



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Dear Fellow-laborers,

It seems like only yesterday that Gloria and I sold our house in Dallas and moved to Thailand to pursue our calling full-time. We left our families, friends; and what little security we had – and struck out in a journey of faith.

The greatest sacrifice of all was to leave our families. We had to leave behind our eldest son, daughter-in-law and two beautiful grandchildren in Dallas. We do try to get back to the U.S. at least once a year, but it is never enough!

I am not complaining. With every great endeavor there is sacrifice. Dr. John C. Maxwell, the famous guru on leadership, tells us that Noah, Abraham and others called to God's service learned the "Law of Sacrifice" – *Sacrifice ALWAYS precedes success.*¹ They sacrificed because they saw the vision God had laid out before them – a vision that would affect millions of people in the millennia to come.

The vision that God holds out to us as fellow-laborers in His Harvest Fields is this: *the sacrifices we make now will affect the lives of thousands – maybe even hundreds of thousands – in the years between now and the Second Coming of Jesus the Christ!*

God ALWAYS requires His servants to SACRIFICE! But it is no longer only about sheep and goats – more importantly – it is now our hearts and our minds!

Ps 40:6-8

*"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;
My ears You have opened.
Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.
"Then I said, "Behold, I come;
In the scroll of the book it is written of me.
"I delight to do Your will, O my God,
And Your law is within my heart." NKJV*

Ps 51:16-17

*"For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it;
You do not delight in burnt offering.
"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart --
These, O God, You will not despise." NKJV*

¹

The Maxwell Leadership Bible, Thomas Nelson Bibles.

Sacrifice plays a BIG part in doing the Will of God. I have often said that any great goal demands three things: hard work, time and *sacrifice!*

The sacrifices God is looking for are connected to our hearts and minds. Jesus said we must be willing to give up ALL – *even our very lives* - for Him!

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.’” Matt 16:24-27 NKJV

God requires that we FOLLOW Jesus – that we become *completely consumed* with accomplishing the Work of Jesus Christ – according to His Will – on the Earth TODAY! That is the life-commitment of every person who calls him/herself a true Christian!

By this I am NOT saying that everyone should sell their house and move to Thailand! That calling was given to Gloria and me. What I AM SAYING is this:

Are we doing everything in our power to dedicate our lives and resources to GETTING THE JOB DONE!? Are we REALLY sacrificing in whatever way we reasonably can to accomplish His Work?

In the Old Testament, a sacrifice was a real one. Sheep, goats and bulls were the currency of the times. They were of REAL value to the people. It was a REAL sacrifice to give up one of these animals in sacrifice to God. Every time blood was spilled, it foreshadowed the very REAL sacrifice God would make by giving up His Only Begotten Son on the cross to pay for OUR SINS!

Giving up an animal was a real sacrifice. But it was still only an animal! We no longer sacrifice animals. Our sacrifices must be ourselves! There can be NO halfway – NO half-hearted commitment to God and His Work!

Could God accomplish His Work without us? Yes He could! He could even raise up stones to do it!

John the Baptist said in **Matt 3:9-10**:

“...and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” NKJV

I am speaking to ALL the members of ALL the Church of God fellowships: If any of us are so sleepy – so full of lethargy – or even unwilling to carry out God’s end-time Work, He will just get someone else who WILL!

But God has not called stones to do His Work. He has called us – you and me! God fervently DESIRES to accomplish His Will THROUGH His people! That is why Jesus founded His Church – to be populated by called out human beings - *IN THE FIRST PLACE!*

Now, don’t get me wrong! I know of God’s people who ARE sacrificing to get the Work done. For example, I receive letters regularly from poor and elderly widows who are fully engaged in the Preaching of the Gospel. Maybe they can only send a few dollars, but each and every time they write, they tell me *they wish they could do more!* Their sacrifices ARE a sweet savor to God! And I believe He multiplies their donations just as He multiplied the loaves and fishes. And I am just as assured that their prayers are sweet incense to Him!

And what about the volunteer teachers who come teach at Legacy School? They find a way to pay their own way to Thailand, sacrifice a year or more of their lives to serve as teachers and work for no pay! This is just one more example of what I mean by sacrifice.

And what about the countless sacrifices Jesus’ true servants make everyday to serve their Lord?

So, if you are already making major sacrifices in your life to serve God’s End-Time Work, then, I am not talking to you! It is God who watches and sees! It is He you and I must answer to.

But what do I see? I SEE – and I will bet YOU SEE TOO! – that MUCH, MUCH MORE CAN AND SHOULD BE DONE by all of us who call ourselves “God’s people”.

What I AM ASKING is this: *Are you completely and totally dedicated to God and His End-Time Work? Are you doing EVERYTHING you can to demonstrate that commitment to Him?*

God’s Work is a Work of the HEART and the SPIRIT! We demonstrate to God where our hearts are by what we DO with the resources He gives us.

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Luke 12:34 NKJV

Everything already belongs God! What He is MOST concerned about is where your heart is – *Are you 100% involved in His Work!?*

We are ALL – every single one of us – called to DO HIS WORK! We must ALL be fervently “about Our Father’s business”! Every time a new person is baptized, the angels in heaven break out in song! Every time some one new dedicates their lives to Him, God is well pleased! But people such as these will NEVER hear the Word of God unless more of us are *sacrificing to get that Word out to the Nations!* The Apostle Paul wrote in **Romans 10:14-15:**

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? NKJV

Do we REALLY understand how God uses us? We cannot just stand by and say that the job belongs to someone else; or belongs to some time in the future. Our present role as members of the Body of Christ is CRUCIAL to the accomplishment of God's Work on Earth today!

Every sacrifice we make leads to someone new hearing the GOOD NEWS of the Kingdom of God. Without the Gospel going forth to ALL NATIONS – they have NOTHING to respond to!

Can we all see just how important the role of each and every one of us is in God's Work? It is CRUCIAL! It is INTEGRAL! It is VITAL!

I hope we get our eyes opened soon so that we can all see. Yes, I see some of my brothers and sisters peacefully asleep! Some are entangled in the cares of this world. Some are seduced by the pursuit of riches. Some have allowed trials and tribulations to cause them to "check-out" of God's Work. Some are *so far from God* that they have become easy prey for Satan!

Christ said:

"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

"And He said to them, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Mark 4:3-9 NKJV

Since the disciples didn't understand what He was talking about, He explained the parable to them:

"Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word. And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." Mark 4:13-20 NKJV

Some of us have become entangled in the “cares of this world.” Others have become engaged in the “pursuit of riches” – the yardstick of success. The desire for “other things” becomes foremost in our hearts and minds and we are snared! When we get sidetracked by these things – Satan wins!

We CANNOT allow the cares of this world, pursuit of riches and desire for things *OTHER THAN THE WORK OF GOD* “*CHOKES*” US AWAY from God’s service! Our success as Church of God members comes when we BEAR FRUIT – *thirty fold* and *sixty fold* and a *hundred fold*!

Our success with GOD is measured by the fruit that comes with the PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL! Our fruit appears when we see people who have NEVER heard God’s voice before COMING TO REPENTENCE! Even a small sacrifice on our part can be *LIFE-CHANGING* to others!

Are we fully, completely and absolutely engaged in the pursuit of THIS KIND OF SUCCESS? In Matthew 25, Jesus teaches us with another parable:

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them." Matt 25:14-19 NKJV

I have heard some people say that “talents” means God-given talents such as musical ability, public speaking ability or some other physical ability. Well, Jesus is NOT talking about our ability to sing or write! A talent was a measure of gold weighing 164 ½ pounds². Jesus is talking about the PHYSICAL RESOURCES He gives us to continue His Work!

Jesus is the “man traveling to a far country” and we are His servants. When He returns, He will have a reckoning with us! Let’s continue. How did the servants of Matthew 25 do with the resources He gave them?

"So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'" Matt 25:20-23 NKJV

² Easton’s Bible Dictionary

Here we see that the first 2 servants used their physical resources to create an increase. Each doubled the resources given him to do His Master's Work.

What about the *last* servant?

"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where y have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'" **Matt 25:24-25 NKJV.**

His talent achieved NOTHING!!

He knew His Master reaped where He did not sow. He knew that His Lord gathered where He did not scatter seed. But He STILL did not use his resources to produce increase. What stopped Him?

Let me ask this question: **If Our Lord and Master is not the one doing the sowing and scattering of seed, WHO IS?!**

WE who are his servants, of course! It is clear from this parable that **WE** are the ones who are to be SOWING and SCATTERING! God is the one who will then do the REAPING and GATHERING.

Let me ask this question: *How are we doing as servants of Jesus the Christ?* Are the physical resources HE gives to us being used to produce an INCREASE?

Wherever we INVEST our physical resources, ***are they being used to scatter the precious seeds of ETERNAL LIFE to all the nations?***

This is SERIOUS business! God takes what we do with what He gives us – **VERY SERIOUSLY!!**

Let's look at the end of the parable:

"But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

"For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." **Matt 25:26-30 NKJV**

Who is Jesus talking to? This parable is in the Bible for a VERY important reason!

GOD IS TALKING TO US!! Again, “talents” are symbolic of **physical resources** – not some ethereal artistic ability!

Matthew 25 tells me that I have a personal responsibility to Jesus Christ to see that whatever physical resources He gives me are used to bring forth fruit! I have the RESPONSIBILITY to sow! I am held ACCOUNTABLE for how my “talents” are scattered!

Yes, sometimes it is more comfortable to sit back and play Pilate – wash our hands of any further responsibility. But Jesus’ words in Matthew 25 show clearly that we cannot do this. The “talents” are given to US! It is each and every Christian’s individual responsibility to make sure they are creating an INCREASE!

We are not called in this Church Age so that we can receive personal salvation only! We are called as Christ’s instruments so that ***OTHERS ALSO*** can receive eternal life! And He gives us “talents” so that we can do the job!

Jesus said that we are NOT to wait. He said that we are to be busy doing the Work of God today! (**John 4:34-38**)

That is why I address you who read this letter as “Fellow-laborers”. Our job is to join in His labors and help finish His Work!

In Asia I see the fruits first-hand! Sometimes I see it directly when the lives of young hill tribe students at Legacy School are changed forever! At other times I see it when people of pagan religions are called because of the efforts of fellow servants whose evangelistic efforts you support.

My fellow-laborers, we must GET ON FIRE for God’s Work! We must continue to make the sacrifices necessary to FINISH His Work! We are Christ’s end-time team! Maybe you are already sacrificing all you can. That is between you and God. My job – the job God gives me – is to STIR YOU ALL TO ACTION! The rest is up to *you and God.*

DISASTER IN SOUTH INDIA

I have been receiving emails from Michael Hubert describing the disaster that has befallen Tamil Nadu and other states of South India. Hundreds of thousands of people are affected by one the greatest disasters in that area of the world since the Tsunami of December last year!

South India has been struck by 2 major typhoons over the past several months. The typhoons have dumped millions of gallons of rain on South India. The flooding has caused major damage to homes and the infrastructure of India’s Southern States. Thousands of homes have been washed away, leaving the homeless. Crops have been destroyed, leaving the people without enough to eat. Entire villages have been stranded by washed out roads. People are now dying because of water born diseases such as typhoid. Yet I see nothing about this on the news! I had to resort to the internet to learn the facts!

Legacy works with Michael Hubert and his Shabnam (*Early Rain*) Foundation. He is doing what he can to help, especially those who are either Church members or prospective members. His own house in Madras was flooded with several feet of water!

He is getting foodstuffs, straw mats and small kerosene stoves to those he can get to. He is overwhelmed. He is only one man. Legacy is helping him with what we can send. He certainly needs more help.

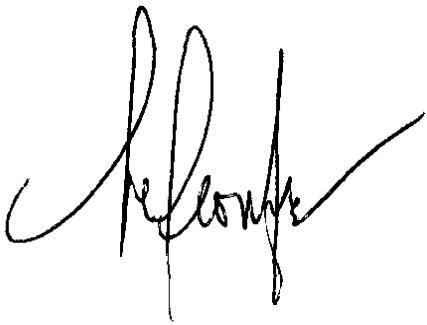
When I return to Asia, I will visit India as soon as I can. I want to visit with our new brethren and our prospective members and see “on sight” how we might find the best way to help. When one has very limited resources, one needs to discover the best way those resources can be stretched to make the biggest difference! Please pray that God will guide and bless my visit and show me *His way* to help in India.

I will write again soon. Gloria and I want to thank all of you for your support and hospitality to us during our visit to America. And we sincerely thank you for your prayers and support for our God-given mission in Asia.

This will be the last letter of 2005. Please accept our sincere gratitude for all you have done this last year.

Thank you with all our hearts!

In Jesus’ service,



Leon Sexton

WHAT IS LEGACY INSTITUTE?

LEGACY INSTITUTE is a private, non-profit, charitable foundation and is not affiliated with any human church organization. Legacy Institute seeks to serve and help mankind in the spirit and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. His instructions were to freely give. This means without discrimination and without prejudice. Your donations to Legacy Institute are tax deductible in the USA.