Part 3: Can God Still Save Me?

Small Group Lesson

Big Idea: Desmond Doss was a man of conviction who's life is portrayed in the film "Hacksaw Ridge". It is the story of a young man (Doss) who heeds the call to enlist in the military and serve his country. There is only one problem, he also holds a deep conviction not to take the life of another. Although a man of deep patriotism, his stance on preserving human life is met with great resistance from his fellow recruits and commanding officers. Desmond was a different kind of soldier. He endured resistance and unfair treatment with an unwavering faith. He refused to quit knowing he could help others. It is in his conviction to help others that we can also see a type of Christ. To those who were looking for a hero to save the Jewish people, Jesus was not quite what they expected. He was also different. A different kind of Savior.

Key Scripture: Ephesians 6:12 *"For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places."*

1. A Different Kind of Hero

Desmond Doss's conviction about not carrying a weapon was shaped by the commandment *"Thou shalt not kill".* His simple but profound choice carried a barrage of negative implications including rejection and even physical violence from his fellow recruits. Jesus was also despised and rejected even though his heart's desire was to serve and give his life for the very ones who abused him. John 1:10-11 says of Jesus; *"He came to the very world he created, but the world didn't recognise him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him."*

Discussion Question: When have you had to make a decision to follow Christ when it pushed against the crowd? What made it easy or hard for you to make your decision?

2. Life is a Battlefield

The battle for Hacksaw Ridge at Okinawa is considered one of the most gruesome battles of World War II. When Desmond and the 307th Infantry arrived, the severity of combat and the reality of war became very clear. As they made the ascent they were met with heavy resistance from the enemy. Just like the battle of Okinawa, your life is a battlefield. There is a war between the Kingdom of heaven and the Kingdom of Hell that is raging over the souls of man and the day-to-day life that you and I walk through can be just as brutal.

Discussion Question: What are some of the battles that go on in our day to day lives? If you are comfortable, share with the group if you are walking through a battle right now.

3. Can He Still Save Me?

When the rest of the 307th withdrew under heavy fire, Desmond chose to stay on the ridge rescuing the wounded members of his infantry throughout the night. Fighting exhaustion he single handedly rescued between 75-100 soldiers, saving their lives by lowering them to safety. With his hands burned and bloody, his body near total exhaustion, Desmond would pray *"Lord, help me get one more".* God's grace can reach even the most wounded and broken. There is no pit of sin so deep that He cannot reach His hand to rescue us. His great love compels Him to go after just one more. Paul's letter to the Romans says *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* Romans 5:8.

Discussion Question: Understanding the great price that Jesus paid to save us from death, why do you think someone would refuse to accept His offer of eternal life?

Conclusion:

In honor of his heroic efforts at Hacksaw Ridge, Desmond Doss was awarded the Medal of Honor and the Purple Heart. He is the only conscientious objector to ever be given that award. Jesus' hands and feet bore the marks of His ultimate sacrifice; His life given so that we could be restored to a right relationship with God. He is now seated in the place of honor at the right hand of God offering the gift of salvation to all of those who would cry out for forgiveness.