Causes worthy of sacrifice

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God sent Moses on a mission to rescue his people from oppression. He was asked to risk his life in a costly but exciting adventure--a mission of compassion and justice on behalf of a million other people.

Recently, on TV, I saw an attempt to break the world's record for having the most skydivers come together in a midair formation. On their third attempt, some 240-plus skydivers broke the record. They held on to each other in formation for 15 seconds.

The feat, however, came at a terrible cost. During the group's second jump, one skydiver--the mother of two--inadvertently ran into another and was knocked unconscious. Unable to open her chute, she fell to her death. The skydivers solemnly dedicated their record-breaking jump to their fallen friend.

People are capable of amazing feats of self-discipline and risk-taking for relatively insignificant causes. They will devote themselves to their goal at the expense of time, money and family, just so they can prove something to themselves. For the sake of adventure and the thrill of competition they're willing to sacrifice their lives, to give up everything.

But Jesus tells his followers this: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it."