

Power of Myth

Lesson 7: Sacrifice

11.14.2021

Objectives: Examine sacrifice as represented in modern myths, and reflect on our own willingness to sacrifice.

Materials: Laptop/Youtube access, lesson attachments, colored pencils.

Time allotments: Suggested for 50 minute class, followed by 20 minute closing service (end class close to 9:50/11:50 to begin chapel by 9:55/11:55).

1. Nametags and Graffiti Wall (5 minutes before class begins)

- Make nametags using blank paper, markers, and holders. Youth can create their own unique but LEGIBLE nametag. Make it a regular practice to wear nametags.
- “Graffiti Wall” questions: Write the following on whiteboard. Invite youth as they arrive to grab a marker and weigh in with their responses:
 - ▶ Who is someone that makes sacrifices in a way you look up to? (E.g. a historical figure, family/friend, prominent community member)
 - ▶ What is the greatest sacrifice you have ever made?
- Teachers complete attendance sheets.

2. Silly Fun: “One Minute, Please!” (5 minutes max)

Pair youth up randomly. Each taking turns, the aim of the game is to talk for one minute straight on a given subject. **Youth must try to speak non-stop for the full duration of their minute!** Teacher announces the topic, and first person begins speaking for one minute on that topic. Teacher calls time, and announces new topic for the second person to speak. Continue alternating as time permits.

[Teachers choose subjects to stimulate the imagination and which may be amusing. Topics might include: Whether a hotdog is a sandwich... Which animals would be rudest if they could talk... 10 things you can do with Ramen noodles... How many chickens it would take to take down an elephant... 10 things that everyone looks silly doing..... Inanimate objects you would eliminate from existence if you could... If all the States in the USA were represented by food, what food each state would be.]

3. Chalice Lighting: Light the chalice, saying these words together: “We light this chalice as a symbol of our faith; the light of truth and the warmth of love.”

Teacher reads: (from labor leader and civil rights activist, Cesar Chavez)

“If you’re outraged at conditions, then you can’t possibly be free or happy until you devote all your time to changing them... But you can’t change anything if you want to hold onto a good job, a good way of life, and avoid sacrifice.”

4. Viewing Clips of Sacrifice (25 minutes)

Before viewing any of the movie clips, ask youth to help define “sacrifice.”

- Two helpful qualifiers that define the sort of sacrifice we are talking about with myths are (1) acts of **selflessness** and (2) done at **great personal risk**.

First Clip: Harry and his friends have just fought off the Death Eaters who were trying to get their hands on a prophecy made about Harry and Voldemort.

Order of the Phoenix: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8x_ml8-boo (4:44 min)

Discussion questions:

- Wow! A lot of sacrifices were made or offered up in this clip! Each character must have had different (even if similar) reasons for taking such amazing risks. Pick a character, what drove their sacrifice?
- Do you think it’s a sacrifice if a character is forced or bullied into taking life-threatening risks?

Second Clip: Earlier in the story, Harry is on trial for underage use of magic in the presence of a Muggle. He had used the *Patronus* charm to fight off Dementors that attacked Dudley and Harry at the start of the film. He has been told by an owl post that he is to be expelled from Hogwarts and must stand trial.

Order of the Phoenix: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQMvX5Jcd4A> (4:31 min)

Discussion questions:

- What is the sacrifice made in this clip?
- Why has Dumbledore risked his position as headmaster and his reputation with the Ministry of Magic for this trial?
- How does this affect Harry and Dumbledore’s relationship?
- At the end of the film, Harry repeats something Dumbledore told him: “We have something Voldemort doesn’t have. We have something to fight for.” How do you think that would affect the choices of those either for or against Voldemort in making sacrifices?
- Why do you think sacrifice is of central importance to the Harry Potter world and story arc?
- What are some examples from other movies or literature in which characters make sacrifices?

5. Martin Luther King Jr. on Sacrifice (10 minutes)

Teacher introduces: The day before Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, he delivered his last speech to a crowd of sanitation workers on strike in Memphis, TN. In that speech, he looked to the well-known Parable of the Good Samaritan.

- Invite a youth volunteer to read aloud the attached parable of the Good Samaritan.

Discussion questions: In that final speech, Martin Luther King, Jr. makes a stunning observation about the parable: *“I imagine that the first question the priest and Levite asked was: ‘If I stop to help this man, what will happen to **me**?’ But by the very nature of his concern, the good Samaritan reversed the question: ‘If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to **him**?’”*

- What do you think Martin Luther King, Jr. is saying about the nature of sacrifice?
- What moves someone to risk sacrificing themselves for another?

6. Personal reflection: “I Would Sacrifice” (10 minutes)

- Pass out handful of colored pencils and “I Would Sacrifice” handouts, and ask youth to consider their own willingness to make sacrifices along their life journey.
- Assign each sacrifice (on the left) a color and draw as many lines to any “greater goods” (on the right) for which they would give things up. If there is anything they would not ever sacrifice, or any “greater good” that simply does not apply for them, have them cross it out.
- Give youth 5 minutes to reflect and complete, then ask them to share in pairs (perhaps choose same pairs as for silly fun).

7. Say goodbye until next time: Extinguish the chalice, saying together: *“May the light of truth and the warmth of love go with us in our hearts.”*

8. Help clean up classroom before leaving: Please keep regular practice of readying classroom for the next class.

- leave lesson plan and all materials organized
- wipe the whiteboard clean
- tables and chairs neatly returned
- nametags collected in Ziploc bag
- leave any comments for RE staff on attendance sheets

Viewing clips, in order of sequence:

- *Order of the Phoenix*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8x_ml8-boo (4:44 min)
- *Order of the Phoenix*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQMvX5Jcd4A> (4:31 min)