
SETTING SAIL

All Hands on Deck

As we set sail and allow the wind of the Holy Spirit to take us into unchartered waters to meet the needs of our local community, pastor the city of Brisbane and release revivalists to the nations, it's going to require all hands on deck. That's the type of sacrifice Jesus is asking of His disciples.

Who Do you Say I Am? – Mark 8:27-33

In realising that He's the Messiah and not just another prophet, they are recognising Him as the true King of Israel (a politically and theologically hot topic). But they still don't understand how the Kingdom is going to come. They still don't realise that it's good news in and through who Jesus is and the sacrifice He will make. The Kingdom of God is coming through Me, Jesus says.

Sacrifice – Mark 8:34

- + The act of giving up something that you want to keep especially in order to get or do something else or to help someone
- + Anything consecrated and offered to God.

Building on Sacrifice

We are a part of a story that is bigger than our own. In fact, we fit into God's story, and each generation is responsible to complete their part of the story line. We reach back to receive the blessing of generations that have gone before, and we take up the responsibility to continue the story and to leave a legacy for generations to come.

No vision accomplishment comes without cost and sacrifice, and Jesus raises the stakes and says for His vision to come to pass, for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done, He's asking us to sacrifice our own self-determination. Only God will bring this vision into fruition but each of us will need to play our part.

The Ultimate Sacrifice – Mark 8:34-9:1

Surrendering to the Father's will, Jesus emptied Himself, became man and was found in the form of a servant whereby He willingly gave Himself sacrificially that God's will might be fulfilled in and though His life and death (Philippians 2:6-8).

Jesus' life on earth was without wealth, position, status and even acceptance (John 1:11).

Christ voluntarily emptied Himself of anything and everything that stood in the way of the glory and gain of His Father through Him.

What about us? Are we willing to sacrifice to enable God's agenda for our lives?

A Living Sacrifice

Holding tightly to God's kingdom values determines the priorities we have which in turn will determine our life pursuits—what we are willing to surrender to and sacrifice for.

Romans 12:1 - As followers of Jesus we consecrate and offer ourselves to God as a living sacrifice an instrument of righteousness (Romans 6:12-13; 8:11-13). We are called to a sacrificing life. How do we do this?

We live a sacrificing life by not being conformed to this world (Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:16).

How can believers NOT be conformed to the world?

1. *By being transformed by the renewing of our minds.*

- + I'm not God's provision – He's mine
- + Sacrifice for God = making hard choices
- + Allow the truth of God's Word to transform us

The Word of God, ministered in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (so that it goes beyond knowledge in our head but deep into our hearts to become a part of who we are), transforms us from worldliness to true spirituality where we will be equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16).

2. *Through Sacrificial Giving*

- + The best antidote to a self-centred life is to give
- + Every time you give it is a spiritual victory

Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

MATTHEW 6:21 (NLT)

When I give my treasure, my time, and my talent to God, it's like a magnet – it pulls me closer to God (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Setting Sail Means All Hands On Deck

The whole point of moving across the river and building this facility was so a people not yet born would praise the Lord. A people not yet born again. It's not for us it's for them. So, we have to go out. Jesus is still looking for followers who are willing to go to the other side, into our city. To the lost and the desperate. We're setting sail for the unreached in our city.

Now is the time to look beyond the four walls of the church, to honour the past by building the future, and see what God is calling us to as we assess and try to meet the needs of our local community, endeavor to pastor the city of Brisbane and release revivalists to the nations of the world.

God has called us to be a large regional church of significance in our city so that thousands more people would come to know and experience the sacrifice of love Jesus made for them. We too must sacrifice to enable this to happen. The time is right to bring life to our generation and the ones yet to come. We all have a significant part to play in the expansion of God's kingdom.

Discussion Questions

1. Who do you say Jesus is? What ramifications does this have on how you live your life?
2. How can you sacrifice your time, talent and treasure to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share so that you might lay up treasure for yourself as a firm foundation for the coming age?
3. In Mark 8:38 Jesus makes a very challenging statement. In what ways might we project to the world around us that we are ashamed of Jesus or to be known as one of His followers?
4. What will we be willing to sacrifice to make this God given vision a reality? Spend time this week asking the Lord in prayer, waiting and listening to His response.