

## *Costless Christianity*

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**2 Samuel 24** David's purchase of the threshing floor of Araunah: the cost of sacrifice.

We are living in a religious culture that is wholly self-absorbed, maintaining a profession of the Christian faith while wholly ignoring the sacrifice that is eternally affixed to the true regenerative work of the Holy Spirit. Not that the work of regeneration is conditional upon a sacrifice made by its subject as in the 1<sup>st</sup> covenant but that the regenerate heart that has been converted by free grace has been inaugurated into a Kingdom whereby all of its subjects live sacrificially unto its King not by mandate but by love.

The idealism that the Christian life can be lived while bypassing the sacrificial altar finds its roots in humanistic deism, and it draws its power from uninterrupted deception. "*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" Beloved, there exists a whole doctrine that is empowered by cultural embrace that pronounces its greatest doctrinal tenant as Christianity without cost or Salvation without sacrifice.

Those who embrace this doctrine and practice its tenants are those who attend services each week on their terms and cooperate with the rhythm of its pulse as long as it doesn't violate the tenant of their doctrine which excuses them from any cost or sacrifice. As soon as any challenge is proposed to deviate from their decree they fold up their tents and excuse themselves from their company until they can find a dwelling place that meets the demands of their doctrinal criteria.

Those who are abiding in this doctrinal delusion that do not depart from the company of the elect of God will fold their arms and drop their eyebrows as the challenge is made to lay down your life and sacrifice all for the Lord of the Kingdom. As the true elect are laboring sacrificially and daily bearing their crosses, these tares that are sown amongst the wheat are sitting idly by and folding their hands even being unwilling to wipe the sweat drops of the elect from the floor as they labor their labor of love unto the Lord.

Another tenant of their delusional doctrine is justification by excuse. Within this clause the tares begin to justify their inactivity and their unwillingness to lift a finger to help alleviate the burden of the just by making excuses they feel legitimate. Retorts are given such as; I'm too busy in business – I have worked hard all week for man unto my own temporal gain. I have been overloaded with work in the office this week and my stress level has been off the charts, hence I cannot labor for the Lord of the Kingdom. Yet, I'll support you as you labor for Him and cheer you on.

**Proverbs 24:33** "*Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:*" Statements are made such as: "I have been dealing with children all week, I am famished in the present moment hence I cannot train up a child in the way that they should go – but I am willing to pay someone else to do so!"

The excuses continue to surmount as these tares have exhausted their strength and zeal upon endeavors to which the sum of the reward finds its total return in the dividends of their own personal benefit and pleasure. All the while they justify themselves by excuses of being tired or stressed out having expended their resources upon that to which the payback is temporal and personal.

Yet, the call of the Kingdom of God to bear their cross and to yield their lives as living sacrifices are wholly ignored and they feel justified in this disobedience due to the excuses they make in their hearts. All the while there are needs in the Kingdom of God that are not being met – and the true elect of God are shouldering burdens that are unbearable because they are burdens to be shared not borne alone.

The tares that creep into the house of the Lord seek the benefits of redemption while seeking to escape or avoid the commitment and sacrifice required of the redeemed. They seek a costless Christianity that affords them eternal bounties; the same bounties as the just without the lifestyle of sacrifice and labor of love to which the just are wholly given.

There justification is in that they labor and labor hard – yet they are the sole recipients of the reward of their labors. These will even find justification in their illicit religion to give small amounts of their reward or accrued dividends to the Kingdom of which they are not true subjects but it is only to the end of self-justification. We have no heart to labor unto the Lord but the reward we have received from our labors unto man we commit a small portion; as long as it doesn't cost us anything or diminish our quality of life.

We drop a \$20 or even a \$100 in the plate which really has cost us nothing – to try to offset the lack that is within the body of Christ by our delinquency in labors. Beloved, you can invest the total sum of the reward of man – your total financial net – and it will not replace your call from Jesus Christ to loose your life! Your money in the offering plate does not replace your obedience to His call to surrender and sacrifice. If this is your heart, you might get with the elders this morning and ask for the money you illicitly put in the offering plate to be returned to you; for your thirty shekels of silver cannot purchase the field of sacrifice nor does it waiver you from the call to the Cross and the life of surrender and sacrifice.

In II Timothy 2:15 we see the Christian called workmen that needeth not to be ashamed. The Greek word renders this “a laborer”. The import of the passage is for the Christian to study the Word of God – but it is unto the workman. These are the chosen of God who are wholly given unto His purposes, laboring for His Kingdom and cause, that they might have an intimate knowledge of the scriptures.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray for more laborers.

### **Luke 10:2**

*“Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.”*

Why is it that the laborers are few? Have we ever asked this question? It is because the way is straight and narrow that leads to life – and few be that find it!

### **Matthew 7:13-14**

*“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”*

Beloved, it is one thing to join yourself to a body of believers that labor a labor of love before the Lord, but a wholly another thing to be amongst those laborers, laboring a labor of love. Beloved, it is one thing to attend a church that teaches and holds fast to the doctrines of sacrifice, commitment, and cross-bearing, and wholly another thing to be committed, bearing your own cross, and sacrificing for our Lord.

Our excuses of being busy or tired or “not feeling called” are illegitimate and are reflective of our commitment to other enterprises – namely ourselves and the preservation thereof. It amazes me that we are full of strength, vision, purpose, and enthusiasm to the call of commitment to enterprises that give return to our personal increase. We will labor intensively, passionately, devotedly towards that end even in weariness.

Yet, when the call of the Kingdom of God is heralded we are too tired, famished from our labors unto our personal gain, that we cannot – or will not respond. Beloved, this is not the heart of Christ nor is it the anthem of the just. Let me take a moment and remind us of that anthem.

### **2 Corinthians 11:21-30**

*I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.*

*Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; **in labours more abundant,** in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;*

*In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.*

*Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*

### **Luke 9:62**

*“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”*

### **John 6:27**

*“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”*

Beloved, we must examine our hearts and our lifestyles. What are we truly committed unto? What has the grace of God produced in our lives? The early church fathers gave their lives for their Christianity – what are we giving for ours? What are you yielding to the Lord and what is it costing you? What sacrifices are being made – what costs are affixed to them?

What are our sacrifices unto the Lord costing us? How deep is our commitment to Christ and His Gospel in comparison to our commitment to other enterprises that yield dividends to our personal increase and gain? Beloved, are we loosing our lives for Christ – or gaining our lives for ourselves?

The danger is that you can sit in this sanctuary week in and week out listening to the challenge to commit without committing. You can witness others laying down their lives and even cheer them onward – while you yourself refuse to lay down your life. You can amen and become excited in listening to sermons such as this – that challenge us to sacrifice – without you yourself sacrificing.

It is all in vain if you do not relinquish your life for the Lord Jesus Christ and become a laborer in His Kingdom as His dear child. It is my earnest concern that many of you are finding your life here upon this earth – and forfeiting your inheritance in the Kingdom of God.

Christianity devoid of sacrifice and commitment is only religion without power; any power unto salvation. If your form is leaving you empty without authority over sin and victory in your walk with Christ you must examine that which you are truly committed unto.

If God would grant us the vision, the word ‘sacrifice’ would disappear from our lips and thoughts; we would hate the things that seem now so dear to us; our lives would suddenly be too short; we would despise time-robbing distractions and charge the enemy with all our energies in the name of Christ. May God help us to judge ourselves by the eternities that separate the Aucas from a comprehension of Christmas, and Him, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor so that we might, through His poverty, be made rich. Lord God, speak to my own heart and give me to know Thy holy will and the joy of walking in it. Amen.

### **Nate Saint**

Written just before he was martyred by the Auca Indians in South America.

