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ROGUE ONE: A Star Wars Story (2016) | FAITH AND SACRIFICE | BIBLE STUDY

Facilitator Note: *We encourage facilitators to take this Bible study and expound on it throughout the week, allowing it to be a springboard for deeper conversation and personal meditation.*

PRESS START

Rogue One's Biblical parallels almost write themselves. We come into this story knowing that our main characters will pay a heavy toll for their accomplishments. In the middle of the story, we find a man who isn't a Jedi and has no direct control over the Force; rather, he walks by faith in the Force to protect and guide him. In these examples alone, we see self-sacrifice for the greater good and faith in a force of good that is outside of ourselves. **While we examine these two examples, were there other Biblical parallels you sensed while watching?**

EQUIP

The crew of *Rogue One* do not all choose to accept the final mission without strings. They all have their own reasons and motivations that make them willing to take the risk. Still, in the end, they all choose to take the mission, fully knowing the risks it entails. They believe in a cause other than their own self-interest, and that cause is more important to them than their own individual safety.

You may have started tearing up in the final scenes of the movie. As it becomes more and more clear that no one is making it out of the situation safe and sound, the tension builds. Along with that tension comes the reality that every decision the characters make has a new and uniquely irreplaceable importance. These are their last acts--the things they are willing to do, laying down their lives in order to accomplish the mission.

These acts lack any possibility for subterfuge, apathy, misconception, or disregard in their interpretation. They are an embodiment of what each person loves most. In the movie's final act, what the characters love most is each other and their friends, whose wellbeing they fight for until their dying breaths. We might think of this verse:

John 15:13: *"Greater love has no man than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."*

LEVEL UP

ASK: What is worth giving up your life for? What concept do you believe in enough to sacrifice your life in its service or pursuit?

Let's take a deeper look at how our Rogue One heroes decide to answer these questions. They choose to believe in and pursue a cause. Some of them do so out of the simple faith that it is their purpose to do so, while others do so because they want to help their friends; still others simply pursue the cause because they believe the mission must be accomplished. Whatever the individual reason, each of these characters have attached themselves to something that they know could require the ultimate cost: their lives.

ASK: What do we spend our life pursuing? Where do we make sacrifices, investments, and take on responsibilities we don't have to?

The answers to this question should naturally lead us to the answer of the first question. After all, if something is worth us giving our lives for, it follows that it would be something we regularly sacrifice parts of our life for.

MOD

Another aspect of this topic that bears consideration is faith. Chirrut Îmwe (the blind Force monk) literally does everything on blind faith; his companion, Baze Malbus, seems to do everything based on faith in Chirrut. In one way or another, faith underlies most of the motivations that lead our brave heroes to their sacrificial ends, and, in many ways, faith is what separates normal love from the type of love that we are willing to sacrifice everything for and spend our whole lives pursuing.

ASK: Of all the things you spend your life investing in, which of them involve faith? Is the presence or absence of faith an important distinction? Does it change the way we pursue things?

PRAY

Does anyone have anything we need to pray about? Alongside these requests, let us pray that we will be more willing to make sacrifices as we go about our day/week/month. Also, let's pray for help choosing to live for things outside of our own self-interest.

THE NEXT LEVEL

Are there things we say we believe in, but don't spend much effort pursuing? Why is that? Apathy is a simple trap to fall into, and, sometimes, other concerns take precedence. *"Sure, exercise is great, but I'm busy. I don't have time."* Just because we believe in something doesn't mean it's automatically at the top of our priority list. Still, if we say we're willing to give our lives for something, it should be a high priority for us.

Psalms 34:14 *Depart from evil and do good: Seek peace and pursue it*

1 Peter 3:10-11 *The One who desires life, to love and see good days, must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and peace and pursue it*

Whether it's our work, hobbies, video games, or Jesus, it's all about following through.

Author: Philip Dickerson | Editor: Colby Bryant & Casey Covel

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