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The Good Shepherd lays down his life. . .

SCRIPTURES:

Genesis 3:7-10, 21
Genesis 44:30-34
John 10:14-18
John 15:9-13

INTRODUCTION:

Share about a time when someone sacrificed for you.

SERMON SUMMARY:

The first sacrifice occurred when Adam and Eve realized they were naked. **Read Genesis 3:7-10, 21.** This was the first time an innocent animal had to die for the sake of a human. **If Adam and Eve watched God make these clothes, what would they have seen? What might they have thought or felt?**

Throughout the Biblical narrative, we see examples of sacrifice. First, an animal takes the place of the human as in the story of Abraham and Isaac. Then, we see humanity choose to sacrifice themselves. For example, Judah responded when he realized his brother was going to be kept in Egypt. **Read Genesis 44: 30-34. Why was this self-sacrificing act so powerful?**

Judah foreshadowed the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus. **Read John 10:14-18. How was Jesus' version of leadership and love so different than the world's? (Consider that he led during the Roman Empire.)**

REFLECTION: Emerson reflects, "Self-sacrifice is the real miracle out of which all other miracles grow." **If this is true, why is it so difficult to sacrifice for others?**

APPLICATION:

Read John 15:9-13. Over and over, Jesus invites his followers to rule in a different way—through sacrifice. **What can you do this week to move toward a self-sacrificing way of Kingdom living?**

Is there a specific situation God is calling you to love by laying down your life?

ASSIGNMENT: Read Romans 12 this week. Reflect on how Paul exhorts us to love those around us, sacrificing in many different ways. Pray that God would help you trust Him as you put others first.