Chapter 7, GOD IS SELF-SACRIFICING

Our Holy God Died for Us

"God is Self-Sacrificing" is a powerful chapter. My prayer is that your going through this lesson on your own will be a rewarding experience. Our class will not meet this coming Sunday, November 8.

Early this week, read the chapter about why God had to die on a cross. Give yourself the following days to do the soul training exercise, reading the Gospel of John, either on your own or with one or more friends. The Gospel of John gives the reader the account of our Holy God dying for us.

Gospel of John has been attributed to John the Apostle, one of Jesus' twelve disciples. He was a fisherman and is widely believed to be the unnamed second disciple in the encounter when Jesus said in John 1:39 "Come and you will see". This Gospel is different from Matthew, Mark, and Luke. More than recounting events, John emphasizes who Jesus is—the Son of God—and how believing in Him brings eternal life. John explains his purpose in John 20:31: that readers may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and have life in His Name.

Select a time and a space each day to read several chapters of the Gospel so when you finish, you can easily return to your other scheduled tasks. As you read, many questions will come to your mind about specific words or situations. Don't interrupt your reading to find answers just now. Jot them down and go back to them when you have completed the entire book. Then take the time to do your research questions.

Do slow down when a word or phrase grabs your attention. Many passages in John lend themselves to the practice of lectio divina, inviting us to slow down, listen to God's Word, and allow it to shape our hearts and lives. There are four simple steps:

READ	Listen, and notice the word or phrase that stands out.
REFLECT	Allow silence. What might God be showing me through this word or phrase?
RESPOND	Pray about it. How might I respond?
REST	Simply be in God's presence

Here are eight passages where you may desire to practice lectio divina, slowing down and letting it sink in:

John 1:35-39	Responding to Jesus' invitation
John 3:16-17	Receiving God's love
John 4:7-14	Jesus meeting our deepest needs
John 10:11-15	Knowing the Good Shepherd
John 13:1-17	Loving through humble service
John 14:1-6	Trusting Jesus when life is uncertain
John 15:1-11	Remaining connected to Jesus
John 21:15-16	Receiving forgiveness and beginning again.

(*Continued on next page)*

Lectio Divina is not a four-step formula for producing a spiritual experience but a way of approaching scripture, trusting God to lead us to understanding His holiness.

God's love, planted and nurtured in our hearts, is like a "tiny mustard seed that grows over time into a large plant". May God grow us in His faith, hope, and love.

Selah