

**WEEK #7 – THE ROAD TO DISCOVERY LEADS TO TRANSFORMATION**  
**February 16-22, 2009**

**MONDAY – February 16<sup>th</sup>**

**CENTERING BREATH PRAYER: Thank you...for your sacrifice.**

*Mighty Savior, I come to you today in thanksgiving for the sacrifice you made for me. As the Epiphany journey is coming to a close and the Lenten season is nearing, I thank you once again for all that you have done for me. Help me to carry your love to those around me and let everyone know of your sacrifice. In your loving name, I pray. Amen.*

**SCRIPTURE: Psalm 50:1-6**

**KEY VERSE: Psalm 50:5:**

***“Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!”***  
**(NRSV).**

Epiphany seems a long time ago today as we enter the final week of the Epiphany journey. We've discovered much over the course of the past six weeks. Today our Psalm leads us to a gathering of faithful people under a covenant marked by sacrifice. Of course, we know that the Psalm is talking about the temple sacrifices made for atonement for sins and other sacrifices mandated by the Judaic law. But, Christ changed all that. He became the sacrifice which makes atonement for all our sins! So, when we gather in God's eternal presence for judgment, it will be Christ's sacrifice which will be seen instead of our sins and his blood which will cover them and make us clean forevermore. Our faithfulness will be joined with Christ's sacrifice in the New Covenant in Christ's blood, cemented together by love. That's something to shout about! And it's something for which to give eternal thanksgiving. Naturally, when our mighty God summons us, we will go and behold the perfection of beauty as God shines forth. It is a blessing which we anticipate with great joy. We need not fear the judgment, because Christ is with us and has prepared a place for us, even as he promised to his disciples many years ago.

So, how can we give thanks to Christ for becoming our sacrifice today? Many find the Lenten journey the appropriate time and place to give thanks for Christ's sacrifice as we join with him in recognition of his suffering. Others choose to give thanks each day through prayer and devotional time spent together. Still others give thanks by their actions, working to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the ill and imprisoned and offer shelter and hospitality to those in need. All of these and others bring a sacrifice of thanksgiving from the depths of their gratitude. There are as many ways to bring thanks to our Savior as there are people to offer them. Then, of course, we can gather together to offer praise and thanksgiving as a body of believers. That is what corporate worship is all about. We are encouraged to gather ourselves together for worship because we are a people of the covenant marked by sacrifice. We need the fellowship and gifts which other believers bring as we gather ourselves together in worship and ministry.

Our scripture passage from Psalm 50 brings us a picture of the mighty God who inspires the awe and majesty which is often called the “fear of God.” It is a reminder of the power which God exerts in the universe. It offers the God of judgment who those who have not paid attention to the Lord have reason to fear. But, we who have chosen to follow Jesus as our Christ have no fear. Christ has taken away the fear by covering us with his sacrifice. Therefore, we can confidently gather together in worship and in truth, knowing that the love of

our God supersedes the fear the power of God engenders. Christ's loving sacrifice takes away all fear and leaves only the awe and majesty of our powerful God. We are hidden in the compassionate love which Jesus' sacrifice brings to all who will receive it. So, let us gather as faithful people in the New Covenant made by Christ's sacrifice and bring a gift of thanksgiving. Let us be bound together through that same sacrifice in compassionate ministry out of the love which Christ exhibited to us. As one body, the body of Christ, let us gather and recognize God's great gifts to us through Jesus, our Christ.

**ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES: John 14:23-51; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26;**

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND/OR JOURNALING:**

1. What is my understanding of the New Covenant?
2. Why do we gather together in worship?
3. Am I afraid of God or do I know that I am secure in Christ's loving sacrifice? Why?

**SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION:**

1. Write out a prayer of thanksgiving to the one whose sacrifice has made you acceptable to God. Keep it near you throughout this last week of Epiphany. As you prepare to enter the Lenten journey remember why we spend time in reflection about Christ's sacrifice for us.
2. Attend a corporate worship service this week. Let it be a reminder of the great gathering which will take place at the end of this world.

*Precious Savior, I thank you today for your wondrous sacrifice which allows me to live. I know that I do not deserve your love or the great sacrifice you have made on my behalf. Enable me to enter into the New Covenant through your sacrifice and cover my sins with your blood. Be with me throughout this day and prompt me to share your sacrifice with those around me this day. In your saving name, I pray. Amen.*