

Sacrifice.



Costly Grace and
Glorious Privilege

Simon Guillebaud

Sacrifice: Costly *grace* and *glorious privilege*
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godly men and women who have gone
before, and have written more comprehensively
on the topic of sacrifice.



In places, the author's material deliberately
has echoes of their work and teaching.



We acknowledge their helpful contributions.





Show me the way of the cross once again
Denying myself for the love that I've gained
Everything's You now, everything's changed,
It's time You had my whole life;
You can have it all.

Yes, I resolve to give it all;
Some things must die,
Some things must live.
Not, 'What can I gain,'
But, 'What can I give?'

If much is required when much is received,
Then You can have my whole life;
Jesus, have it all.

I've given like a beggar but lived like the rich
And crafted myself a more comfortable cross,
Yet what I am called to is deeper than this,
It's time You had my whole life;
You can have it all.

(Matt Redman, 'The Way of the Cross' from the album
The Friendship and the Fear, Star Song Music, 1998)





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Introduction.

Matt Redman's song speaks of us crafting ourselves a more comfortable cross. However, a comfortable cross simply doesn't make sense. There was never anything comfortable about a cross. As words, comfort and cross cannot coherently co-exist. They are irreconcilable. The cross – Christianity's universally recognized symbol – represents sacrifice, excruciating pain and death. Subsequently, the resurrection represents hope and victory. And so it is rightly said that the cross we bear precedes the crown we wear. That order is very important to remember.

What you have in front of you is a call to sacrifice. Sacrifice is a huge topic, but this book is intentionally short so we will not be able to look at it in great depth. I was asked to write a book on this theme and thought long and hard about it. My hesitation lay in the fact that my sacrifices for Christ have been relatively small. You might consider them more substantial as I share some of my own personal journey in these coming pages, but honestly, I know how much the Lord has called me to lay down so far and there are many, many people who are more qualified than me to write out of the depths and pain of their personal experiences with and for Jesus.

And indeed even those things that are often thought of as sacrifices I consider privileges. Can something be called a sacrifice if it is simply giving back to God a small part of the



debt that we owe? Is it a sacrifice to spend time working with other Christians spreading the good news of Jesus and, in doing so, being constantly focused on the bright hope of being with Him after this life? I'd rather say it's not a sacrifice but a privilege.

I want to emphasize this more. It is critical that we think of privilege and sacrifice going hand in hand. Whereas 'comfortable' and 'cross' don't sit well together, 'privilege' and 'sacrifice' do, for the authentic follower of Christ. We must agree on that, because otherwise the whole concept sounds grim, daunting and negative.

What inspired me to lay my life down for the cause of Christ

*If Jesus, who is God,
died for me, then
no sacrifice can be
too great for me to
make for Him.*

was, in large part, reading about other men and women across the centuries who 'did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death' (Rev. 12:11). Their example set the standard in terms of what should be a normative response to God's call on our lives. It just seemed logical to me that if Jesus, who is God, died for

me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.

So, as we take a short look at what sacrifice involves for the follower of Jesus, I make no apology for giving plenty of examples from the lives of the saints of yesteryear as well as quoting their words, because there is an authenticity and authority behind such actions and pronouncements that I simply cannot claim to have fully experienced and lived out.



Their words and deeds will inspire you more than mine. And inspiration is what I'm shooting for in these pages. If you get to the end of them and are more fired up to aim higher, go deeper, and reach further in your love and pursuit of Christ, then this book will have done its job.

As we consider five aspects of Christian sacrifice we'll use what the apostle Paul says in Romans 12:1 as our springboard.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.

God give us ears to hear, eyes to see, discerning minds, and hearts committed to enact His call to be a living sacrifice!

Simon Guillebaud, July 2013

