'If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him'.

This statement became the driving force in the life of C. T. Studd of 19th century England. Charlie Studd was nurtured in the lap of luxury among British high society, but in his early twenties, he forsook it for the foreign mission field, ultimately becoming one of the most dedicated and sacrificial missionaries in the history of the church.

By the time he was sixteen, Charlie had become an expert cricket player, and by eighteen, he had a Cambridge career in cricket and had already become the most famous player in Britain. But that year of 1878, he came to known and love Jesus Christ. It wasn't long before the fame and notoriety did not satisfy, and C. T. was stirred to seek something higher and more eternal, as he had seen his own father do at the end of his life.

C. T. determined that his life would be consistent and fixed for one purpose in view—being obedient to God's will. He soon set himself to seek an empowering of the Holy Spirit, and before long, the love of God was poured out upon Him in fullness by an empowering of the Spirit he had not known before.

Within a few months, Charlie was burdened very specifically to make himself available for work in China. When he made this decision known, he received strong opposition from family, friends, and even other Christians. But he had come to the point that he never looked back. His guiding principle he stated in simple words: 'How can I spend the best years of my life living for the honors of this world, when thousands of souls are perishing every day?'

Charlie soon wrote to his mother: 'Mother dear, I do pray God will show you that it is such a privilege to give up a child to be used of God in saving sinners who have never heard of the name of Jesus'. Soon after this letter, he met with Hudson Taylor, who was home from China to enlist any Christian workers who felt called to go to China. It wasn't long before Studd was accepted by Taylor as a member of the China Inland Mission, along with six other young friends—M. Beauchamp, A. T. Pohill-Turner, D. E. Hoste, C. H. Pohill-Turner, W. W. Cassels, and Stanley P. Smith. Charlie and his six friends made up what was known as The Cambridge Seven, who were leaving promising careers and heading to China, which stirred the news across Britain. They set sail for China in February of 1885.

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A full account of Studd's life and work can be found in Norman Grubb's biography, C. T. Studd: Cricketer and Pioneer. C. T. actually had three different missionary careers, first in China, then India, and finally in Africa.

It was while he was in China at the age of 25 that Charlie's full future financial inheritance came to him. He decided, after prayer and searching the Scriptures, that he was to give it all away. On January 13, 1887, he gave 5000 pounds each to the ministries of D. L. Moody and George Muller, then 5000 to be used for the poor of London, another 5000 to Booth Tucker, for the work of the Salvation Army in India, and several 1000 pound gifts to various Christian workers in Ireland and England.

He thought he had given it all away, but later found out he had more inheritance coming, so he then sent several thousand pounds to the China Inland Mission, leaving him with 3400 pounds. It was like giving away millions by today's standard.

Three years after arriving in China, C. T. married a young Irish missionary from Ulster, Priscilla Livingston Stewart. Just before the wedding, Charlie presented the remaining 3400 pounds to Priscilla as a wedding gift. She wouldn't have it. To gether they gave the rest of it away for the Lord's work. The theme of their wedding day was, 'United to fight for Jesus'.

One of the main works in China that the Studds did was to open an opium shelter for addicts, who were allowed to stay there for a month. Hundreds came through the shelter and left free from drug addiction, and many came to know Christ a
nd found freedom. Over the eight year period of that difficult ministry, over 800 people came through the shelter and were helped.

After being in China for 10 years, the Studds returned to England in 1894. C. T. had almost died the previous year and it had become obvious it was the Lord's will to return home. As their furlough unfolded, D. L. Moody invited Charlie to the U. S. to take a speaking tour of American churches and universities.

In 1900, C. T. and Priscilla answered God's call to go to India. Charlie's father had expressed on his death bed that he hoped somehow his son would one day go to India. From 1900-1906, C. T. pastored the Union Church in Ootacamund, South India. A remark was made about this church during this period that best describes the work of grace that occurred there: "That church is a place to be avoided, unless a man means to get converted!" There were constant and, at times, remarkable conversions, including military officers and individuals in places of high honor.

When the time came in 1906 to leave India, all four of their daughters had become believers and wanted to be baptized there before leaving India. C. T. baptized the girls himself in a tank in the ground. Among those present for the baptism were an old missionary and his wife who deeply loved the girls, another Baptist missionary couple, and a young British missionary named Amy Carmichael.

The Studds returned to England, not knowing exactly what God had for them. C. T. was now fifty, with some real health challenges. It had been 18 years since their marriage and their mutual surrender to God's purposes. But the greatest venture of all was yet to come, the greatest work of his life—the interior of Africa.

The Studds had no money, and as he was facing real health issues, how could he even consider tropical Africa? Before long, his doctor declined giving his permission for the plans and then the mission committee rejected his request. His answer to the doctor and the committee was, 'Gentlemen, God has called me to go and I will go'. God's ultimate will and C. T.'s determination won in the end, as Charlie labored in the heart of Africa for the next twenty years, establishing the Africa Inland Mission, which later became the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade (WEC).

Studd sailed for Africa on December 15, 1910, and wrote on his first day in the Belgium Congo: 'I know I am the Lord's; I know I only want His glory and the salvation of others and I know He knows it. Best of all, I know God is with us. He talks to me and His blessed Word means more than ever before; He makes me to dare and to do for Him'.

He often faced ongoing challenges that only God could meet and would often say, 'Funds are low again, hallelujah! That means God trusts us and is willing to leave His reputation in our hands'.

Concerning the romance of the mission field, Studd once commented:

"The "romance" of a missionary is often made up of monotony and drudgery; there often is no glamor in it; it doesn't stir a man's spirit or blood. So don't come out to be a missionary as an experiment, for that is useless and dangerous. Only come if you feel you would rather die than not come. Lord Wolsey was right: "A missionary ought to be a fanatic or he en cumbers the ground." There are many trials and hardships. Disappointments are numerous and the time of learning the language is especially trying. Don't come if you want to make a great name or want to live long. Only come if you feel the re is no greater honor, after living for Christ, than to die for Him. That does the trick in the end. It's not the flash in the pan, but the steady giving forth of light and the shining on and on that we need out here. Our job is to make all hear the Word and God's job is to give penetration to His Word."

Over those twenty years, Studd witnessed seasons of real outpourings of the Holy Spirit and saw real revival spread to many mission stations.

Some of his words while in Africa:

'Last June at the mouth of the Congo there were a thousand prospectors, traders, merchants and gold seekers, waiting to rush into these regions as soon as the government opened the door to them, for rumor declared that there is an abundance of gold. If such men hear so loudly the call of gold and obey it, can it be that the ears of Christ's soldiers are deaf to the call of God? Are gamblers for gold so many, and gamblers for God so few?'

'Some wish to live within the sound
Of church or chapel bell;
But I want to run a rescue shop
Within a yard of hell'.

'Let us not glide through this world and then slip quietly into heaven, without having blown the trumpet loud and long for our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Let us see to it that the devil will hold a thanksgiving service in hell, when he gets the news of our departure from the field of battle'.

In a letter written home not long before his death, C. T. gave a look back at his life:

'As I believe I am now nearing my departure from this world, I have a few things to rejoice in:
- that God called me to China and I went in spite of opposition.
- that I joyfully acted as Christ told the rich young ruler to act.
- that, at the call of God, I deliberately gave up my life to the Lord Jesus for this work in Africa, one day when I was sailing alone on the Bibby Liner in 1910, which was to be henceforth not for the Sudan only, but for the whole unevangelized world.
- my only joys therefore are that, when God has given me a work to do, I have not refused it'.

C. T. bore much fruit in Africa, even while enduring weakness, sickness and suffering several heart attacks. It was on July 16, 1931, around 10:30 am, that Charlie Studd died in the heart of Africa and was buried there. His last spoken words were, 'Hallelujah! Hallelujah!'

The evident, God-given strengths of C. T. Studd were as follows:

- courage in any emergency
- determination never to sound retreat
- a conviction that he was in God's will
- real faith that God would see him through any situation
- his contempt for depending on the arm of the flesh
- his willingness to risk all for Christ.

His own son-in-law and biographer, Norman Grubb, perhaps stated best his father-in-law's lasting legacy to the future cause of the gospel, when he wrote:

'His life will be an eternal rebuke to easy-going Christianity'.

-- Mack Tomlinson