



JESUS' VALOR

Romans tells us that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory (perfection) of God and that the wages of our sin is death. There is no chance that we could ever pay the price to purchase our freedom. We could never satisfy the judgment rendered against us. Our only hope is a Savior with the power, the authority and the heart to save us.

See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.

MATTHEW 20:18-19 (ESV)

OUR DEVOTIONAL

Valor is “strength of mind or spirit that enables a person to encounter danger with firmness: personal bravery” (Merriam-Webster).

We often celebrate acts of valor. Firefighters run into burning buildings; police officers run toward danger and violence to protect our neighborhoods; and our military members do the same for our nation. Do you remember the iconic images of 9/11 of the men and women who served dirty, exhausted and wounded? Which way were they heading? Into the fight, the crisis, the moment.

We admire people who put themselves on the line, who risk their lives and health for the greater good. People with jobs like these know in the back of their minds that they *could* get hurt or die. Any given day, they *might* not come home to their families. But it is exceedingly rare that a person will knowingly and intentionally sacrifice their life for another's.

This is exactly what Jesus did. He knew what our redemption was going to cost Him.

Really look at the words of Jesus here, “...going up to Jerusalem...Son of Man (Jesus) will be delivered...they will condemn him to death...mocked and flogged and crucified.” Jesus, knowing the price, made a clear and coherent decision to go into harm's way, to pay the price, to take the punishment—for you individually, and for me individually.

Jesus' humanity didn't want to do it. He asked God to figure out another way (Mark 14:36; Luke 22:43). It was going to bring him unimaginable pain, both physically and emotionally (betrayal and abandonment by loved ones). But fear of suffering and pain did not win out. His submission to the Father and His love for us did.

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13). Jesus acted with astounding valor as a human being, knowing the cost, as He surrendered and offered up His life as payment for me, for you, for us.

Jesus knew the cost and yet, for the joy of redeeming us individually and together, went to the cross. He paid the price, knowing that if He did that the victory would be won, and on the third day He would rise again. He paid the price, knowing that by His act of valor that He would break the authority of the enemy over us, taking the keys of death and hell from him.

Looking forward to Easter, let’s celebrate the spiritual breakout Jesus has purchased for us through his life, death and resurrection.

FAMILY MOMENT

Chose a chore or project that can be completed by the entire family, one that is not particularly pleasant but needs to be accomplished. When my children were younger, we had peach trees in the yard that would drop overripe peaches on the lawn. Left on the ground they would draw bee’s, insects, rodents and stink. The solution? We all had to put on yard gloves and pick up the slimy, buggy and pungent fruit.

Pick an activity, a treat or reward the family really wants to share together—a night at the drive-in, special day trip, a special dessert, etc.

When the task is completed, load up and go have a great time together.

Talk about how in today’s scripture, Jesus described the job in front of Him. He made a clear decision, and nothing was going to stop Him from completing the task. The reward? The resurrection, the freeing of His people from the slavery of sin and death.

PRAYER & REFLECTION

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you have taken the safe way out of something in life when you could have served Him and others by standing in your integrity.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you and/or your family connect with the final days of Jesus emotionally as well as spiritually. Ask Him to help you develop your heart of gratitude.
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you connect with the reality of the Resurrection! *Heavenly Father help me be humble and exceedingly grateful that my life is redeemed, I am set free from slavery to hurts, habits, addictions and destructive behaviors; because Jesus died to set me free.*
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you live a life worthy of the sacrifice made for you.