

Making Sacrifices

Scripture: Hebrews 9:23-28 (NIV)

Date: March 9, 2021

Message: *But he has appeared once for all at the culmination at the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgement, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many;*

Hebrews 9:26b-28a

In our society today, we struggle with the idea of sacrifices. We think passing up a meal or giving some clothes to the homeless is a sacrifice. It is important that we are occasionally reminded what a sacrifice looks like.

Several years ago, I was an assistant football coach for a team that had strict rules about being late for practice. The head coach had reputation for toughness and the veteran players knew and appreciated it. They always looked forward for a young player to be the first tardy.

This particular year it happened a couple of weeks into practice. The punishment was for the guilty player to bear crawl down the entire field and back. A bear crawl (walking on hands and toes) is not easy especially in full football equipment in August heat. All other players would shed their helmets and shoulder pads and watch from the shade.

The young player took his position by the goal posts and prepared for his journey. To the amazement of all gathered, a senior captain got down beside him. This senior was our hardest worker but was very soft spoken. You only heard the occasional “yes sir” or “no sir” from him. Over the next several minutes you could see the two slowly moving up and back down the field. It was apparent the senior was encouraging the younger player all the way especially during the last tough yards.

When they had finished, the team rushed to the senior to ask why would he do something like that. He gave a powerful answer, “None of my team goes alone.” For the rest of the year, he continued this practice with anyone who was guilty of being late.

Jesus made it very clear that we would never have to *go it alone*. His death on the cross meant that we are covered in the sacrifice and the grace assures us that we can be united with the father for all eternity.

Prayer: *Dear Jesus, as we move through this Lenten season may we not polish the cross so that we forget the horrible torture that you endured. Thank you for your sacrifices and the gift of grace that gives us salvation. May we offer ourselves in powerful ways to bring others to Christ. Amen.*

Bill Elkins
Hamlin United Methodist Church
Western District
billelkins@hotmail.com
Liturgist, Lay Leader, Chair PPRC, Lay Member to Annual Conference