

Spirit of Sacrifice

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the necessity of the spirit of sacrifice in building the church and serving God wholeheartedly.

Scripture: Genesis 22:2, 2 Chronicles 3:1, Isaiah 49:15, Romans 1:25, Ephesians 5:25

Topics: "Sacrifice", "Commitment to the Church"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the 'Spirit of Sacrifice' by drawing parallels between Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah and the sacrificial love of Jesus on Calvary. He highlights that true service to God and the building of His church requires selfless sacrifice, contrasting it with the self-serving attitudes prevalent in society today. Poonen illustrates that just as a mother sacrifices for her child without expectation of return, believers must adopt a similar attitude towards the church. He challenges listeners to reflect on their commitment to God and the church, urging them to embrace a life of sacrificial love. Ultimately, he calls for a wake-up to the reality that God's work is accomplished through those who embody the spirit of sacrifice.

Transcript

In 2 Chronicles 3:1, we read that "Solomon began to build the house of the Lord on Mount Moriah". Mount Moriah was the place where Abraham had offered his son Isaac to God (Gen22). There on that mountain Abraham understood God's way as the way of sacrifice and submitted to it. God sanctified that spot and determined that His house would be built on that very spot 1000 years later. And this is where God builds His house (the church) even today - wherever he finds those who have the spirit and the faith of Abraham.

On Mount Moriah, Abraham was symbolically saying exactly the opposite of what Adam and Eve had told God in Eden. In Eden, Adam and Eve as it were, told God by their action of eating the forbidden fruit that created things that brought them pleasure were more precious to them than the Creator Himself. And that is exactly what billions of human beings are saying to God even today. "They worship and serve created things more than the Creator" (Rom.1:25). But on Mount Moriah, Abraham said the opposite: that his God and his Creator was more precious to him than his dearest possession on earth (Isaac). And he was willing to sacrifice Isaac in order to prove it. God will honour all who live by this principle of sacrifice. It is by those who have been gripped by this way that the true house of God is going to be built even today.

On Calvary's hill, it was not only true that Jesus died for the sins of the world. There, Jesus demonstrated the principle of sacrifice by which God does all His work. No-one can serve the Lord in any other

way. Those who seek for a comfortable life in this world and at the same time want to build the church also, will only deceive themselves. Those who seek the best of both worlds have been deceived by Satan thoroughly. Many have attempted to serve God without sacrifice. Their labours however have been crowned with failure after failure!! "Christ loved the church and gave HIMSELF for her" (Eph.5:25). To build the church, we have to love the church in the same way. It is not enough to give our money or our time. We have to give OURSELVES - our Self-life.

When God wanted to describe His love to man, He could compare His love with only one earthly example - the love of a mother for her newly-born child (See Isaiah 49:15). If you observe a mother, you will see that her love for her baby is full of the spirit of sacrifice. From early morning to late at night and right through the night, a mother sacrifices and sacrifices and sacrifices for her baby. And she gets nothing in return. She endures pain and inconvenience, year after year for her child, joyfully, expecting nothing in return. That is how God loves us too. And that is the nature He wants to impart to us.

A mother does not care whether others around her are sacrificing anything for her child or not. She joyfully sacrifices everything herself. In the same way, one who has seen the church as his own baby will not be bothered whether others around him are sacrificing anything for the church or not. He will sacrifice himself joyfully, and he will have NO complaint or demand against anyone else. Those who complain that others are not sacrificing for the sake of the church are not mothers but hired nurses. Such nurses have fixed working hours and will complain when the nurse for the next 8-hour shift does not come on time. But a mother does not work 8-hour shifts each day. She works a 24-hour shift daily - year after year - and she does not even get paid for it. Even when her child is 20 years old, the mother's work is not over! Only mothers can have milk for their babies every day. Nurses cannot produce milk for the babies they care for. In the same way, those who are like mothers in the church will always have a word for their spiritual children - in every meeting. Many elders have no word for the church because they are nurses, not mothers. A mother does not expect any payment from her children. No child ever pays its mother for her service. In fact, if you were to calculate the wages a mother should be paid, at the rate of Rs.20 per hour (as paid to nurses), you will find that every child owes its mother more than 3 million rupees, by the time it is 20 years old!! Which child can ever repay such an amount to its mother?

Now the question that comes to us is: Who is willing to work like that for the Lord and for His church - without receiving any payment, but giving oneself, day after day, year after year, until Jesus comes? If God can find just one person with that spirit anywhere, He will use him to build the church, much more than He can use 10,000 half-hearted believers who try to serve Him without the spirit of sacrifice. When Jesus returns to earth and you stand before Him, will you have any regrets over the way you lived, or will you be able to look back over a life spent usefully for the kingdom of God?

Wake up before it is too late, and ask God to show you that His way is the way of sacrifice.

He who has ears to hear let him hear.

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