

SACRIFICE

BECOMING A HERO TO OTHERS

In 1997, Pat Tillman was a starting linebacker at Arizona State University. At 5' 11" and 200 pounds, he was considered small by Division I standards. However, he had distinguished himself as an intelligent, relentless, and ferocious competitor. That year he was named the PAC 10 Conference defensive player of the year. He graduated summa cum laude in three and a half academic years as an Academic All-American.

From there he went on to play in the NFL for four years with the Arizona Cardinals. In the 2000 season, Tillman set a Cardinals record with 224 tackles. In 2001, at the age of 27, he turned down a \$9 million, five-year contract from the Super Bowl Champions, the St. Louis Rams, out of loyalty to the Cardinals. He also passed on a three-year, \$3.6 million contract with Arizona in 2002 to enlist in the military and become a member of the 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.

His reason for making this life-changing decision...just a few months earlier the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, had occurred. Pat Tillman, just a few months after 9/11, turned down a multi-million dollar NFL contract so that he might serve and defend his country. When asked about this decision, this star athlete who had everything going for him, namely being a millionaire professional athlete with all the fame and fortune that goes with it, simply stated that he was not satisfied with the fact that he had not done something special for his country! He walked away from this lucrative career to serve his country and place others before himself.

Tillman's battalion was involved in Operation Mountain Storm in Afghanistan, part of the U.S. campaign against fighters of the al-Qaeda terror network and the former Taliban government along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. He was killed one night in battle while serving his country. America lost a real hero and a true warrior that night. A patriot who put the safety and welfare of others he had never met ahead of himself and his own well-being. Pat Tillman will forever be a true American hero!

1. What are the areas of your life where you need to think more of others?
2. What would happen if every teammate was willing to sacrifice for the team?
3. What can you sacrifice in your life to be of service to others?
4. What are you willing to sacrifice to help make this a better team?

**“No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life
for one's friends.” - John 15:13**