

Laying Down Our Lives

Description

1 John 3:16-24

We typically think of those who “lay down” their lives as martyrs: those who lose their physical lives on behalf of others. We rightfully honor their sacrifice and hold them up as examples. John reminds us that Jesus’ death on the cross can be seen as the ultimate expression of this kind of life.

John’s words, however, expand our understanding of what it means to “lay down” our lives. Not all may be required to die an early death. In truth, most will not. Still, many of us have material possessions (v. 17). When we see someone in need, there is an opportunity to lay aside our plans for the benefit of another. What are our plans but the life we intended to live? When we put another’s needs ahead of our own, we follow Jesus’ example. It is not the cost of the sacrifice, but whether it expresses Christlike love.

No sacrifice is trivial. Whether we consider it great or small is unimportant. We are to “love one another as he commanded us” (v. 23).

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