

## 91.5 For Thy Sake

God wants us to lay down everything, even our very lives, for His sake because even in our loss, He makes us more than conquerors through Christ. In **Romans 8:36** (KJV) the apostle Paul quoted **Psalm 44:22** and said:

**“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”**

Let me let you in on a little “*inside baseball*” secret: many preachers and church leaders want to be the heroes and the “*go-to guys*” of their congregations. We may start with good intentions wanting to contribute to the cause of Christ and wind up like Diotrefes, who loved the preeminence (**3 John 9**).

Too often, the preacher’s aim is for himself, although he doesn’t see it. He does what he can to climb the spiritual ladder of success to work for prominent and influential churches. While ambition is not always a bad thing, we must check our motives. Sincere motives will produce genuine fruit, and insincere ones produce bad.

The prophet tells us, “**The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9, NKJV)**” We preachers can cloak our true feelings and motives with our spiritual jargon and deceive ourselves and our congregations into thinking we are all about advancing the kingdom when we have another agenda in self-promotion.

What would happen if preachers stopped trying to climb the success ladder and church leaders stopped trying to jockey for power positions, and we let the Lord direct, emptying our egos in the process? The very people who accuse preachers of proclaiming politics are the ones who play the church politics to get their way. What if we stop political games in churches and started “counting all things as loss (**Philippians 3:7-8**)?”

The preacher who dared to proceed on this level would wind up in two possible places. He would be “*the voice crying in the wilderness*” or God’s voice in the marketplace. People would come to see the fire of God or remove to the latest mode of preferential church entertainment.

Christian Americans have been spoiled with an easy religion (and, might I add, expecting a “cheap grace” of ease). Too many of us think about our wants and comforts in serving Christ and are only willing to do what is convenient or comfortable. A warrior who goes into battle with a personal agenda or limitations endangers himself and his platoon. Soldiers suffer hardship for their cause, which is part of the conflict. **2 Timothy 2:3-4** (NKJV) reads, “**You, therefore, must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.**”

If we lived in the days of the Roman Empire and witnessed crucifixions, we would know at least one thing about a man carrying his cross – that person was not coming back. He would be on a one-way trip to die. Jesus is the exception. He bore His cross until Simon had to pick it up for Him so the Father’s will could be done in the sin offering at His cross.

Simon is honored for carrying Jesus’ cross for Him, but Simon of Cyrene is not the only one with this privilege. You and I have a cross to pick up. Listen to the Master’s words in **Matthew 16:24-27** (NKJV):

<sup>24</sup>**Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. <sup>25</sup>For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. <sup>26</sup>For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? <sup>27</sup>For the Son of Man**

**will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.**

We have a momentous opportunity to let go of our egos and agendas and be content where God leads. I may never lead a prominent congregation, have an earth-shaking podcast, or write best-selling books, but I can take the ordinary things before me and offer them to God, saying, “*For thy sake.*”

Jesus lived in obscurity for thirty years and then came on the scene to do the will of His Father. He did mighty works, but He also worked in the ordinary.

- He took ordinary water and made it into extraordinary wine.
- He wrote in ordinary dirt to convict those who accused the woman caught in adultery.
- He used ordinary bread and the fruit of the vine as symbols to remember Him.
- He rode an ordinary donkey into Jerusalem.
- He wept ordinary tears over the city.
- He overturned everyday stone tables in the temple courts.
- Commands ordinary water for the baptisms of His disciples.

Not all of us will be super-charged to greatness in the eyes of men, but we all have ordinary things around us, including ourselves, to use for God’s purposes in drawing people to Christ. That changes our view on everything. Our jobs become an opportunity to serve others even quietly as leaven for the kingdom. The shift in thinking sanctifies our workplace, home, school, hobby, etc., and makes it a holy place.

**Hebrews 12:4** (NKJV) reminds us, “**You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.**” So far, the worst thing that has happened to some is a job loss or Facebook jail for a pro-Christian stance. These are small prices to pay in light of the eternal, so we seek the Lord, not self-promotion. We raise Him to draw men to Him, not for our egos. We dedicate the simple and the profound to Him and say. “*He is the key, not me.*”

**Isaiah 55:6** (NKJV):

**Seek the LORD while He may be found,  
Call upon Him while He is near.**

Let’s Keep The Light of ‘*For Thy sake*’ Burning!

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