

All for Christ (Biography)

by C.T. Studd

C.T. Studd's life was a testament to the power of faith and sacrifice, as he gave up his comfortable life to spread the gospel to the unevangelized world.

Scripture: Luke 6:22

Topics: "Holy Separation", "Sanctification"

Description

The preacher delves into the concept of being set apart, exploring how it signifies the marking off of boundaries and the appointment of individuals for specific purposes. This separation is seen in various contexts such as the final separation of the righteous from the wicked, the disciples from the world, and the setting apart of apostles for special functions. Throughout the Old Testament, God emphasized the importance of setting apart His chosen people for Himself, ensuring they remained holy and distinct from other nations.

Transcript

Over a hundred years ago, in February 1885, a group of young men set sail from England to become missionaries in China. They included graduates and ex-army officers and were known as the "Cambridge Seven" because they had felt called to the mission field after attending meetings at that University. The leading member of the group was Charles T Studd, the son of a wealthy indigo-planter who had retired from India to a large country house at Tidworth in Wiltshire. His father had been converted in 1877 when a friend took him to hear D. L. Moody preaching in London and he immediately gave up his pastimes of racing and hunting, and used his home for evangelistic meetings until his death two years later.

Charles and two of his brothers, Kynaston and George, were all at Eton when their father was converted and they were far from pleased by his efforts to interest them in the gospel. However, unknown to each other, all three were also converted when a visiting preacher went to stay with the Studd family during the summer holidays of 1878. The three brothers excelled at cricket both at Eton and later at Cambridge where they achieved a remarkable record of each captaining the cricket team in successive seasons from 1882 to 1884. The exceptional skills shown by Charles gained him a place in the England team in 1882 which lost the match to Australia which originated the tradition of the "Ashes" between the two countries. The following winter he toured Australia with the England team that recovered the trophy but in 1884 his brother George was taken seriously ill and Charles was confronted by the question, "What is all the fame and flattery worth when a man comes to face eternity?" He had to admit that since his conversion six

years earlier he had been in "an unhappy backslidden state." As a result of the experience he stated, "I know that cricket would not last, and honour would not last, and nothing in this world would last, but it was worth while living for the world to come."

From then onwards Charles began witnessing to his friends and fellow players and helping his brother Kynaston who had started organising missions amongst students. Soon he had the joy of leading others to the Lord and he prayed for power to be more effective in proclaiming the gospel. Through the promise contained in Acts 1:8, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me....unto the uttermost part of the earth," he realised that his own zeal and energy were not sufficient and that he had to rely entirely upon God.

Up until that time he had felt content to witness amongst his own associates but after hearing a missionary speaking about the need for workers in China. Charles was increasingly burdened and convicted by verses such as "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psalm 2:8). Although his friends and relatives tried to dissuade him, Charles knew he was being called to the mission field and he sought an interview with Hudson Taylor, the director of the China Inland Mission and was accepted as an associate member.

Studd's decision was followed by six others within a few weeks and as they prepared for the mission field, members of the "Cambridge Seven" spoke at meetings up and down the country with remarkable results. In addition to numerous conversions a great wave of missionary zeal swept through the students of Edinburgh, London, Oxford and Cambridge which was to have profound effects throughout the world in later years.

For C. T Studd those future years were to see him giving away his family inheritance to help the work of George Muller, D. L. Moody, Dr. Barnardo and others and spending ten years in China where he suffered great hardships to reach remote areas where the gospel had never been heard before. On returning to England he was invited to visit America where his brother Kynaston had recently arranged meetings which had led to the formation of the Student Volunteer movement. During this tour he experienced powerful blessing upon his ministry and the spiritual life in many colleges, churches and other bodies was radically transformed.

From 1900-1906 Studd was pastor of a church at Ootacamund in South India and although it was a different situation to the pioneer missionary work in China, his ministry was marked by numerous conversions amongst the British officials and the local community. However, on his return home Studd became concerned about the large parts of Africa that had never been reached with the Gospel and in 1910 he went to the Sudan and was convicted by the lack of Christian witness in central Africa. Out of this concern Studd was led to set up the Heart of Africa Mission and when challenged as to why he was preparing for a life of inevitable hardship he replied, "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him."

On his first venture into the Belgian Congo in 1913, Studd established four mission stations in an area inhabited by eight different tribes. Then a serious illness to his wife required his return to England, but when he returned to the Congo in 1916 she had recovered sufficiently to undertake the expansion of the mission into the World Evangelism Crusade with workers in south America, central Asia and the middle East as well as Africa. Supported by his wife's work of home, Studd built up an extensive missionary outreach based on his centre at Ibambi and although she made a short visit to the Congo in 1928 that was

the only time they met again since she died in the following year. Two years later, still labouring for the Lord at Ibambi at the age of seventy, Charles Studd died, but his vision for China, India and Africa had expanded to reach the whole unevangelised world.

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