

Living Sacrifices

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Romans 12:1

Rom. 12:1, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”*

How to present ourselves before God.

The text says that Christians should offer themselves as living sacrifices. Paul is begging these Christians to present themselves to God as living sacrifices. He is not meaning only the body, but the spirit of man using his body in the service of the Lord.

We were purchased by the death of Jesus. We are now the temple of the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor. 6:19-20, *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*

We should desire to present ourselves as living sacrifices to the Lord.

Let us notice God’s way for us.

Give our body as a living sacrifice

In the Old Testament, a dead sacrifice was given — ours is a live one. He wants *us* today.

In doing this our natural life is not consumed like ordinary sacrifice, but presented to God as alive from the dead.

The Old Testament sacrifice had three stages:

- Preparation for sacrifice (so must we today).
- Death of the animal (today, we are to have death of fleshly self and evil desires). Col. 3:1-6, *“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.”*

- The act of sacrificing (today, we are to live the life of Jesus).
 - 1 Cor. 15:58, *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”*
 - 2 Cor. 4:16, *“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”*

What is sacrificed?

Our old life in baptism. Rom. 6:3-7, *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.”*

Sacrifice in denial of ourselves. Matt. 16:24, *“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”*

Sacrifice in growing spiritually.

- 2 Pet. 3:18, *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”*
- 2 Cor. 3:18, *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”*

Sacrifice in worship. John 4:23-24, *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”*

First of all, worship! Then:

- Give ourselves to do the things commanded in worship.
- Give ourselves in the right manner.

Sacrifice in perfecting holiness in our lives.

- 1 Pet. 1:15, “*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;*”
- Rom. 8:5-8, “*For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*”

Sacrifice in service.

- Preaching.
- Teaching.
- Ministering — helping others. (Letting our light shine).

Not only now, but throughout life.

Holy and acceptable

The sacrifice is not acceptable just because of the death - it is in the offering of the sacrifice that is acceptable.

The animal called for was without spot or blemish. (Such was holy).

The sacrifice had to meet all the criteria of the law before it could be holy.

Our living sacrifice has to meet every requirement to be considered holy.

Holy means: That which is required — given in the right manner (love).

Our lives must meet the criteria of spiritual circumcision.

- Rom. 2:29, “*But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*”
- Col. 2:11, “*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.*”

Which is our reasonable service

Because God is our creator.

The creator should have control over the created. If He had not created us we would not have the blessed hope of heaven.

Reasonable because God has control of our destiny.

Christ will be our judge. 2 Cor. 5:10, *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”*

It is only reasonable that we should respond lovingly toward Him.

To love is to know the sacrifices which eternity exacts from life.

Reasonable because God has redeemed us with a great sacrifice. Heb. 2:9, *“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”*

Jesus gave his life for us in the most horrible way.

Because He loved us we should love Him and do what He desires of us. 1 John 4:19, *“We love him, because he first loved us.”*

Reasonable to receive continued blessing in this life:

If we give God our lives in His service, He has promised to bless us. Matt. 5:3-12, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”*

He has promised to give us all that we need spiritually to be faithful. 2 Pet. 1:3, *“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”*

Conclusion

We have seen that we are to present ourselves as living sacrifices, which is to be holy, and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service.

We see that God wants **us** — that thinking part of man.

Christian, it is only reasonable for us to “*present our bodies as a living sacrifice*”. For God gave us the greatest sacrifice of all His Son. We need to repent if we are not spending ourselves in sacrifice to Him.

The unsaved, You should see the need to repent of your wayward life and give it to God in a living sacrifice. Christ is waiting for you. Sacrifice the old man in baptism, that you might be a new man prepared for heaven.

The following are the steps necessary to make that happen:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*” When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, “It doesn’t work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him.”
- **Repentance.** Acts 2:38, “*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” Acts 11:18, “*... Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*” If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, “There’s a burglar in my house!” So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, “I’m sorry; I’m sorry!” What is he sorry for? He

is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.

- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are “**UNTO**” righteousness, life, or salvation. “Unto” means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, *“But John forbid him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said *“it becometh **us** to fulfil all righteousness.”* We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? *“for the remission of sins”*. Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth **and** is*

baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16:15-16).

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a requirement given by God.

Baptism is called a burial. “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Rom. 6:4). Our old man is to be dead to us. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” (Rom. 6:3-6). Baptism is God’s blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.

This doesn’t mean “sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don’t take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not yet become a Christian, won't you consider it today?

