

# 'I Will Not Offer Unto the Lord That Which Cost Me Nothing'

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*The house of God is built upon the ground of the judgment of sin, and fellowship, prayer, and ministry must cost us something to be of value.*

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 24:24, 1 Chronicles 21:1, 1 Chronicles 21:7-30, Matthew 16:24, Luke 14:27, John 3:16, Romans 12:1, Philippians 3:8, Hebrews 13:15-16, 1 John 3:16

**Topics:** "Sacrifice", "Value of Fellowship"

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## Description

T. Austin-Sparks emphasizes the significance of sacrifice in our relationship with God, using the story of David and the threshing floor of Ornan as a backdrop. He highlights that the foundation of God's house is built upon the judgment of sin and the humility that comes from recognizing our faults. Sparks stresses that true fellowship and service in the house of God come at a cost, urging believers to value their relationship with God and each other deeply. He challenges the congregation to reflect on what they are willing to sacrifice for their faith, asserting that genuine offerings to God must come from a place of personal cost and commitment.

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## Transcript

Read: I Chronicles 21:1,7-30.

I think that you will probably all know that this threshing floor of Ornan became the site of the great temple. It was the place where the great temple built by Solomon was constructed. And this setting up of the altar there marks the movement of the house of God from Gibeon to Jerusalem. It is very impressive that the house of God was built upon a threshing floor. We all know what a threshing floor is. It is the place where the rod is brought heavily to bear upon the wheat, the place where the wheat is separated from the mere husks. And that is exactly what happened in a spiritual way in this threshing floor. It was the place where sin was judged. The first thing about the house of God is, that it is built upon the ground of the judgment of sin. David had already said, "I have sinned greatly, and done very foolishly." His sin was terribly judged by God. And the foundation of the house of God was where sin was judged. We know that is true in the New Testament.

Before you have the Church, you have the Cross. Before there can be any house of God, there must be the threshing floor where sin is judged. It is the place where all pride is abased. This sin of David was a sin

of pride. When Satan moved him to number Israel, the idea was that David might be able to boast of the greatness of Israel. Even Joab, who was a very carnal man, warned David that he was doing wrong. He said to David, Israel is a very great people, you need not bother about counting them. It was just pride that prompted this. To be able to say, you see how many people we have got. See what a wonderful people we are. See how many converts we have got. The Word says, "And the Lord was displeased with this thing." And that threshing floor was the place where all pride was brought down to the dust, the place of confession of sin, and the judgment of sin, and then forgiveness of sin. The place where judgment and mercy met together. That is the foundation of the house of the Lord. Before the altar could be set up publicly, it had to be in the very experience of David himself. That altar had struck into the heart of David like a sword. THE CROSS HAD DONE A DEEP WORK IN DAVID, BEFORE DAVID COULD SET UP THE ALTAR PUBLICLY.

These are abiding principles of the house of God. But in this brief word in II Samuel twenty-four, I want to come to that verse twenty-four. "Neither will I offer unto the Lord that which cost me nothing." To have a part in the house of God is a very costly thing. There is nothing cheap and easy about this. No, it is a very costly thing to come into the house of God. First of all, it cost God everything in giving His only begotten Son. It cost that Son everything in emptying Himself of all the fullness and glory of Heaven. The sin of man is a very costly thing. We cannot come into the good of that in the house of God without recognizing that it is a costly thing to come into God's house. A house of God is the place of fellowship. A house of God is the fellowship of the people of God. But fellowship is a costly thing. Surely you are learning that lesson as you go on. The fellowship of God's people is not a cheap and easy thing. Everything to do with that fellowship costs us something.

If that fellowship is disturbed between two people in the house of God, it is not an easy thing for one to go and confess that they are wrong, not an easy thing to apologize for doing that harm. It is not easy to humble ourselves before one another, we will do anything rather than humble ourselves to another brother or sister. No, fellowship is a costly thing. It costs humiliation and confession. What is true between two is often true between a number. If we are going to keep the fellowship in the house of God, it's got to cost us something to do that. There is a price attached to it. And if we are not prepared to pay the price of fellowship, it is because we hold fellowship cheaply. You see, if a thing to us is of little value, we are not prepared to pay very much for it. If we really do love the house of God, that is, the fellowship of the Lord's people, we will be prepared to pay any price to keep that fellowship. A thing which is of value to us is a thing for which we will pay the price. It is the same in our service to the Lord.

Here we are gathered this evening for prayer. Well, you know, sometimes in our gatherings for prayer, some people can pray without it costing them very much; it is very easy for some people to pray. It is like turning on the tap, and it just comes without any effort. But for some people it is very costly to pray. If some people pray, it is not at all easy for them. It is something that is just rung out of their hearts. It is when prayer costs us something that it is really of value.

The same is true of ministry. Now, all here tonight are not ministers of the Word. But there are those people who just love to get on the platform and talk. They are never more happy than when they are in public speaking. And they can do it so easily. Now that which really is of value costs something. The Cross, the Altar, has got to be right at the heart of our praying. It has got to be right at the heart of our ministry. So that we cannot minister unless the Lord does it through us. We would rather run far away from the platform than speak on it unless the Lord is going to do it. Well, I think you see the point. 'I will not offer unto the Lord that which costs me nothing.'

How much does the house of God really mean to us? How much does prayer really mean to us? How much does the fellowship of the Lord's people mean to us? Do we value it very highly? Then we will be prepared to pay a big price for it. If we do not value all this, and what the Lord has done for us, we will just throw it over so easily. Now this story of David has many lessons for us. Read it again, and think as you read. But always remember this one thing: **THAT WHICH IS OF VALUE, WE ARE PREPARED TO PAY FOR; AND WHAT WE VALUE MOST, WE WILL PAY MOST FOR!**

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