

Sacrifice Series 3:

SELF SACRIFICE

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April 6, 2014

Sermon in a sentence: The greatest and most meaningful sacrifice I can offer to God is my “self”.

Scriptures: Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 9:23-24; Mt. 26:39; Ps. 37:4; Is. 30:21; Jer. 29:11; Ps. 62:5; Ps. 71:5; Phil. 1:20

There are many things we can give, even sacrificially, that do not truly impact us at the core of our being. We may give ‘acceptable sacrifices’ of our time, talents and resources without them having an emotional effect on us.

Now, however, let us consider self-sacrifice – a sacrifice we cannot give without it having a deep spiritual, emotional and psychological impact on our lives.

There are very precious, personal commodities that we guard with great care. Things no one can see, feel or touch, but things that define us in our own minds, and govern our feelings of self worth, significance, self control and autonomy.

When we speak of our **free will, desires, dreams, ambitions, plans, hopes and expectations, we are dealing with things that are very meaningful to us! These are not things that can easily be surrendered and dismissed from our minds. These are often all-consuming drivers that control our thoughts, impulses, motivations and actions.**

Self-sacrifice is the ultimate test. For most of us, this test, this sacrifice, is not being tortured to death as our Lord Jesus was. But it *does* demand giving everything up *to* Him, as He gave everything up *for* us.

The ultimate sacrifice is the sacrifice of “self” to God.

Luke 9:23-24 NASB ... “ If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. ²⁴ “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

Consider some of the songs we sing to the Lord, highlighting the theme of sacrifice:

Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from Thee.
Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne.
Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee.

This hymn was written by Frances Ridley Havergal, (1836-1879), a brilliant English poet, singer and songwriter. She was able to read at three years old and by the time she was 16, she had already learned French, German, Welsh, Latin and Hebrew. (She later added Greek to the list.) When she was 36, she visited a home where 10 people lived, none of whom was living a consecrated Christian life. She prayed, “Lord, give me all in this house”, and before she left five days later, they had all come to Christ. She was so excited that on her last night there she couldn’t sleep, and the words of this song came to her. (She died of peritonitis at 42.)

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One of the great pioneers of the faith in Atlantic Canada is Pastor John D. Mean, now 82 years old, living in Dartmouth, N.S. He and his wife Eunilah evangelized widely throughout Nova Scotia and established a number of churches that are still thriving today. One night, Bro. Mean was praying at the altar of the church in Halifax, almost overwhelmed by a perplexing problem. He was alone at the time and in his own words: "I screamed out in frustration: 'God, what do You want? Do You want my life'"? He reports that immediately He felt the glorious presence of God fill the room and the words of this chorus came to his heart:

**All to Thee Jesus, I give all to Thee
All to Thee Jesus, I give all to Thee
My strength, my will, my life, my all
All to Thee Jesus, I give all to Thee**

From that moment on, he was totally at peace, leaving the situation totally in God's hands.

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**You gave me my hands to reach out to men
To show them your love and your perfect plan
You gave me my ears I can hear your voice so clear
I can hear the cries of sinners
But can I wipe away their tears**

**You gave me my voice to sing your Word
To sing all your praises to those who've never heard
But with my eyes I see a need for more availability
I see hearts that has been broken
So many people to be free**

**Lord I'm available to You
My will I give to You, I'll do what You say do
Use me Lord to show someone the way
And enable me to say
My storage is empty, and I am available to You**

**Now I'm giving back to You, all the tools You gave to me
My hands, my ears, my voice, my eyes
So You can use them as You please
I have emptied out my cup, so that You can fill me up
Now I'm free and I just want to be more available to You.**

Carlis L. Moody Jr. wrote this for Rev. Milton Brunson and the Thompson Community Singers in 1988 and it was a smash hit. Some time *after* writing the song, he was felled by a stroke and was nine months in recovery. During that time, he promised the Lord that if he got well, he would pour his whole life into ministry, which he does to this day alongside his father at Faith Temple in Evanston, Illinois.

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There is incredible peace, assurance, comfort and joy that come to those who sacrifice themselves fully and completely to God.

- **When I fully sacrifice my will to Him, I can then pray with total trust: "... not as I will, but as You will" (Matt. 26:39).**
- **When I sacrifice my desires to Him and delight in His presence rather than in my own dreams, He engineers a paradoxical reversal: "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Ps. 37:4).**
- **If you surrender your 'best laid plans' to Him: "Your ears will hear a word behind you, 'This is the way, walk in it', whenever you turn to the right or to the left" (Is. 30:21).**

- “For I know the plans that I have for you”, declares the LORD, “plans for welfare and not for calamity, to give you a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11).
- When we sacrifice our ‘need to know’, our need for control, our pride and our ego to Him, we are then free to place all of our hopes and expectations in Him (Ps 62:5; Ps 71:5; Phil. 1:20):

Psalm 62:5 NASB My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him.

Psalm 71:5 NASB For You are my hope; O Lord GOD, *You are* my confidence from my youth.

Phil. 1:20 NASB ... according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but *that* with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Total surrender of our “self” to Christ frees us to experience the joy of His presence and enter into the supernatural realm where He dwells.

Chorus

Here I Am Lord, Here I Am