

Giving Up Their Jewelry

During his reign, King Frederick William III of Prussia (1770 – 1840) found himself in trouble. Wars had been costly, and in trying to build the nation, he was seriously short of finances.

He couldn't disappoint his people, and to capitulate to the enemy was unthinkable.

After careful reflection, he decided to ask the women of Prussia to bring their gold and silver jewelry to be melted down for their country. For each ornament received, he determined to exchange a decoration of bronze or iron as a symbol of his gratitude. Each decoration would be inscribed, "I gave gold for iron, 1813."

The response was overwhelming. Even more important, these women prized their gifts from the king more highly than their former jewelry.

The reason, of course, is clear. The decorations were proof that they had sacrificed for their king. Indeed, it became unfashionable to wear jewelry, and thus was established the Order of the Iron Cross. Members wore no ornaments except a cross of iron for all to see.

There is a parallel. When believers come to their King, they, too, exchange the flourishes of a former life for a cross.

But the ultimate reward is worth it.

– Beecher Hunter