

Connections to Please God:

Read Hebrews 13:13-16

If you have had a chance to listen to Pastor Tim's message take a moment to do that this week. He speaks about living a life to please God by making; a sacrifice of suffering, a sacrifice of praise, and a sacrifice of a shared life.

1. As a Christian, how are living a life that is sacrificial, one that takes you into suffering and out of your comfort zone?

This is a personal question that some may wrestle with but allow it to get people to think. Some may disagree with the concept which is ok but turn back to the scripture and wrestle with the text.

2. If you are not living a life that takes you out of comfort and into suffering, why do you think that is? Is it because you don't think God wants you to? Is it because you don't want to? Is it because you are just too comfortable in the place where you are with God?

The goal is not guilt but transformation. But sometimes in order for God to get a hold of our lives we first must recognize how far we are from living lives in a way that pleases Him.

3. What do you think it means and how do you offer a "sacrifice of praise"? (Hebrews 13:15)

I really find it an interesting term, "sacrifice of praise". I never find praising God as a sacrifice but maybe it is because I often forget that praise goes way beyond my lips. Even though the verse speaks of the fruit of my lips, my heart, my hands, and my feet all become part of my praise. How do I serve and love God is what I should ask myself.

4. How are you living a sacrifice of a shared life?

Ask people to share

Take a few moments today to read each of the verses below and discuss what it instructs you to do as a Church Small Group in living a shared life together.

- **Philippians 2:4**

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

What this passage says to me about sharing my life with my small group:

I have a responsibility to look after the needs of other people God has put into my life. Jesus taught to love others as you love yourself. This is what is being instructed. Love is an action and I am to sacrifice sometime my own needs and desires to help my brother or sister. Small group

allows me to draw close and share life with other people so that I can know how and when to help.

- **Galatians 6:2**

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

What this passage says to me about sharing my life with my small group:

Small group gives me an opportunity to walk side by side with my brothers and sisters, praying for them, sharing hurts and struggles together.

- **Hebrews 3:12-14**

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.

What this passage says to me about sharing my life with my small group:

Part of being connected keeps me pure and walking with the Lord. This is hard to do alone. When we live isolated, lonely lives apart from the body of Christ we fall. But when we live connected, transparently and as real people with real struggles we disarm the enemy and we hold one another accountable to the life we have been called.

- **Hebrews 10:24-25**

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

What this passage says to me about sharing my life with my small group:

We must continue to press on and keep meeting together. We need each other. The battle is going to continue but we have victory in Christ and we need to remind one another and encourage one another so that God can use us as a sacrifice of praise.