

The Gift of Sacrifice—Easter

Ruth Dollin
Women's Ministries Resources— 2010 (Aus. East Territory)

Preparation:

Two or three weeks before Easter suggest to ladies that they think of something they could sacrifice— e.g. food, time (spend time in prayer) etc.



Resources: “Google”- The Period of Lent on internet for information.

Refreshments: Hot Cross Buns

Décor:

Set up around the room small tables with different reminders of Easter. Ladies can have an opportunity to reflect on the significance of the season.

For example:

- Red table cloth on each table
- Pictures of different aspects of Easter (listed below)
- Words on card (as listed below)
- Props (as listed below)
- Candle (lit)

Picture	Prop	Words on Card
Palm Sunday	Palm branch	HOSANNA
Jesus before Pilate		CONDEMNED
Jesus praying in the garden	Praying hands	SURRENDER
Judas betrays Jesus	Silver coins	BETRAYED
The Crucifixion	Wooden cross, crown of thorns, 3 nails	SACRIFICE
The empty tomb	White cloth	HE IS RISEN

Note: Next to The Crucifixion set up a table with basket, pens, and paper.

Opportunity is given for ladies to write on paper something to lay at the foot of the cross and leave there.

Play Easter meditation music quietly in the background and allow time for ladies to spend time at each table and reflect on each aspect of the Easter period.

Song Suggestions: *I come to the garden alone*
When I survey the wondrous cross
From Heaven You Came—The Servant King

Sharing: What aspect of Easter holds the most significance for the ladies.

Devotional:

“Sacrifice” - Oxford Dictionary: Giving up of a valued thing for the sake of another, that is more worthy or more important.

Christ’s offering of Himself in the crucifixion.

Easter is a significant time of the year for the Christian.

There are many aspects to consider— none more important than the other.

The example of Christ’s sacrifice and his obedience to the will of the Father, gives us an opportunity to once again examine our personal response and look for opportunities to honour Christ and his gift to us.

Scriptures:

Mark 8:31 AMP

Jesus told his disciples that it was necessary for Him to suffer many things.

What an example of obedience and courage. The fact that he was aware and still continued the journey to the cross says much to us about his absolute confidence in God’s plan and purpose.

Luke 22: 39-42 AMP

Jesus struggled with the reality of going to the cross. This says much about his humanity and that he knows about our struggles.

Matt. 27: 31-54 AMP

When they had finished making sport of him they stripped him of his robe and led him to be crucified.

We will never comprehend how Jesus must have felt to be treated so cruelly and yet we today are still able to experience the gift of salvation and assurance of a relationship with Him. What a gift!

Illustration:

The story is told of a man who worked on a drawbridge. The bridge would be drawn so that the ships could pass underneath; the bridge would be put back in place so that the trains could safely pass across the river. One day just before a train was scheduled to arrive, the worker noticed that his son was playing around the huge gears and that his clothing had actually become caught in the gears. The man quickly had to make a choice: He could save his son which would mean that scores of people would plunge to their death as the train fell into the river below.

His other option would be to save the train which would mean that his son would be mauled and crushed and killed in the huge gears. Out of love for the people on the train the man decided to sacrifice his son whom he greatly loved.

This story is just a human illustration, but perhaps in a small way it helps us to appreciate what God did for us in “not sparing His Son” Romans 8:32. (*Editor’s note: We must continually be aware that Jesus’ sacrifice was not the tragic result of unexpected events and God’s response was not that of a father’s panicked response to the situation of sin; Acts 2: 22-23 tells us that it was the result of “God’s set purpose and foreknowledge.”*)

This story is portrayed in a short video clip on You Tube: “*Most-The Bridge*”

Conclude by giving ladies a further opportunity to reflect around the different memories of Easter set up around the room.

Play the recorded song “*Above All*” by Michael Smith.

