

Too Many Christians Completely Ignore This Precious Spiritual Gift

Missionary John Allen Chau died for what he believed in. Some have hailed him as a hero while others have stated that he was foolish. But it was apparent that he was willing to lay down his life to preach the gospel to people he didn't know. Yet he knew God loves them.

As a Christian, chances are you have learned about spiritual gifts. Perhaps you were taught biblical truths of spiritual gifts in an introductory class at the church you were joining. It may very well be that you took a class about "Membership," then you took a course on "Ministry," where your spiritual gifts were identified. Then you took a class on "Missions" and somewhere in the mix you learned about "Money." Courses like these are good and basic, and numerous people filter through them and into the other processes the church offers. But, have you ever taken a class as a new Christian about "Martyrdom"?

Can you imagine how many would probably not commit to becoming a member of a church if there were a required class on this spiritual gift? Too often this gift is neglected or it is passed over when teaching on spiritual gifts. Or it is listed as "other gifts."

Counting the Cost

Jesus said that disciples are to, "count the cost" (Luke 14:25-33). This wasn't just for first-century saints, but all Christian disciples.

The apostle Paul alluded to martyrdom when discussing spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14. He said, "If I give all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be

burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:3). In this verse Paul was talking about being betrayed. But also the willingness to die for Christ's cause, being handed over to persecutors and being martyred.

Counting the cost to being a disciple of Jesus is a requirement for all followers of Jesus. Millions of believers around the world make Jesus Lord, knowing that their life can be taken for their newfound faith. Many are imprisoned and tortured as new Christians in other countries, considering it a joy to identify with Christ's wounds. Of these saints Revelation 3:11 says, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Consider This

Have you truly counted the cost of being a disciple of Jesus? If your life were at stake, and a persecutor told you death was imminent if you confessed Jesus is your Lord, what would you say? Many readers may scoff at this because they don't face persecution or death for their faith where they live. But it can happen anywhere. And if this were the case, we would see who the genuine followers of Jesus are and the many who really aren't.

If you hesitate, perhaps you haven't counted the cost yet. But, consider it—spending time in God's presence. Study more about this neglected spiritual gift and commit wholeheartedly to follow Jesus.

Next Steps

Read the Bible daily and also purchase the all-time classic *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* for your spiritual growth. And comment on our Facebook page if you counted the cost and are willing to lay down your life for the gospel. {eo}

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