A Sacrificing Servant

*Matthew 20:27-28 (NIV) - (Jesus said) "And whoever wants to be first must be your slave just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."*

In the Korean War, there was a young sergeant by the name of Gardolibov.

Sergeant Gardolibov had been caught up in the blood battle that was known as "Heartbreak Hill." During a lull in the shooting, a rescue team was sent out to aid the wounded. By the time the medics found him, the sergeant was dying, his hands paralyzed.

But death and paralyzed hands hadn't stopped the sergeant from fulfilling his duty.

In that moment when a normal person directs his thoughts and concerns to survival, the sergeant was still doing what he could to keep the messages going through. In the conflict, a crucial communication wire had been broken. Seeing the danger, Gardolibov had clenched the two broken pieces of wire ends between his teeth.

The medics were moved by his devotion. I imagine you are also touched by the sergeant who was faithful unto death.

As admirable as the sergeant's sense of duty was, it pales in comparison to the sacrifice of our Savior.

Scripture tells us of how Jesus' innocent blood was shed. It was shed not just to save a few comrades who might appreciate His gift. No, Jesus died for people who hated and despised Him. He died for the very people who had put Him on the cross and made mockery of Him as He was dying.

It is quite possible that the sergeant knew, as he died, that his options were limited. He could hold those wires, or he could let them hang loose. No other possibility presented itself.

In contrast we have a Savior who went through His entire life fully aware that if humankind was to be saved, He would have to die. It was a crushing burden to carry. Even so, Jesus did just that. As John had plainly stated, He was the Lamb of God who would take away the world's sins by carrying them to the cross.

Now, it's quite possible that Sergeant Gardolibov was aware that family, friends, and those who lived after him would be proud that he had done the right thing. In contrast the Savior's omniscience told Him that many people in future generations would deny that He had ever existed -- let alone made any kind of sacrificial satisfaction for humankind's sins.

In spite of all this disregard and disrespect from those He had come to save, Jesus remained at His post, and finally showed Himself to be faithful unto death. He continued on as a serving Slave for humanity, giving His life so there would be a covenant of peace between once-lost humanity and our forgiving God.

Paul understood Jesus' love and duty when he wrote to the church in Rome (and to us): "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, NIV).

**THE PRAYER**: Lord, history is filled with soldiers who made great sacrifice for their comrades. I rejoice that in the battle against Satan, Jesus made sacrifices for me. Seeing His great sacrifice, may I also be willing to make sacrifices for others. This I pray in Jesus' Name. Amen.