

WEEK 10

TO READ IN THE BOOK: CHAPTER 15, SACRIFICE

BIBLE STUDY: LUKE 15:11-32

Last week Ewan preached on the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Read the parable again and then read the poem below called, *The Prodigal Applied*.

Filled
with
compassion,
He—
Runs to me
Throws his arms around me
Kisses me
Puts the best robe on me
Puts the ring on my finger
Puts sandals on my feet
Kills the fattened calf—
Celebrates me.

Why do you think Jesus says the father is filled with compassion *first*?

When you move toward God, do you think he has compassion on you? Why would he have compassion on you?

How do you feel about the thought of God celebrating you?

Which of the two brothers do you think is more likely to sacrifice their time and energy in the future? Why?

BIG IDEAS SO FAR

You were not built to live only for yourself. You have been hardwired to *want* to be part of something bigger—something bigger than your own survival and your own happiness. This desire that is hardwired into you is the desire for **transcendence**.

Your desire for transcendence is a desire for glory, and it is a good desire.

The Evil One is continually presenting us with less in a way that makes it appear to be more.

Admitting when you say or do something wrong or hurtful is one way you can step down from your throne as the almighty ruler of your own kingdom.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CHAPTERS 15

To sacrifice your time and energy for someone or something is very human. We all have things which we value and for which we are willing to sacrifice.

Certain things are so valuable to us that they prevent us from sacrificing our time and energy for those things we deeply value—even though deep down we really want to sacrifice ourselves for those things we deeply value.

God created us to be free—beholden to no one and no thing, but him. God created us to be free from those things that have such a tight hold on us that they prevent us from devoting ourselves to those things we deeply value.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHILE READING

What in your life has required a great amount of commitment, discipline, and sacrifice?

Although the word “disciple” may rub you the wrong way, do you consider yourself a disciple—a follower—of Christ? What is it that makes you answer yes or no?

What is it you are holding onto tightly? Your job? Your children? Your reputation? Your health? Your money? Your time? Most of us could say “all of the above” but try to identify the one or two things that you cherish above the rest.

Think about your last interpersonal conflict. Realizing that virtually all conflict is caused in part by both parties, what treasure were you holding onto that contributed to the conflict?

How does your time together as a group fulfill Christ’s call to give up everything and be his disciple?

Think about someone who has harmed you in the past year. Do you want to forgive them? Do you know what is blocking you from forgiving them fully from your heart?

Think about someone you have harmed in the past year. Do you want to go to that person, admit your failure, and ask their forgiveness? Do you know what tends to make asking forgiveness difficult for you?

As a group, spend some time in prayer asking God to help with those areas of need that have arisen in response to the previous two questions.