

SACRIFICE

Sermon by Mark S. Aites

TEXT: EXODUS 35:20-29; 36:2-7

INTRODUCTION:

1. In **Exod. 35:4-9**, the Bible records for us a command of God for the people to give an offering for the construction of the tabernacle.
2. The request involved some precious metals, fine linens, dyed skins, oils, precious stones, and spices.
3. According to **Exod. 36:3**, the children of Israel *“continued bringing...freewill offerings every morning.”*
4. The craftsman who were working on the sanctuary then encountered a problem (**36:5**).
5. Then the remarkable response of Moses (**36:6**).
6. The story is remarkable because of the fact that their giving had to be restrained.
7. But within this comes the thought for our lesson this morning, that in order for them to have given so much, there had to have been considerable sacrifice involved.
8. In the books of Mark and Luke we read of another story of sacrificial giving (**Mark 12:41-42; Luke 21:3-4**).
10. In **Matt. 26:6-7**, we have yet another example of sacrificial giving.
 1. In the story, the Lord's disciples were upset for the waste of this costly oil.
 2. But Jesus indicated: **26:12** *“For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial.”*
11. In Luke's writings of the early church, we learn of their tremendous sacrificial giving (**Acts 4:34-35**).
12. In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he writes of their sacrificial giving (**2 Cor. 8:3-4**).
13. Each of these biblical examples speaks of a willingness to not only give, but to make a sacrifice.
14. To sacrifice something means that one is willing to give something up for the benefit of another or others.
15. Jesus Himself gave the supreme example with the sacrifice of His life (**John 15:13**).
16. Consider: There are people who want comfort rather than a cross.
 - 1) As long as things are comfortable, they are happy.
 - 2) But don't ask them to sacrifice anything; or do anything which might interfere with their comfort.
17. The 20th century has created a comfortable Christianity.
 - 1) Air conditioned and heated church buildings.
 - 2) Padded pews to sit on.
 - 3) Secure from the adverse affects of the weather.
 - 4) For some it's hard to conceive of things not being this way.
18. I have a friend who frequents Trinidad:
 - 1) The services there are 3 hours long.
 - 2) There are no sides of the building to protect them from the adverse effects of the weather.
 - 3) The heat is sweltering.
 - 4) They are open to the insects and rodents that we often keep out.
 - 5) There are some narrow hard and uncomfortable wooden benches; the rest sit on the ground.
19. Thinking of the ease with which we have things today... (**Amos 6:1,4-6**).
 1. The indictment was prompted by Israel's sin; the failure in that they forgot God, and had become too comfortable and lazy.
 2. It may be all too appropriately a description for our generation.
20. This morning: consider, what have you sacrificed to be a servant of Christ?
 - 1) What have you given up to be a Christian?

- 2) If you can't think of anything, then there is a problem.
21. To be a Christian, one must sacrifice at least 4 things: self, relationships, money, possessions, and time.

DISCUSSION:

I. SELF.

- A. **Matt. 16:24**
- B. This is probably the hardest of all four because when one sacrifices himself to the Lord it means that Christ's will takes over.
1. It means that we give up wanting things our way.
 2. And we follow the Lord's example (**Luke 22:42**).
- C. The sacrifice of self signifies to us that the fleshly desires are to be sacrificed and replaced with spiritual ones (**Rom. 6:6; Gal. 5:24**).
1. The former manner of life is done away with (**2 Cor. 5:17**).
 2. With this sacrifice, with one's decision to turn from a life of sin there are things that a Christian will no longer intentionally do!
 3. Peter writes that a Christian "*no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.*" (**1 Pet. 4:2**).
 4. The Christian puts "*on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness*" (**Eph. 4:24**).
- D. It is for this reason that one cannot be a Christian and still cling to the world. If one clings to the world, and still allows his own will to dominate then he has not made a sacrifice! (**cf. James 4:4; 1 John 2:15**).
- E. Knowing these things, it is amazing that so many Christians are still trying to cling to the world.
1. They want to be God's child but they're not ready to make the sacrifice necessary.
 2. As it has been said many times before, they want the rewards of Christianity without bearing their cross.
 3. Yet Jesus plainly says, "*And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me*" (**Matt. 10:38**).

II. RELATIONSHIPS.

- A. **Matt. 10:34-37**
- B. Sometimes, unless you were blessed with Christian parents, you must face the problems in the home for your decision to be a Christian.
1. It is difficult when one spouse is a Christian, and the other is not.
 2. It is difficult, when you are a Christian, and your parents are not.
 3. I told one of the classes of a lady that I had known (deceased now), her decision to be a Christian led to her being ostracized from her mother and father for more than 30 years.
 4. Some cannot remain Christians because the price is too high for them.
 5. They are not willing, if need be, to sacrifice their relationship with family members.
 6. Jesus made it clear: "*He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.*"
- C. And what of friends.
1. It is difficult again to give up close relationships with friends who are of a worldly mind.
 2. Some you may be able to retain and teach them the gospel.
 3. But if you want to follow Christ, then you are going to have to sacrifice some friendships.
 4. **1 Cor. 15:33**
 5. Speaking to Christians... (**Eph. 5:8, 11**).
- D. Someone might say, but if I do as the Bible teaches I will lose my popularity. Jesus had an

answer for those who are popularity seekers (**Luke 6:26**).

- E. To follow Jesus you must expect that things are not going to be easy all the time.
 - 1. **Matt.5:11**
 - 2. Notice the Lord didn't say *if*, but *when they revile and persecute you*.
- F. One other area needs to be mentioned here, that of remarriage (**Matt. 19:3ff**).
 - 1. The Lord makes it perfectly clear that remarriage is possible if the divorce was for reasons of fornication (illicit sexual relations).
 - 2. No other reason is given here for a divorce and remarriage.
 - 3. Notice Jesus' comments that follow (**Matt. 19:11-12**).
 - 4. A famed brother made this scripture come to life this past century, Guy N. Woods (now deceased). He made the sacrifice to follow the Lord.

III.MONEY AND POSSESSIONS.

- A. When one becomes a Christian, and the Lord's will takes over his life, then his money and possessions take on a different meaning.
 - 1. He begins to recognize that the world's teachings on money and possessions will lead him in a direction apart from God.
 - 2. He learns the truth (**1 Tim. 6:7**).
- B. He further comes to the realization that all things belong to God, and that we are only stewards (temporary managers) of what has been entrusted to us (**1 Cor. 4**).
 - 1. When one truly realizes that his money and possessions are not ALL IMPORTANT, then and only then can he give to God as he should.
 - 2. Only then can he be benevolent and give to others as needs arise.
- C. Paul praised the Macedonians because they first gave of themselves (**2 Cor. 8:5**).
 - 1. With their willingness to give themselves entirely to the Lord, they were then able to give liberally and freely.
 - 2. They could sacrificially give because of their love for the Lord and others (**2 Cor. 9:6-7**).
 - 3. It is true God wants us to give cheerfully, but do we give sacrificially? Or do we give only enough so as to not interfere with our comfort?
 - 4. I remember the item in the Parade magazine in which Prince Charles was reported to have put a 5 pound note on the plate. (Such is comfortable but not sacrificial.)
 - 7. Again, some are not willing to give up some things and make sacrifices for the Lord.

IV.TIME AND TALENTS.

- A. This one is very pertinent to our day and time in which we live.
 - 1. The hurried schedules, the abundance of activities; family life has changed so very much.
 - 2. We plan many events not just days ahead but sometimes two and three months.
 - 3. We carry planners and try to find the time to fit things into our busy schedules.
 - 4. But it is here that we see all too prevalent a lack of time for God and His work.
- B. We can make sacrifices for sporting events, social events, school related events, but it seems that there is an unwillingness to sacrifice time for God.
 - 1. It is evident in that some will not even come together with the saints on Sunday and Wednesday evenings.
 - 2. It is evident in that little to no personal evangelism takes place.
 - 3. To serve the true/living God there needs to be some sacrifice with one's time.
- C. **Eph. 5:15-16**
 - 1. The word *circumspectly* (NKJV) means *carefully*.
 - 2. These verses suggest that one make the best use of his time.
 - 3. And if the Lord is not a part of that time, then it is not the best use of one's time.

- D. And of your talents, must be the willingness on your part to use your God-given talents in His service.
1. According to **Matt. 25:14ff**, each of us has at least one talent, some several to be used in the Master's service.
 2. Are you using your talents that God has entrusted to you, or are you using them for the world and self.
 3. Are you willing to sacrifice of yourself to use these abilities to God's honor and glory?
 4. If not, then you have not really yet made a sacrifice for the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

1. **Luke 14:27-28.**
2. Do you want to be a follower or disciple of Jesus? If so you need to count the cost!