church/synagogue that I attended gave me a badge that said: “Most humble brother” but then they had to take it away because I wore it.’ NOT A TRUE STORY. FAKE NEWS. Actually, Derek Prince uttered it but he heard it from someone else. “Nothing new under the sun.”

K. But back to the message: The truth is we have nothing to fear and nothing to overcome because He is our all in all and we are more than conquerors through Him.

L. Sometimes our acts of kindness won’t be recognized, won’t be talked about, won’t even be known. BUT we will know we are playing a role in loving people into the Kingdom one heart at a time and doing great works for our

LORD. Typically, it is this unconditional love that leads people to the LORD. That's what happened to me...and many others.

X. Great example: Cory tenBoom

- A. She didn't lay down her life unto death. Her sister did. Cory sacrificed tremendously for others and risked her life for the Jewish people in WWII and wound up in a concentration camp.
- B. By doing such led many many to the LORD back then and still today and will tomorrow.
- C. How far would you extend the group of people for whom you would lay down your life/your own desires?

XI. What can we do short of laying down our lives for others? A personal decision for all of us:

- A. Help them move? Even if busy
 - B. Share the gospel even if it means rejection?
Disinheritance? Death? Laying down our own life could certainly be a great witnessing event.
 - C. Let's not judge others. That is a challenge for me.
 - D. The only one qualified to throw a stone, didn't. (He who has no sin cast the 1st stone...to the charged adulterer).
- John 8

- E. **Does your life match your message?** (Ron Cantor)
- F. Yeshua's prayer to God, the Father, for the disciples, that they will be UNITED and represent God well to the world and share God's love and heart and thereby know that God, the Father, sent His only Begotten Son. We are to do the same.) John 17:20-23 "I pray...for those who believe in Me ... that they all may be one (unity)...so the world may believe that You (God, the Father) sent Me (Yeshua) ...that they may be **perfected in unity**, so that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them as You loved Me.

XII. May have to skip: **We live in a dark world that seems to be getting darker.**

- A. Isis and the Nazis performed atrocities that most of us would never even think of doing to anyone, especially innocent people and children. The need to share the gospel seems to be at an all-time high. That may have always been true.
- B. (Romans 12:21) "Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good."
- C. Only 49% of millennials Identify as Christian according to Pew Research Center making them the first generation in American history to not have a majority of Believers!

- D. 70% of Millennials support socialist ideas (vague term) as per Dennis Prager/Prager U. 36% showed increased support (whatever that means) for communism.
- E. More than a 1/3rd of millennials polled approve of communism.
- F. **The appetite of the evil one is insatiable.**
- G. Great divide. Leaders falling into sin—we need to pray fervently for them.
- H. Secular leaders coming to faith-we need to pray fervently for them.
- I. Cathy's and my approach is to not be a bull in a china shop. Rather, consistent with 1 Peter 3:15 we are ready to give reasons for the hope that lies within us.
- J. Maybe skip. Example of the enemy hard at work: A very close friend during law school has refused to speak with me for 25 years and has refused to tell me why. After I persisted to reach out to him, he finally shared about a week ago it is apparently because I shared some Jonathan Cahn 1 minute devotionals. He is going through a divorce after many years so I have been reaching out to him and he finally agreed to get together IF I agreed to not discuss "religion." I rarely, if ever, discuss religion. But I LOVE to discuss my relationship with the LORD and the paramount importance of having one.
- K. Hateful name calling woman on FB who I don't even know. Called me a liar, ignorant, etc. Kept hurling anti-

missionary arguments at me...all of which can be refuted. Satan was baiting me to get ugly back. Finally she shared on Thursday she is reading my book.

- I. Maybe skip: Cathy and I have been watching a **CNN documentary** on Netflix on the **decade of the 70's**. It seems to have been birthed out of the hippie movement of the 60's with free love, drugs, rejection of God, etc. Beginning or expansion of
 1. feminism
 2. admittedly linked to abortion
 3. in your face demand of acceptance of homosexuality (Anita Bryant, a former Miss America stood up to this and got a pie thrown in her face),
 4. demonic music
 5. terrorism
 6. high jackings
 7. denunciation of Israel (Yasser Arafat was given a standing ovation at the UN after he was behind the kidnapping and slaughter of 12 Israeli Olympic athletes at the 1972 games in Munich),
 8. campus unrest and murders
 9. serial killings (Son of Sam), Charles Manson's brutal murders etc.
- J. The **Decade of Decadence**. And we thought it was bad then. That was a springboard.
- K. Time to ratchet up our sacrifices and take stands for righteousness.

L. The appetite of the enemy for more corruption is insatiable—it is NEVER satisfied.

XIII. I WILL CLOSE WITH SOME INSPIRING QUOTES FROM CORY TENBOOM:

- A. "Love is larger than the walls which shut it in."
- B. "If the devil cannot make us bad, he will make us busy." So we won't have time to sacrifice for others.
- C. "Happiness isn't something that depends on our surroundings...it's something we make inside ourselves."
- D. "Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?"
- E. "In darkness God's truth shines most clear."
- F. "If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. But if you look at Christ, you'll be at rest."
- G. "Don't pray when you feel like it. Have an appointment with the Lord and keep it. A man is powerful on his knees"
- H. "There is no pit so deep, that God's love is not deeper still."

VIII. **Conclusion: Wayne Hilsden** (Messianic pioneer and leader in Israel; co-founder of King of Kings Community in Jerusalem): **"An advantage of dying to self is that you have nothing more to lose."**

- A. May I live my life in such a way that I don't have to tell people I am a Believer--they will know it by my actions (or

at least recognize that I am different from the rest of the world).

- B. In the recent words of **Kanye West at Joel Olsteen's** church: "We aren't called to be Christ. We are called to be Christ-like."
- C. I ask myself, what have I done to show God's love in the past week? month? Year?
- D. LOVE! Can we all agree to pray that we can better exhibit Yeshua's love?
- E. What am I willing to do today? Tomorrow? This week? Next week? Next year? In the future?

Sermons: Lay Down Your Life. No greater gift