

J U N E 1 6 2 0 2 1



Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV)

Thought for today...

Sacrifice. That word likely elicits many thoughts and feelings in each of us, and I would hazard a guess that not many people are thrilled at the prospect of having to make a sacrifice. Whilst the word can be defined as: •to kill or destroy, additional definitions are •to endure the loss of, and •to give up (to yield) for the sake of other considerations, or to give up (something valued) for the sake of other considerations.

Many of us will be familiar with the story of Joseph in the Bible (Genesis 37-50), who was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, falsely accused and imprisoned because of the lies told of him by Potiphar's wife, and then subsequently released and elevated to a position second only to Pharaoh the King of Egypt.



Having ten of his brothers appear before him later during a time of famine, to beg for grain to feed their starving families, Joseph hatched a plan (setting up his youngest brother Benjamin to look like a thief), so that he might test his brothers characters, and see if they had matured in the many years since they had betrayed him, or whether they would be quick to betray their half brother - Joseph's full brother - Benjamin, as they had Joseph in the past.

Joseph was moved with compassion when his eldest brother Judah offered himself as a sacrifice in Benjamin's stead for any wrongdoing. He said: **"So please, my lord, let me stay here as a slave instead of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers."** Genesis 44:33 (New Living Translation).

John 15:13 tells us: **'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.'** (New International Version).

The author of the Book of Hebrews (13:15) gives us much to ponder concerning sacrifice: **'Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.'** Hebrews 13:15 (New King James Version).

And in the following verse: **'Do not forget to do good and to help one another, because these are the sacrifices that please God.'** Hebrews 13:16 (Good News Translation).

I may at times be tempted to give myself a pat on the back when helping others, until I take a closer look at the meaning of the word 'sacrifice': 'to give up (something valued) for the sake of other considerations'. This is just what God did when He sacrificed His only Son for the sake of considering the need for the world to be saved from sin, and Jesus, who considered the fact that no one else was worthy to pay the price, willingly sacrificed His life for ours on the cross at Calvary.



Sometimes, my surroundings or circumstances may cause me to feel like doing anything **but** offering praise, and it is then, in those very moments that my praise becomes a sacrifice. My desire is that rather than occasionally, my practice will be to continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God. How about you? Selah.