

# Stop giving your life to Jesus

Spoken Word Poem by Glen Scrivener

I gave my life to Jesus about a thousand times,  
At teenage shrines of rare experience,  
They'd blare Delirious then dare obedience,  
I'd swear allegiance, soul-bared and serious,  
Each prayer more daring than the previous.

On stage, the preacher saw we staunch hard core,  
who flocked to the fore to knock, knock knock on heaven's door.  
He claimed salvations like he was keeping score.  
Yet none were sure but he...  
And none doubted more than me.

So I prayed again, to firm cement it,  
Making sure I really meant it.  
Vowed my life to be amended,  
Willed my all to dust descended,  
Gave my heart to be expended.  
Then when all my prayers were ended...  
Nothing, but my self lamented...  
Oh I pretended all was mended and extended lifted hands  
But within I could not understand:  
What more could He demand?

I gave my life to Jesus a thousand different ways,  
No single day would pass without this act.  
I would contract to yield my every part,  
To make one more fresh start,  
To be more set apart,  
And in return I'd yearn for Him to impart the merest trace  
of grace into my heart.

I gave my life to Jesus, though faith continued flagging,  
though doubts were ever nagging, zeal sagging  
dragging down to duty's basement.  
But at least I had my bracelet!  
O dear bracelet, give me strength anew.  
The bracelet counseled: What Would Jesus Do?  
And to answer all I could think was that He would sink  
to His knees in passionate pleas,  
like at Gethsemane.  
And with almighty self-surrender,  
there He rendered ALL to God who, silent, let Him fall.

So what should I do?  
I too would heed that call,  
and likewise sprawl before the Splendor.

This crawl became my pattern,  
each new day I'd flatten self  
before the Lord, pressed down to gain reward  
that never came. But all the same I'd call.

And all the while the preachers told me  
"Give control, not part, but wholly,  
Give your heart, your life, your all."  
But rarely do I recall  
Being told what He gave, my Lord to save.  
Except... they slipped it in... to conscript us they gripped us  
With "Jesus whipped, our Saviour stripped,  
the blood it dripped from the cross," but they ripped it from it's gospel frame  
To say "Now YOU. YOU DO THE SAME."  
And thus Christ's offering was flipped, we were guilt tripped  
by the very act that saved us.  
So it was engraved, instilled:  
The cross was a standard unfulfilled by us.  
Oh but we'd try, my how we'd try, we'd bow the knee and bear the load,  
It was the very least we owed.

I gave my life to Jesus... but somewhere down the road I slid,  
my faith undid even amid my church, my prayers,  
even as I bid for heaven's care,  
beneath the lid, the venom hid.  
I was your youth group's keenest kid,  
But no-one hated God more than I did.

With Him it's just take, take, take, there's no break,  
His thirst for blood who can slake?  
At least vampires get you just once,  
But this God held perpetual hunts.

I gave my life to Jesus but I guess it was no good.  
I did what I could to appease Him,  
but no pleasing seemed probable,  
So this elder brother turned prodigal.

And I could chronicle the years headed east.  
A far country unpoliced,  
It was a famine disguised as a feast,  
A pig-sty passed off as release.

But there... at the end of the track, with life out of whack when all was pitch black...  
THERE – what brought me back?

THIS BOOK.  
Cos THIS BOOK, as I read, didn't say what they said,

To those with bowed heads, under piety's dread, by their leaders misled,  
THIS BOOK said: REPENT and BELIEVE the GOOD NEWS.  
The KINGDOM of God is at hand.  
There He stands in your stead,  
your King lifts your head,  
He has shouldered your dread,  
arms outstretched till they bled.

As I read, I met HIM: the Father's sheer Gift,  
now offered to lift us from cowering,  
The feeble empowering,  
The filthy clean showering,  
the lowly now towering in Him.

So that night on His knees? Gethsemane's pleas?  
Those prayers they were said for me.  
Cos I am not Jesus there in the garden, begging for pardon,  
I'm Peter.  
Despite all my boasts, I'm asleep at my post,  
And Jesus does it all for me.

Can you give your life to Jesus? Talk about cart before horse.  
Can we resource the Source who flows like a river  
He is the Giver and we just receive, that's what it means to believe.

So I'll leave an appeal. To the preachers who feel  
that they must stir up zeal, then let it be His we reveal.

You say "Give your heart"  
This says "Christ is the donor"

You say "Yield your life"  
This says "He was always the owner"

You say "Get on fire."  
This says "You are the Light."

You say "Keep running to God."  
This says "Walk in Christ."

You say "Dare to be a missional, intentional, incarnational, contextualised, no-compromise,  
counter-cultural, radical, red-letter, fully-devoted, disciple."  
This says "Follow."

You say "Get hungry for God."  
This says "Take, eat, swallow."  
You say "Press into God"  
This says "You're hidden in Christ"

You say "Be a world changer"  
This says "Lead a quiet life."

You say "Surrender all."  
This says "You're not your own."

You say "Step up to the plate",  
This says "You're raised to the throne."

You say "Burn out"  
This says "Shine"

You say "Work on your relationship with Jesus."  
This says "I am my beloved's and He is mine."

Folks, look at the book and unhook from this wearisome, will-driven view  
Stop giving your life to Jesus, He's the Giver delivered for you.