

SIM *now*

East Asia Edition

Serving Sacrificially

But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus

Acts 20:24



SIM
Serving In Mission
国际事工差会

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Prayer



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Serving Sacrificially

Chris Crowder, Global Director of Regional Development

“Truly I tell you, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields — along with persecutions — and in the age to come eternal life”

(Mark 10:29-30)

My wife and I both started weeping at the same moment. The Cessna Caravan was gathering speed for takeoff. We were in the middle of the plane surrounded by all our worldly goods and were clutching our 7-month-old firstborn son. Thomas had no idea what was happening, but we did.

We were willing to go to a remote village, deep in the bush to live, but we had not yet done it. As we were taking off, I believe we both had a moment when we realized we were going off the grid, far beyond the reach of any real help. There were snakes, scorpions that could harm an infant, illness, parasites, and the list goes on.

The possibility of a sacrifice was only an idea up until that moment. Our tears fell, because it had just become real. Our obedience to do what the Lord had ordered meant that being a sacrifice or offering a sacrifice was now possible. We were actually taking our baby to live in the bush of Sudan. The risks were real. It was hard but the decision to obey was rather easy, but we still wept because there were elements of fear. Yes, we were happy and sad at the same time! We were “joy-fearful”. Serving Jesus sacrificially usually involves that mysterious combination of joy mingled with some loss.



Each of Jesus’ disciples need to be willing to sacrifice or give up. Of course, this is what Jesus himself did “for the joy set before him.” In the same way, for SIM missionaries to cross boundaries to Christ-less communities always require sacrifice.

Thank you so much for your prayers and unwavering partnership with our SIM East Asia missionaries who have been serving sacrificially and moving forward in His mission. We hope the stories of sacrificial service of some of them, in this issue, will inspire you as partners in His mission, to play a part in this sacrificial service for our Lord who sacrificed Himself for us on the Cross.

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Greater the Sacrifice, Greater the Impact

Dr Beng Shin, Theological Education Consultant



Great sacrifice leads to great impact. In the book of Acts, this truth is demonstrated in the life of Barnabas.

Sacrificing Wealth

Barnabas was a Jew from Cyprus (4:36). He sold his land and laid the entire sum at the feet of the Apostles. Traditionally, a Jew would keep his ancestral land honouring his parents and clan. It was expected of him to pass it to his children. Barnabas' sacrifice knew no barrier.

His giving was so impressive and exemplary that he was singled out from among the multitude who also gave their all. The Apostles changed his name from Joseph to Barnabas, the son of encouragement. This new name became the hallmark of his life. His giving must have been so pure and sincere that Luke contrasted it with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), who gave partially, but lied that they gave everything and paid with their lives.

Sacrificing Safety

When Paul escaped from Damascus and came to

Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but the disciples were afraid of him (9:26). The death of Stephen and the imprisonment of many (7:58-8:3) were fresh in the mind of the persecuted Christian community. They were suspicious of Paul scheming to spy on the Christians and get all of them arrested. Barnabas was the only one who dared to sacrifice his safety and bring Paul to meet the Apostles (9:27).

Sacrificing Life

Though Barnabas was a successful leader of the thriving Antioch church (11:20-24), he went to seek out Saul to team up with him in this growing ministry (11:25-27). In Acts 13, when the Holy Spirit called Barnabas and Paul to serve as missionaries He responded to God's call without any hesitation. Barnabas unreservedly forsook all and took off with Paul. It demands great courage to give up a successful ministry to become a missionary.

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Sacrificing Leadership

Next, he graciously let Paul take the lead role in their first mission trip (13-14). From then onwards, Paul stood at the forefront (13:9). Luke even described the mission team as Paul's party (13:13). Paul became the speaker of the mission team (13:16). Though it is common among successful leaders not to give up their leadership, Barnabas gave it up with grace, humility, and sacrifice.

Yes, Barnabas' sacrifice made a great impact not only on the churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, and mission fields, but also on Paul and Mark. His sacrifice impacted the World.

Joy of Serving Sacrificially

Quinnie, Central Asia

I remember once a pastor said, **“Give until it hurts; serve God until it hurts.”** When I first came to the field to serve, I thought I had sacrificed my stable and high paid salary, my family, and friends. Yes, all of these did hurt but after serving in the field for 3 years, I now realize that doing something I hate is also a kind of sacrificial service.

In my home country, having a maid to cook and do all the house chores is very common.

I hate cooking and doing house chores so much especially cleaning the toilet bowl. Yet, being hospitable is one of the most important services in the field, I always have to cook and do the clean up after people pay a visit.

The residential area where I stay has no running water and indoor toilet. If people want to have a shower, they must pay for it in a shower house. Last year, some of the youths asked if they could come to my place for a shower. Initially I was hesitant as I would have to clean up after they had used the toilet and bathtub. However, realizing that this could be a way to serve and to show God’s love, I said ‘yes’ to them.

One day, one of the youths came for a shower with a 5-year-old kid whom I welcomed with a smile. From the innocent laughs of the kid, I could tell how much he enjoyed the bath.



The happy kid after shower

After the bath, he looked around my house and said, **“Wow, your house is very big,”** though, it was not very big. He said so as he would have never been to an apartment. After a brief conversation, he asked shyly if he could come again for a shower. I replied cheekily **“Okay, next time, bring me a candy.”** He nodded his head with a big grin.

Instead of counting how much I have sacrificed to serve, I now remember the JOY of serving sacrificially. After he left,

I sat at my desk with joy thinking about the kid and thanking God for providing me a ‘decent’ place to bless others in a different way.

Did not Christ say, **‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’** (Matthew 25:40)

**Give until it hurts;
serve God until it
hurts.**

Grace to Serve Sacrificially

Alda, Indonesia

My ministry is to share the Good News and disciple my students, through music. Thanks be to God for the opportunity to teach in a music school in South Sulawesi, East Indonesia. I did not understand the dialect, culture, and custom of the students when I first came to serve here. People easily found out that I was not a local from the way I spoke their language. Living and serving in a place very different from my hometown had not been easy. I had to make some sacrifices and adjustments to settle there.

After my first 6 weeks in the field, our school was closed due to Covid-19 and music classes could not be continued physically. Though the School was reopened twice it was closed again due to Covid-19 cases in the school. But I thank God for my house that I could use it to continue with my piano classes, choir, and ear training. I had to divide the students into 5 groups and that made me very exhausted. Though I was often very tired, God granted His grace and enabled me to complete all my classes.



During those challenging times, I could build good relationship with my students. They used to come to my house to discuss about their studies, play games, sleep over, cook, eat, plant veggies in the garden and attend my morning devotions. We used to go out together too at times while some students joined my Bible Study. As a result, we now have 3 Bible study groups. Sharing my house with my students with the aim of sharing Father's love with them is my small way of sacrificially serving my Lord.

God has indeed been guiding me amazingly. His ways have always been beyond my imagination. Though Corona virus has been very scary, He has been turning this scary situation into a very useful tool in His own way by revealing His greatness and faithfulness. I have been

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experiencing His abundant grace by enjoying good health and by having good relationship with other teachers and students. He has been taking care of my family back at home too. I was able to meet up with my family during my school semester break after 2 years. I am confident that He would grant more of His grace to stay strong, to sacrifice more and continue with my service faithfully!

Strength to Serve Sacrificially

Bonga, CAN



Bus ride to home state

When Corona virus first appeared in the world scene, I was about to leave the field for my home country for a time of rest. Little did I know that I was about to embark on a journey that would take me from Indonesia back to my home country, with many interruptions along the way. But I can honestly confess that God's supply of strength was sufficient all through my journey.

When I began my journey, I was delayed due to the late arrival of my travel documents from the consular office in Indonesia. On arrival in Kuala Lumpur, I received news that my onward travel would be via Sri Lanka. Though I successfully arrived in my home country, I was denied access to the state quarantine facilities as I had transited via 5 airports on my way home.

Knowing my predicament, God, through our mission's local partners located an alternative guesthouse where I could serve my quarantine. Unexpectedly, when my phone broke down, God provided a replacement phone from an unlikely source, the Army barracks in my home country. Yes, seeing that I was physically and spiritually

drained after many hours of travel, God encouraged me by providing help through unknown sources.

After 5 days of travel by bus to my home state, I was tested positive for Corona virus, and was placed in a group to undergo quarantine in government facilities, with 5 other ladies who had arrived by train from other places. One by one, these roommates fell sick, testing positive for the Corona virus. Then I knew that there was an opportunity for me to minister to them. Truly an atmosphere of fear hung in the room, and I could not help but feel worried that I might also test positive. Yet I overcame my fear and suggested to the others that we could read the Bible, pray, and sing songs together. As we did this, our feelings of fear disappeared, and before long, all of us tested negative, allowing us to end our quarantine period.

God's words to Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9, ***"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness,"*** strengthens me.

**God encouraged me
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sources**

When I am willing to focus on the needs of others and sacrificially serve, even if I am myself feeling afraid or inadequate, His strength will be sufficient to me.

Perilous Sacrifice

Henry, Bolivia

“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me — the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace” (Acts 20:24)

When the World Health Organization declared Covid 19 as a pandemic 2 years ago, country after country started to close their borders and I found myself stranded in my home country for almost a year. But while waiting to return to my field, Bolivia, God gave me opportunities to minister to poor folks as well as migrant workers in my home country. Though some thought I was foolishly risking my life, I knew that there was no service without sacrifice and risks.

When I returned to Bolivia to continue with my ministry, I found that Covid cases and fatalities continued to rise there too. Church meetings and ministries were being curtailed and it seemed as if the whole world had shifted to virtual encounters from education to worship.

As I walked through the streets, I saw beggars and homeless people out there with needs and no protection at all from the merciless Covid virus. God put a burden in my heart to help some of these forgotten people at a time when everybody was trying to avoid contact with everybody.

It was heart breaking to see a significant number of pastors and people whom I ministered to, succumbing to the virus last year. Together with another pastor I began distributing food and

financial aids to families of pastors who died of Covid. Some members of those families were themselves battling the virus when we went around distributing aids and praying for them.



Accompanying bereaved family of pastor who died of Covid

It was not about being brave and daring to do what I did during the pandemic but simply leaning and trusting in God’s guidance and protection as I responded to the needs of the moment. Though I cannot fully comprehend why God chose to take some home to Himself while sparing others, one thing that I am more convinced now than ever is that we all live according to God’s timing.

Missionary Charles Thomas Studd once said: ***“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.”*** Thus, let us continue our journey of risky service for our Master, so that He can fulfil His plan and purposes in our lives.



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