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## Do We Daily Make a Full Sacrifice of Ourselves Like Jesus Did?

Eric V. Snow, sermonette, 02-19-2010, Ann Arbor, MI UCG

Is life **always** about compromise? Like most politicians seeking votes and passing legislation, should we live spiritually by taking half-measures and giving half-loaves? Is serving God merely somewhere on our list of priorities? Or is it the top priority that reorganizes the rest of the list? Does God want total dedication and complete self-sacrifice from His people?

God wants us to fully commit our lives to Him, like Jesus did. Half-hearted efforts shouldn't constitute our service to God.

**S.P.S. Our daily lives should be characterized by a complete sacrifice to God.**

**2 questions today: 1st point: Are we serving God everyday as if we counted the cost?**

Luke 14:25-33

Was this text only a concern when we were baptized? Consider this analogy: Suppose you had a fancy wedding but then afterwards talked little to your husband or wife and didn't care about what he or she thought about how you lived your life everyday. Is that really a "marriage"? We have to keep up our daily dedication to God, such as by prayer and Bible study. It isn't just a one-time event, but a relationship that has to be continually cared for by constant concern and communication.

Verse 26: In general, is what other people think more important to us than what God thinks? Do we sin or avoid doing good works because other people think it's fanatical or strange to obey God's law? Are we afraid to admit that we obey God's law to our friends at school or our co-workers?

Classical example: Would a teenager raised in the church consider it a shameful confession to the guys in the high school locker room that to admit that he's still a virgin? Another example: HWA's fear of what his business associates would think when his wife first started to keep the Saturday Sabbath.

V. 27: Not just trials in life, but the purpose of our lives. We are no longer our own, seeking our own special purposes in life apart from God's revelation to us. "PF mentality" in Myers-Briggs personality test system. To create and live by our own self-devised moral code is not an option for Christians.

V. 28: Did we really count the cost at baptism? More importantly for most of us here, are we living as if we did count the cost? God offers us eternal life and eternal happiness in return for total dedication to Him. We shouldn't think our relationship with the true God is like the how the pagans

served their gods: “If I serve God, then God has to give me such-and-so in return now.” That is, during this life. But we shouldn’t base our relationship with God based on what we can “get” from God. Are we living by “the way of get” in our relationship with God?

V. 33: Do we live our spiritual lives thinking, “If we keep the Sabbath and Holy Days, go to church, make offerings and tithe, and avoid obvious big sins like adultery, then the rest of our lives are our own?” “Taxpayer analogy”: God makes no more claims on us?

**Leads to 2nd point: Are we “Christian hedonists”?**

Are we trying to maximize pleasure and minimize pain during this physical life while still trying to obey the great commandment? Do we secretly or subconsciously doubt that obeying God’s law pays? So just in case the Bible is wrong and there’s no eternal life, we still got in our fun anyway?

## Mark 12:29-30

Are we really living by this? Are we trying to serve two masters? Isn't that hopeless? True, there's HWA's orientation: To obey God's law increases happiness during this life also. But suppose we think that things aren't working out that way for us individually?

A radical re-orientation in our approach to life should have taken place when we got baptized.

C.S. Lewis's Honest taxpayer analogy: Do we perceive our service to God as paying taxes? Then with what's left over, we hope we can live on it? After giving up a certain amount to God, we look forward to having enough time, money, and choices left to get on with what we really want to do in life? That's not how God sees the purposes of our lives in His plan for humanity.

Quote Lewis on p. 178 of Timothy Keller's  
"The Reason for God."

Luke 9:23-26

If God requires us to die as martyrs during the Great Tribulation, would we deny the faith to save our lives temporarily? After all, we're all going to die eventually anyway, sooner or later. What will a few decades of physical life matter in the context of eternity? There is "no exit" for us from eternal death except by the resurrection and being "born again" when Christ returns.

I suspect some of us would faithfully face the firing squad as martyrs better than live 60 years of the daily "grind" of building a relationship with God through prayer, fasting, Bible study, meditation, and reorienting our lives to do what He wants instead of what we want.

**So in conclusion:** As the Passover approaches, let's make sure we have totally

dedicated our lives to God on a daily basis.  
Let's pay the cost that we counted at  
baptism as being worth the price.

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