



# Links Players

## PEOPLE WHO HELP 7: SACRIFICE

*“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (John 15:13, NIV)*

LATE LAST YEAR, when I interviewed Bubba Watson’s caddie Ted Scott for the Links Players magazine, we talked about shoes. Teddy was thinking he might need some new ones, the kind that would keep him in the game for a few more years. Finding shoes isn’t easy, he said, “when you wear size 13 and your feet are about one inch wide, like mine.”

I don’t carry a 50-pound tour bag, but I do a lot of walking, on and off the golf course. I could almost feel his pain.

When it comes to helping others, we can’t rule out the possibility of pain. Sometimes making things better for those who need our help is going to hurt us. And the pain may not be only physical. We’ll find ourselves carrying emotional weight, too. And if we’re really helping people at the core of their lives, we may run up against the spiritual attacks of the enemy. In other words, if you’re going to help others, you’ll have to make some sacrifices.

When Jesus told his disciples that the greatest love is to lay down one’s life for others, he knew what was ahead for himself. The cross. For the sake of their sin and all of ours, too, Jesus submitted himself to the will of the Father, the false accusations of the religious leaders, and the most dreadful sentence meted out by the Roman government.

Is this what Jesus wants of us? Are we to literally die for others? Perhaps. The history of the Christian faith includes countless martyrs. They may not have been put to death because of their doctrine, but prompted by their faith they acted to help others, including the diseased and destitute—and the price they paid was a terminal illness of their own or a criminal hand turned against them.

This is not the common plight. When Jesus said that we are to “take up [our] cross daily,” he did not mean we would die physically day after day. But we are to be prepared to make a sacrifice of our own plans and pleasures when the cry for help winds its way into our ears.

We can’t meet every need, and we can never pretend to be the Messiah. But we can act in his name when the helpless stand before us. We can be his people who help.

**Opening questions** How do you go about finding a good pair of shoes, whether for golf or the street? • When have you been witness to someone making a significant sacrifice to help someone else?

**READING** Matthew 20:26-28; Matthew 25:37-40

### The greatest (Matthew 20)

Who did Jesus say would be “great” and “first”? Does behaving like this still have a place in our culture? How about where you live and work?

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### Helping Jesus (Matthew 25)

We are again reminded here that helping others is akin to helping Jesus. What others are listed in the group Jesus mentioned? What kinds of sacrifices would you need to make in order to help such people? What makes you willing or resistant to doing this?

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### Onward from here

Now at the end of this series of lessons on helping others, in what specific ways are you prompted to do so? How will you need to be intentional in order to make this happen?

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Written by Jeff Hopper ©2018 Links Players International. An introductory video for this Bible study is available here: <https://youtu.be/10hzss0IK14>.