



Thursday Thought

by Pastor Myron D. Atkinson

“You’re such a Martyr!”

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Verse for the week: Matthew 6:2 (NLT) “When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get.”

I’ve heard the phrase “You’re such a martyr” used on television and in real life. It’s usually said with negative connotations. Some say it when a person has sacrificed and then whines about it or feels sorry for themselves. Others say it because they feel guilty themselves for their lack of sacrifice. I don’t like it when people throw the phrase around because it’s down playing the love and devotion that was shown by those who have sacrificed and died for their faith.

The word “martyr” means “witness” – someone who has seen an event and shared what happened. That’s what the apostles did on that first Easter morning. They saw and then went out and witnessed what they saw. These apostles and the early church fathers looked at martyrdom as an honor. The apostle Paul said in **Philippians 1:21(NCV) “To me the only important thing about living is Christ, and dying would be profit for me.”** For Paul and other early church fathers, it wasn’t a sacrifice to give up their lives or their possessions. They willingly did it out of their love for Christ and the people He loves. They were being a witness. My mother didn’t die for her faith but she made a lot of sacrifices for my brothers and me. She went without getting her teeth fixed so her boys would have good teeth, she ultimately ended up with dentures. She gave up sleep so that she could work extra hours and multiple jobs to see that there was food for us. Her sacrifice was a witness of her love for us. Yes, I’m sure it bothered her when we didn’t show appreciation at the time, but it didn’t change her sacrificing for us..

To sacrifice is good, but for those who do sacrifice, please be careful. Don’t provide people opportunities to say, “You’re such a martyr,” because of your actions. When we sacrifice out of love for others, we shouldn’t brag about our sacrifices, or even worse, whine about it. Instead, thank God for the opportunities. God sees our sacrifices and He will reward us if we aren’t drawing attention to ourselves through whining. Jesus said in **Matthew 6:4 “Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.”** The reward is coming but most likely won’t even be in this lifetime. So, hold your horses and look forward to the day when you stand before God.

Question to ask yourself: Are you guilty of whining when you do something for others? If so, how can you change your attitude?