

EVERYONE IS ON ONE OF TWO PATHS: LIFE OR DEATH

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: I AM GROWING
SERIES: GOD IS THE WAY - I AM RUNNING THE RACE

BIG TRUTH: EVERYONE IS ON ONE OF TWO PATHS: LIFE OR DEATH

Psalm 18:30; Proverbs 3:5-6; 1 Peter 2:2; Luke 13:24

BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 7:14

"For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."

BIG IDEAS

- The path of life is a path of selflessness.
- The path of life is made clear in the pursuit of God's Word.
- The path of life is difficult and painful.

BIBLE PASSAGE: MATTHEW 7:12-14

TRANSFORM - I AM GROWING

The Transform Year is an exploration of what it means to become a "new creation" in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17) In order for this to happen, we must first find our identity in Him. Many of us live in a consistent state of identity crises. We wrestle with questions like who am I, where do I belong, why do I exist? The answer to these questions is found in Jesus. Our prayer for this semester is that like the Apostle Paul we would be able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- God is the only way to life, hope, and peace.
- Everyone is on the path leading to life or the path leading to death.
- The path to life is hard and few find it, while the path to death is easy and many are on it.



Every student should feel...

- Fearful about the possibility of being on the road that leads to death.
- Hopeful in the reality that God has made the path of life accessible through Jesus.
- Encouraged that God's Word, people, and Spirit can help us run the race well.



Every student should strive to...

- Use the workouts consistently as a tool to help you study God's Word.
- Start using the ACTS model of daily prayer.
- Find a mentor who can consistently help you to run the race of life for God's glory.



Every student should ask God to...

- Give them a desire to pursue the path of life and reject the path of death.
- Help them to take the next step in obediently following Him this week.

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.

EVERYONE IS ON ONE OF TWO PATHS: LIFE OR DEATH

BIBLE VERSE: ROMANS 12:1

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

Believers should give their whole lives to God.

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice..."

- When our hearts are transformed by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, our lives are changed. When we live daily in the truth that God has shown us a great mercy in saving us, we will respond in worship to Him. Our response of worship is to willingly sacrifice for Him. Jesus calls us to give up our worldly lives for Him. Paul teaches us in this verse that our worship is to willingly give up ourselves for the cause of Christ.
- When we live as sacrifices for God, we die to our own desires and ideas of how our lives should be. We begin to see that God's mercies are new every morning and desire to serve God in whatever capacity He has designed for us.

Believers are made spiritually alive through Christ.

"By the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God..."

- Our lives are transformed by Christ when we have saving faith. Our hearts are made new and we are no longer spiritually dead. In our newness of life, we live daily as living sacrifices to Christ. This means that we actively kill the old nature inside of us and submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit. This is an active and daily process that involves intentionally seeking to set aside ourselves for Christ. We will not seek our own will, but the will of God in everything that we do.

A believer's worship is tied to the offering of their lives to Him.

"Which is your spiritual worship."

- God values our obedience to Him more than a physical sacrifice. In order for us to walk in obedience to Him, we have to surrender ourselves. Not just part of ourselves, but all of ourselves. When we obey God and live as sacrifices to Him, we will live worshiping Him. It is our heart of our worship that will lead us to willingly die to ourselves daily for Him.

EVERYONE IS ON ONE OF TWO
PATHS: LIFE OR DEATH**BIG IDEA #1: SACRIFICE IS AT THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL.¹****[THIS]**

Paul writes to the Roman believers of the sacrifice required to follow Jesus in his letter to them. The heart of the gospel is sacrifice. God gave up His only Son. Jesus gave up His life for the sake of the world. He died that we might have life and have it abundantly. God calls us to give up our lives by living completely and wholly for Him. He does not ask for part of our lives or only sections that we're comfortable giving up. Because of the gospel, we can sacrifice our lives in service to God. Because Christ gave up Himself for us, we can give up ourselves for Him. The sacrifice of ourselves is our worship. We are purchased through sacrifice to sacrifice. We live out the gospel when we willingly lay down our lives in service to Christ.

[THEREFORE]**How does Christ's sacrifice enable us to sacrifice ourselves?**

Hebrews 9:12 shows us that it is Jesus' sacrifice that secured our eternal redemption. This means that we receive eternal life through Jesus and our future in Him is secure. Because of Jesus we are able to sacrifice because we are redeemed. Philippians 2:6-8 shows us that Jesus set the example for sacrifice and it is through His sacrifice that we are able to do any good thing for God.

[THIS]

Paul writes in Romans 12:1 that we are to give ourselves to the cause of Christ, and when we do so, we are worshiping Him. When we live a life of worship, we will gladly give our lives to Him because of our love for Him. We are to be a living sacrifice for God. This means that we will live our life for Christ, submitting every area of our life to Him. We will not count the loss of our own desires and hopes as a real loss because we will sacrificially give up what we love on earth for the cause of Christ.

[THEREFORE]**What do you think it looks like to be a "living sacrifice" in everyday life?**

Luke 9:24 tells us that if we want to save our lives, we will give them up for Christ. Jesus taught that sacrificing ourselves for Him is necessary to truly follow Him. Ephesians 5:2 shows us that Jesus does not ask of any of us anything He did not do. We are called to follow His example in being a living sacrifice for Him.

What things, dreams, and desires do you find difficult to give up in order to follow Christ?

In Mark 10:45 we see that we are to sacrifice of our time and resources by serving others because Christ came to serve and not to be served. Sometimes it's difficult to give up our money and our time. Proverbs 3:9 reminds us that when we give first to God and His cause, we are honoring Him. 1 John 3:16 teaches us that true sacrifice is a willingness to love others so much that we'd lay our lives down for them. Sometimes this laying down of our life is a giving up of our own desires and agendas for the sake of serving others.

1. 1. Romans 12:1: We are called to sacrifice ourselves just as Christ sacrificed Himself.

EVERYONE IS ON ONE OF TWO
PATHS: LIFE OR DEATH**BIG IDEA #2: SACRIFICE IS A WILLINGNESS TO LAY DOWN THE THINGS WE VALUE FOR SOMEONE MORE VALUABLE.²****[THIS]**

When we worship God, we willingly sacrifice for Him. Our sacrifice is not done out of duty, but out of love. When we truly know Him and are living for Him, we will gladly give up whatever is necessary in order to fully serve Him. This type of sacrifice is a willingness to give up our ideas, our dreams, our opinions, and all the things we have here on earth. We willingly lay down the things we value for Jesus and His cause. This is giving ourselves completely to Him. We do not think of our own comforts and dreams, but instead value Christ and His kingdom.

[THEREFORE]

Read Romans 12:1. Why is willingly choosing to lay down the things we value most an act of worship to God?

Matthew 13:44-46 compares the kingdom of heaven to great treasure that a person would give up everything for. When we value God and His kingdom over anything else, we worship Him by giving those earthly things up. In Philippians 3:7-9, Paul discusses the attitude of the heart we have when we value God over anything else. We do not care that we lose earthly things for the sake of Christ.

What stands in the way of you giving up the things you love most to follow Jesus?

James 1:1-4 teaches us that our hearts lead us to love the things of this world and the things that our earthly passions drive us to over God. Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that our battle is spiritual and it is the works of evil and our own sinful hearts that hinder us from being a living sacrifice for Christ.

[THIS]

When we sacrifice for God, we do it because we value Him and His purposes more than our own. Just as Christ freely gave up His position in Heaven to sacrifice Himself on the cross for us, when we sacrifice the things we love and value, we are showing we value God more. This sacrifice is our worship of God. It reveals our hearts are completely His. It also reveals we know and understand that God is more valuable and our relationship with Him is greater than anything else we have or could ever attain.

[THEREFORE]

What do you personally need to give up in order to love God most?

Genesis 4:1-8 gives us the story of Cain and Abel. Both brothers offered sacrifices to God, yet only Abel's was accepted. Abel understood the value of God and he willingly gave up his very best for Him. Cain never understood that God is more valuable and he suffered for it. 1 Peter 1:14-15 reminds us of the importance and necessity of giving up our former way of sinful life and following Christ. In order to truly sacrifice for Christ, we must give up ourselves completely and submit to His leading.

2. Romans 12:1: Christ died for us and therefore, we are to give up our lives for Him.

EVERYONE IS ON ONE OF TWO
PATHS: LIFE OR DEATH**BIG IDEA #3: SACRIFICE IS THE ACT OF LEVERAGING ONE'S LIFE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE GOOD OF OTHERS, EVEN AT GREAT COST TO OURSELVES.³****[THIS]**

Sacrifice means intentionally using our lives for God's purposes. God's purpose is to further His kingdom and we are called to be a part of that. This type of sacrifice requires intentional living. When we live as a living sacrifice to God, we intentionally put ourselves in places and around people to be used by God for His glory. We do not consider our own desires or plans, but instead, live fully for Him. Sacrifice means using our spiritual gifts for God. When we use the spiritual gifts that God has given us for His body of believers, we are living as a sacrifice to Him. He gives us those gifts for the church, and we can set aside our own agendas and sacrifice for Him by using them in the best way for His body. We can teach even if we are afraid to teach. We can serve even if we don't want to, or we can be generous even if we don't feel generous.

[THEREFORE]

What does it look like for Jesus followers to leverage their lives for God's glory? How are you personally trying to do this?

1 Corinthians 10:31 teaches us that whatever we do should be done for the glory of God. Galatians 6:9 shows us that everything we do is for God and we should not grow weary in doing it. When we understand this, we use our lives and the positions we have for the glory of God and not for ourselves. When we seek to live for His glory we will use our time, talent, and money for Him.

What does it look like for Jesus followers to use their spiritual gifts sacrificially for the body? How are you personally trying to do this?

Romans 12:6-8 teaches us that we should practice our spiritual gifts joyfully and with zeal. When we do this, we are living sacrificially for God because we will not always feel like using our spiritual gifts. Romans 12:9-21 also teaches us that we live sacrificially and use our gifts for God when we obey His Word and live submitted to Him.

[THIS]

Living intentionally comes with a cost. It means we use our talents and treasure for God. We cannot buy into the world's idea of happiness or joy and live intentionally for God. When we use our talents and treasure for God, it will cost us our time, our energy, and at times some relationships. Being willing to go where we know no one, to give up our time, to use our talents, and our money for God is living sacrificially. It means dying to yourself every day, setting aside any preconceived ideas you had about your life for the sake of the gospel going into the world. It means keeping God's purpose as the center of your life and when you do this, your heart will align with God's heart. Your sacrifice will not feel like sacrifice, but instead like worship.

[THEREFORE]

How have you seen someone use his or her talents for God's glory as an act of worship?

Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are created as God's handiwork and we are created for good works. He has given us each talents that we are to use for His glory. We see this truth play out in Exodus 31:3-5 in the building of the temple. Matthew 19:21 teaches us that our wealth is to be used for God's purposes. When we live intentionally for Him, we will give of our talents and our treasure.

3. Romans 12: Christ calls us to be his ministers of reconciliation and to take the gospel to the world.