

RADICAL LIVING PT. 3- RADICAL SACRIFICE

Scripture used: Matthew 5:41-42, Matthew 16:24-25 (NLT)

OVERVIEW

We have been following the life of Matthew and the radical life that he chose to live after encountering Jesus. The reason why Matthew's story is so meaningful to us is because of the relatability of his life. He was like most people. While he may have had dreams and aspirations to be something greater, he ended up settling into the normal rhythms of life found in day to day busyness and comforts. But it was when Matthew encountered Jesus that he was called to live a "not normal" life, a life experienced by following Christ.

We in the same way so easily get caught up in living a "normal life", comfortable and content with day-to-day living. While we may have had dreams of living a life that makes a difference at some point, life happened. Our focus became our own needs and concerns. But Jesus challenged us to live a life that was counter-cultural to these norms. He challenged us to invest our lives in the things that God blesses: the poor, the humble, the pure (Matt 5:1-10). He challenged us to choose the ultimate form of sacrifice by taking up our cross (Matt 16:24-25), and to actually go the extra mile through giving our time and treasures sacrificially (Matt 5:41-42).

As we go through this series for our BE RICH campaign, we are reminded that our church is founded on the values of sacrifice: "We choose to give up things we love for things we love even more." Will you take the challenge to live a "not normal" life through radical sacrifice towards others?

KEY POINTS

The Big Idea: Following Jesus involves radical sacrifice

- Jesus followers are not normal! - While Matthew lived a very "normal life" of pursuing selfish day-to-day wants and looking out for only his needs, he always knew that something was missing. Rather than live for himself, through the sermon on the mount (Matt 5:1-10) he was challenged to serve someone other than himself. This was a radical sacrifice for that time, and still is today.
"Normal people" have an expectation when they encounter Christ followers. They expect to see someone who is NOT like themselves, someone who is "Not normal".
- The secret to living a life of meaning is that we are shaped to:
 - Give to others. - Did you know someone dies from hunger every 4 seconds? Christ called us to give to the poor. These are the homeless, the hungry.
 - Serve others. - We should not serve out of obligation. We should do it to live a life of Christ-likeness. We need to learn to make it a lifestyle to serve others.
 - Sacrifice for others. - We need to learn to go the extra step, the extra mile (Matt 5:41-42). When others ask for something, we should find the means to give beyond what they are asking. This is radical sacrifice!
- Steps towards a life of meaning (serving): - When we sacrifice, God changes us and changes others through us!
 - Just Start! - As overwhelming the number of those in need are, just start with the person right in front of you. Small steps lead big change!
 - Think about your SHAPE: **S**piritual gifts / **H**eart / **A**bilities / **P**ersonality / **E**xperiences in life.
 - Prepare to restart. - The best way for us to be disciples is for us to pour out our service to others.
 - Make a time commitment. - If you can't find a couple hours to serve others, maybe you are too busy?

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Have you settled into a "normal" life? What are areas God is calling for you to sacrifice for the purpose of serving others?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - What are some specific areas where God may be challenging you to not just do the minimum, but *go the extra mile*? THIS is radical sacrifice.
- 3) **DO** - We are in the SERVE portion of our BE RICH campaign. See next page for this weeks challenge:

*“Command those who are rich in this present world..... to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share”
- Timothy 6:17-18 (NIV)*

SEE THIS SPECIAL NOTE TO LIFE GROUP LEADERS FROM EVELYN POWERY:

“We recognize that there are needs this holiday season within our church community. As leaders, we encourage you to pray for God’s guidance to identify families or individuals within NBCC or in the community that need our help. Do they need groceries, toys, an overdue bill paid, etc? Please fill out the following form (https://mynbcc.ccbchurch.com/form_response.php?id=398) to identify the needs by Saturday, November 26. On the form, you can also indicate whether you and your team are able to meet needs as well. Once we have received all the needs, we will work with all Life Groups and ministry team leads to ensure the needs have been met. Share this information with your group so that they can all begin gathering supplies needed for the identified families. You might even organize a date when your group can come together and package/distribute supplies for individual families. We will leave it up to each group to lead the specifics of this project.

May God bless you as you bless others during this season! If you have any specific questions about the Be Rich holiday campaign, feel free to contact: Evelyn Powery, Director of Transforming Communities, epowery@nbccbayarea.com, (408) 239-3117”

>>> Even though the form isn’t due until around Thanksgiving -- do start thinking now about who your LG might be able to help! <<<

GIVE:

Did you know that if you earn \$33,000 per year, your income is considered to be in the top 1% in the world? We need to learn how to be rich with what we have been given.

Sunday 10/23 - If you are able, you are challenged to give \$39.95, which will go towards Cityteam, Columbia Middle School, and Project WeHOPE.

SERVE:

This is the week to focus especially on SERVING!

One of the greatest gifts we have is time. We have the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus by serving our communities in need! Sign up online or at church to serve with one of our 2016 Be Rich partners starting on OCT 30. See the bulletin inserts for more details. This is a GREAT thing to invite friends to participate in together with you!

LOVE:

In partnership with Mountain View Central Seventh-Day Adventist Church, we will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Second Harvest Food Bank. The challenge is for you to bring 3 lbs. of non perishable food (approx. 3-4 cans) on Sundays, November 13 and 20 in bins in the church lobby. Super-easy, but deeply impactful.