

FACING THE GIANTS

STUDY SERIES



“Wholehearted”

Clip No. 1 ... Study by Stephen Kendrick



THE BIG QUESTION:

What is the value of giving your best? Are you wholehearted?

SCENE SET-UP:

Defensive captain Brock Kelley, the Eagles most influential leader, expresses a defeatist attitude. Coach Grant Taylor challenges Brock to do the Death Crawl drill, and to give it his absolute best. Brock is blindfolded and demonstrates wholeheartedness for the first time.

SCENE LENGTH:

5 minutes

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

Wholeheartedness. Leadership. Endurance. Apathy. Influence.

BACKGROUND INFO:

The Shiloh Eagles football team has not had a winning season in six years. As the new season begins, the Eagles lose the first three games due to their half-heartedness and apathy. Coach Grant Taylor challenges the players to give God their best effort ... on and off the field.

KEY STUDY SCRIPTURES: Colossians 3:23-24; Proverbs 3:5-6; Jeremiah 29:13-14

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What factors made the difference in Brock going farther than he thought he could during the Death Crawl? How well do you think you'd do in a Death Crawl?
2. Why is it important to do something with all of your heart? Are there certain things in your world that you tend to do half-heartedly?
3. How can you tell if someone is wholeheartedly giving their best? What are some examples of people you know who do this regularly?
4. Why don't we see more people put their whole hearts into their endeavors? What does God think about half-heartedness? (see Malachi 1:6-14)
5. Why does one person's passion and wholeheartedness influence others? (see John 12:1-8)
6. What does Colossians 3:23 teach us about wholeheartedness?

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)

TACKLING THE BIG QUESTION: So, what is the value of giving things your best effort? Are you wholehearted in your endeavors?

Half-heartedness and apathy produce bad attitudes and mediocre results. When we don't respect our own commitment level, others will not either. God calls His children to be wholehearted and committed to excellence. When we do our best for God, we maximize our influence on others, we produce quality work, and we yield a reward back from God. As believers, we need to stop the apathy. Live and love God with all your heart.



FACING THE GIANTS

STUDY SERIES

TAKING IT FURTHER

“WHOLEHEARTED”

FURTHER STUDY

Both the Old Testament and New Testament challenge us to be people who give God our best. Many times, God instructs, commands, and challenges us to be wholehearted in our obedience and worship of Him. Look at these examples:

- We will find God if we search for Him with all our hearts and souls. (Deuteronomy 4:29)
- We are to love the Lord our God with all our hearts. (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)
- God requires us to fear Him, love Him, and serve Him with all our hearts. (Deuteronomy 10:12)
- God tests us to find out if we love Him with all our hearts. (Deuteronomy 13:3)
- We are to return to God and obey Him with all our hearts. (Deuteronomy 30:2)
- God can change our hearts so that we can love Him with all our hearts. (Deuteronomy 30:6)
- We are to trust God with all our hearts. (Proverbs 3:5)
- We are to seek God with all our hearts. (Jeremiah 29:13)
- We are to wholeheartedly repent of sin in our lives. (Joel 2:11-14)
- We are to shout for joy to the Lord and rejoice with all our hearts. (Zephaniah 3:14)

READ JOHN 12:1-8

One of the greatest New Testament demonstrations of wholehearted love for Jesus was when he was anointed with oil in the city of Bethany. A few days before Jesus was crucified, he was visiting the home of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. Mary found her treasured jar of expensive spikenard oil perfume, broke the jar, poured it on Jesus' feet, and then wiped his feet with her hair.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is your most prized possession in the world? How hard would it be to give it up? Do you think you could give it up in order to worship Jesus?
- Have you been giving Jesus your first and best ... or your leftovers? (see Proverbs 3:9-10) What are some areas of your life that have lacked passion and sacrifice?
- Why do you think that is? What can you do to become wholehearted in these endeavors?
- When you look at your overall life, what steps can you take to live more wholeheartedly? (*Consider the Old Testament instructions above.*)

UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE

The sacrifice that Mary made was beautiful to Jesus and significant for us because of her wholehearted devotion. Spikenard was extremely expensive perfume and the jar that Mary owned was worth a year's wages (Mark 14:5). Mary could have easily poured a few drops on Jesus, but she chose to break the jar and completely pour it out on His feet.

Because she broke the jar ...

- The entire house was filled with the fragrance of her worship
- All the worth of her treasure was expended on Jesus in honor of Him
- There was no saving of perfume for her to use on herself later
- Others around her were astonished and surprised by her sacrifice

In 1 Corinthians 11:15, we read that a woman's hair brings her glory. Because of her wholehearted love for Jesus, Mary took what brought her glory and used it in worship to bring Him glory. Because her worship was wholehearted, Jesus said that her story would be told around the world (Mark 14:9). Would God consider your worship beautiful, sacrificial, loving, wholehearted ... and worth talking about to others?

I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonders. I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High. Psalm 9:1-2 (NASB)