

Tour 8 Themes

Tour 8 - Engagement - The Royal Sacrifice

Questions for Discussion

1. **Has this Tour added anything to your understanding of the sacrifice Jesus made on your behalf? If so, how does this enhanced understanding shape your ideas about what it means to seek your neighbor's true good (shalom) with a "steadfast, sacrificial zeal?"** (Each participant will have a different response to this question. Here's the key idea: Jesus' example must be allowed to impact our understanding of His "New Commandment:" "Love one another as I have loved you;" or, as John expresses it in his first epistle, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:11). Like Jesus, we should be willing to lay down our lives [or forfeit our scripts] for others.)
2. **Read Luke 7:36-47. What do we know about the woman who anointed Jesus' feet? What could have compelled her to make an appearance in the house of Simon the Pharisee? Why do you think Jesus ignored her ministrations until He had first spoken to Simon? Why did He continue to address Simon even after turning to look at the woman?** (All we know about the woman is that she was a "sinner": the kind of person who wouldn't normally go anywhere near the house of a Pharisee. To risk such a bold venture she must have had very strong convictions on two points: 1] the depth of her own desperate need for forgiveness, and 2] Jesus' ability and willingness to grant it. It was not the woman, then, who had to be told that there's a connection between forgiveness and love. She already knew it! Simon, on the other hand, was laboring under a misconception that he was above such things. That's why Christ addressed the "object lesson" to him.)
3. **In Revelation 13:8 John refers to Christ as "the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world" (see also Revelation 5:6). What do you think this means? How does the concept of God's eternity – the fact that He lives outside of time – impact your perception of Christ's sufferings and the meaning of His sacrifice on the cross?** (If this translation of the Greek is correct – and it appears to be – it adds yet another layer of incomprehensible wonder to Dr. Tackett's assertion that the sufferings of Jesus and the Son's separation from the Father have to be viewed within the context of the eternity of God. As C. S. Lewis's illustration makes clear – his picture of a "dash" in the middle of an endless piece of paper – eternity stretches out in all directions. It's one thing to affirm that Jesus will bear the wounds He received on Golgotha until the end of time. It's quite another to reflect that, in some way we can't comprehend, He also bore them before the world began. That's a truly mind-boggling concept.)
4. **In Tour 6, Kent and Rosaria Butterfield shared the story of their relationship with a neighbor named Hank. Do you see any connections between that story and the message of this Tour? To what extent should we watch out for our own safety while engaging with the people who live around us? Have you ever had to sacrifice something for the good of another person?** (Kent and Rosaria's love for Hank proved to be sacrificial — on a couple of different fronts. In the first place, it brought them – and their kids – into close contact with a person most of us would regard as a dangerous criminal. In the second place, it earned them the censure and criticism of the rest of their neighbors, who felt they'd endangered everyone by offering friendship and affirmation to a meth dealer. In the end, their actions benefited

everyone: not only did they lead to Hank's salvation, but they also created new opportunities for the Butterfields to share God's love with a wider group. Still, it was an awkward situation while it lasted. Does this mean that we don't consider personal safety when we're reaching out to others? Of course not; this is just one of many instances in which Wisdom enters into the picture. But it does suggest that we need to be willing to take risks when the circumstances call for it.)

5. **In Ephesians 3:18 and 19 Paul prays that we “may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God” (NASB). How do you understand this prayer in light of the concepts presented in this Tour? Is it possible to know something that “surpasses knowledge?” How might such knowledge – even a tiny bit of it – impact the way we go about connecting with other people?** (No, we can't “know the unknowable.” But we can sense the weight of it. It can bring us face to face with the paltriness of our limited experience of reality. The full meaning and magnitude of Jesus' sacrifice for us is something we can't possibly wrap our brains around. And yet that in itself is enough to show us just how deeply we stand in His debt and just how far we might need to go in our attempts to convey His love to others.)
6. **What is God showing you specifically through this tour?**