

Week 5 | Sacrificing

Begin with prayer

Find a quiet place and stand still for a moment. Dedicate your journey today to God, asking him to speak to you as you read, pray and walk.

*Lord, grant that I may always allow myself to be guided by you,
always follow your plans and perfectly follow your holy will.
Grant that in all things great and small,
I may do whatever you require of me.
May your will be done in time and in eternity,
by me, in me and through me. Amen*

Teresa of Ávila



Psalm 51:15-17

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Of what value to anyone is a broken spirit, a broken heart? Our God is one who mends, heals, redeems!

Reflect

Broken objects can be fixed in such a way that they look better than before. There is a Japanese skill called *kintsugi*, which is used in mending broken porcelain. The artisan doesn't try to conceal the fact that a valuable dish has been broken – instead the pieces are joined with lacquer mixed with molten gold, silver or platinum. The break is not disguised but becomes part of the history of the object – and the more valuable for that.

A sacrificial life is one which offers to God all the trials as well as the joys, all the challenges as well as the triumphs – accepting life in all its fullness and praising God throughout.

And at its heart is the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, made once for all so that no further sacrifice is needed on our part in order to access forgiveness, love and eternal life.

Questions

What do you think is a 'broken heart'?

Has your heart ever been broken? How did the experience change you?

How might your experience enable you to come closer to God, and to help others?

Prayer

Forgiving God, help me to look inside my heart and see the brokenness. Heal those parts which prevent me from walking in your paths, and help me to share that healing with those I encounter on the Way. Amen

'God writes the gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees and flowers and clouds and stars.'

Martin Luther

Evidence that God's love extends throughout his creation is found in the entire Bible, rejoicing in the capacity of nature to reveal not only God's love for the world and those who inhabit it, but also God's endless creativity and imagination. Jesus constantly uses examples taken from nature to illustrate aspects of God's kingdom and our own behaviour within it. We are taught to appreciate landscapes and to learn from the details of flowers and the behaviour of birds.

As you journey today, let your senses be filled with wonder at your surroundings, so that you learn from and rejoice in the gifts of the natural world.

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