

Sermon Notes | Choose To Lay it Down - Deuteronomy 14 - 17:8

1. Lay Down Your Culture

Deuteronomy 14:1-21

"You are the sons of the Lord your God. You shall not cut yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead. For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession..." (14:1-2)

"You shall not eat any abomination." (14:3)

"Since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) – Mark 7:19

You don't lay down cultural expressions because of rules, but because you know who you belong to. Obedience flows from identity.

American cultural defaults we're called to lay down:

- Individualism
- Consumerism and Materialism
- Freedom of choice
- Nationalism
- Family centrism
- Productivity, busyness, and achievement

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession..." – 1 Peter 2:9

"He chose us... that we should be holy and blameless before him..." – Ephesians 1:4-5

"To him who loves us... and made us a kingdom, priests to his God..." – Revelation 1:5-6

2. Lay Down Your Possessions

Deuteronomy 14:22-15:23

Tithes and Trust

"You shall tithe all the yield... that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always." (14:22-23)

Release and Generosity

"At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release... because the Lord's release has been proclaimed." (15:1-2)

"If one of your brothers becomes poor... you shall not harden your heart... but open your hand." (15:7-8)

Dedicate the Firstborn

"All the firstborn males... you shall dedicate to the Lord your God." (15:19)

God's Kingdom redefines wealth—not as accumulation, but as generosity. We trust God by giving freely.

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." – Matthew 6:21

"God loves a cheerful giver." – 2 Corinthians 9:6–7

"Be generous and ready to share." – 1 Timothy 6:17–19

"Give, and it will be given to you." – Luke 6:38

3. Lay It Down in Celebration of Christ

Deuteronomy 16:1–20

Passover – God's deliverance (16:1–8)

Feast of Weeks / Pentecost – Firstfruits & the Law (16:9–12)

Feast of Booths – God's provision in the wilderness (16:13–15)

New Testament Fulfillment:

- *Passover*: Christ is our true Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7)
- *Pentecost*: The Spirit was given (Acts 2)
- *Booths*: Jesus "tabernacled" among us (John 1:14)

We celebrate by laying down our calendars, our comfort, and our preferences in worship and remembrance.

Christ Laid It All Down

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." – John 10:11

"By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us..." – 1 John 3:16

"Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." – Ephesians 5:2

*"As He felled lumber did He think of the cross?
Grip to chisel, reminiscing making us?
Hands that wielded hammers: now, holding nails
Fully God yet in man's manner: now tearing veils"
– Madalyn Rae*

Reflection

What is God inviting you to lay down?

- Are you trusting God enough to live differently from culture?
- Are you generous with your time, money, or energy—or still holding back?
- Does your calendar reflect worship and celebration of Christ?

Discussion Guide | Choose To Lay it Down - Deuteronomy 14 - 17:8

I. Lay Down Your Culture

1. Read Deuteronomy 14:1–2 and 1 Peter 2:9. What does it mean to be God's 'treasured possession' today?
2. In what areas of your life are you still shaped more by culture than by Christ?
3. How do your daily habits—clothing, entertainment, speech—reflect your identity in Christ?
4. What would it look like to lay down one cultural identifier this week in obedience to God?

II. Lay Down Your Possessions

1. Read Deuteronomy 15:1–11 and 2 Corinthians 9:6–7. How is biblical generosity different from modern financial thinking?
2. What does it mean to be openhanded with your resources?
3. Are there any areas where you're holding back from trusting God with your money or time?
4. How might God be asking you to reflect His generosity this month?

III. Lay Down in Celebration of Christ

1. Review the three biblical feasts (Passover, Pentecost, Booths). How does Jesus fulfill each one?
2. What does it mean to celebrate Christ through your calendar and rhythms?
3. How can regular celebrations (like Sabbath or communion) help you remember and rejoice in God's presence?
4. What would it look like to build joyful worship into your week?

Conclusion

Which of the three areas—culture, possessions, or calendar—is God calling you to lay down most right now?

What one step will you take this week to trust Him more fully in that area?