

The Cross

by Wayne Goff



William Barclay, in his commentary on *The Gospel of John*, observes the following about what it means to give your life, as Jesus gave His life:

“It is told that in the First World War there was a young French soldier who was seriously wounded. His arm was so badly smashed that it had to be amputated. He was a magnificent specimen of young manhood, and the surgeon was grieved that he must go through life maimed. So he waited beside his bedside to tell him the bad news when he recovered consciousness. When the lad's eyes opened, the surgeon said to him: ‘I am sorry to tell you that you have lost your arm.’ ‘Sir,’ said the lad, ‘I did not lose it; I gave it — for France.’

“Jesus was not helplessly caught up in a mesh of circumstances from which he could not break free. Apart from any divine power he might have called in, it is quite clear that to the end he could have turned back and saved his life. He did not lose his life; he gave it. The Cross was not thrust upon him; he willingly accepted it — for us.”

If we would stop and think about the difference between “losing” something and “giving” it, our attitudes in service to God might be greatly improved. God **gave** His only begotten Son, **John 3:16**. Jesus freely **gave** His life for us, **Matthew 20:28**. The apostles **gave** their lives in martyrdom as a testimony of the truthfulness of their message, **Galatians 2:20**. What have you and I **given** to God?

“And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma,” **Ephesians 5:2**.

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,” **Ephesians 5:25**.

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