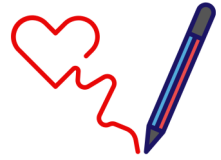


FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



Living Sacrifice

“Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.” (Esther 4:16)

These words were said by Queen Esther to save the Jews from annihilation by the plot of the wicked King's advisor, Haman. Mordecai, the uncle of Esther, pleaded with her to talk to her husband, King Ahasuerus, about the plot by Haman to kill all the Jewish people. On the other hand, Esther knew she would face death if she approached the King uninvited. As a result, she fasted and prayed for three days. The final decision was Esther would approach the King because her bottom line is, “If I perish, I perish.”

During our recent Leaders' Retreat, the theme was “Church Revival.” One of the preparations while awaiting church revival is that “God's people must be prepared to live sacrificially.” Queen Esther is a good example. Despite facing the threat of death, she was prepared to sacrifice her life for the sake of God's people. The thought of sacrifice did not come to her immediately but rather the fear of death. Only after fasting and prayer did God give her the boldness to do what was necessary.

The question for all of us is, “Are we prepared to live sacrificially?” It is not a popular notion because every sacrifice carries a cost. To be punctual for church service would mean having to sacrifice time for more sleep or to do personal things. To be faithful in tithing would mean having to sacrifice our bank balance or cut down on personal expenses. To serve and not to be served

would mean having to sacrifice our pride and personal time. The list goes on. It is not that we do not sacrifice at all, but we tend to do it selectively, especially when our instinct is to gratify our own desires. When we live sacrificially, we put our trust in God. We believe by faith that God will make up for us whatever shortfalls we have as a result of our sacrifice.

Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, but God intervened by providing a ram for the sacrifice. The apostle Paul suffered countless beatings, imprisonment, shipwrecks, and persecution for the sake of spreading the Gospel. He sacrificed comfort, safety, and his life for the Great Commission. Paul exhorts us in Romans 12:1,

“I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

Indeed! Sacrifice is an inevitable part of our spiritual worship. It is not a matter of how big or small the sacrifice is, but rather the faithfulness to do God’s work even if it costs us something. May we be directed to the Ultimate Sacrifice, which is our Lord Jesus Christ. He sacrificed his kingship for our sake so that our sins are forgiven and we can have eternal life. We are a small church, yet we are not small in serving. This is only possible because of your living sacrifice. Be encouraged that this is an expression of your faith in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

Pastor Kelvin