

“A Living Sacrifice”
Romans 12:1-2
12/28/25
Message 1

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “A Living Sacrifice”

- **From The JB Phillips Translation**

- **Romans 12:1-2**

- *With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give Him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to Him and acceptable by Him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the Plan of God for you is good, meets all His demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.*

- **Our Study today is All about – “A Living Sacrifice”**

- **Reason for being here**

- Want to Exhort, Encourage and Challenge us as we
 - END 2025 and BEGIN 2026
 - That we stay focused on the CALL of Jesus
 - That we DON'T DRIFT
 - Remember
 - The Object lesson a few weeks ago
 - About keeping Jesus, the Center - So we don't drift

- Let's Commit to Drawing Closer to Jesus this new year

- **Now our text today Speaks of Being - ALL IN – A Total Commitment**

- **Now this subject is Not Popular**

- In our world today
 - Sadly - Even in the Church

- **Our world is driven BY Being**

- Self-Centered
 - Self-Absorbed
 - The idea of being a Living Sacrifice – Totally Committed
 - Is NOT popular
 - IS considered too demanding

- **Yet God says –**

- **Being ALL IN – Being A LIVING SACRIFICE is Our Reasonable Service**

- He says if you're NOT Fully Committed to Him
 - Your life will be
 - DULL & MEDIOCRE
 - A Life LIVED on SELF is indeed a VERY SAD LIFE
 - Wasted Life

- **Want to KNOW TRUE JOY**

- LIVE your Life the way God Designed us to LIVE!
- 1st Committed to Him
 - 2nd Committed to Others
 - JOY - True Fulfillment comes from Jesus, Others, You

• **So this Morning we will Look At 2 Powerful ways we're to be A Living Sacrifice - Totally Committed To Jesus**

- As A Living Sacrifice, We Commit Our Body's To The Lord v. 1
- As A Living Sacrifice, We Commit Our Mind's To The Lord v. 2

As A Living Sacrifice, We Commit Our Body's To The Lord v. 1

• **1. I Beseech You v. 1a**

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

- **1st Beseech**
 - Greek: Parakaleo
 - Means: To call to one's side, summon; **to beg**, entreat; to instruct, teach
 - AKA

• ***Wuest; "I beg of you, please"***

- Paul appeals to our will
- God calls us to make a choice about the way that we live for Him

- Paul is literally BEGGING them to have Total Commitment to Jesus

○ **2. Application**

▪ **Question**

- Why Does Paul have to BEG them to do something that seem so SIMPLE and the RIGHT thing to do?

▪ **Answer**

- The Flesh

- Yup that's right – The default position is prone to wonder

- So Even though this seem so SIMPLE and the RIGHT thing to do we need to be reminded ALL the time to do it

- Be a LIVING Sacrifice

- And Keep Growing in it

▪ **The Basics**

- As a Pastor

- My Job is to Instruct, Encourage, Exhort, Comfort, Challenge, Etc...

- Not to beat you over the head...

- But I do need to remind you of the Basics

- This is Why

- I am consistently BEGGING (Reminding)

- Stay in the Word
- Stay in Prayer
- Stay in Fellowship
- Be Engaged
- Be a contributor Not a Consumer
- Come Wednesday's, Friday's Saturday's and YES SUNDAYS
- Try not to miss
- All these are NOT for MY benefit – BUT are for your benefit

▪ **I have SEEN too many over the years DRIFT – Some Drifted Away**

- I don't want you to drift
- Warning Signs you are drifting
 - Private
 - Devo is not Consistent
 - Prayer is Not Consistent
 - Then Publicly
 - Start by missing church here or there then start missing more then you're here
 - Critical
 - Complaining
 - Cast blame

- You know your drifted from God
- But it easier for you to blame others
 - It's the Pastor, Worship Team, Youth, CM, it's the parking lot, the building, Etc...
 - I need a new church...
 - Sometimes going to a new church can snap you out of it...
 - BUT if you don't deal with the heart – the problem will only come again
 - The KEY
 - Stay in Christ – Close to Christ
 - Draw closer to Christ Starting today

• **2. Therefore brethren v. 1b**

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

*1 I beseech you **therefore, brethren,** by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

- **1. Therefore = What is it Therefore!**
 - In Light of EVERYTHING just laid out in Romans chapter 1-11
 - In light of the previous 315 verses
 - In light of who we are in Christ
 - Quick Overview

- Romans 1-3:20
 - All Have SINNED (Condemnation)
- Romans 3:21-5
 - BUT NOW
 - Our Position In Christ – JUSTIFICATION
 - Headship of Christ – No Longer Adam
- Romans 6-8
 - Our Position In Christ – SANCTIFICATION
 - Chapter 6 - Victory over SIN
 - Chapter 7 – Sanctification Does not come from the LAW or SELF
 - Chapter 8 - It's All about the Holy Spirit
 - Starts with - NO Commendation For The Believer!
 - The Middle – The Holy Spirit is with us in Struggles
 - End With – No Separation - More Than Conquerors
- Romans 9-11
 - God's FAITHFULNESS to Israel
 - Encourages us that what God starts HE FINISHES
 - Chapter 9 – The Sovereignty Of God

- He is...
 - ALPHA & OMEGA - Beginning & End
 - HOLY
 - PERFECT
 - GOOD
 - IMMUTABLE (Unchanging)
 - CAN NEVER do anything wrong, unjust, or unrighteous.
 - AKA = GOD IS GOD - & We're NOT
- Chapter 10 –
 - God's Present Dealings with Israel
 - Blindness in PART
- Chapter 11
 - Israel's Future Restoration
 - God is NOT finished with Israel
 - **2. Brethren = Fellow Believers**
 - Paul's Heart for them
 - One of Paul's Favorite greetings
- **3. By the mercies of God v. 1c**

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

*1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, **by the mercies of God**, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

- **1st Mercies –**

- **2 Words Used for Mercy in the NT**

- 1st Eleeos

- Is the more common word
- Used to describe “acts of mercy”
- It’s the word that has already been used in Romans 11

Romans 11:30 (NKJV)

30 *For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience,*

- God has displayed His mercy by withholding judgment from us
- NOT giving us what we deserve.

- 2nd Oiktirmos –

- Means: Compassion, pity, mercy; a heart of compassion
 - It is the word used here
 - It is descriptive of the heart of compassion that results in the acts of mercy.
- God has
 - Withheld judgment

- But Also - **A heart of Mercy towards us**
- AKA = What God has Already DONE for us = what we must do for Him
- As a RESULT...
 - Our response to God
 - We do what Paul is going to instruct us to do
 - We give everything to Jesus
 - NOTE
 - We don't do these things to earn MERCY or favor
 - We do them because He has already poured them out in abundance in our lives
 - **2. Application – DOCTRINE = DUTY**
 - In Light of the Doctrine of MERCY we have a DUTY
 - We will be a Living Sacrifice
 - SERVE Him Because of His MERCY
 - Note Paul doesn't say,
 - Serve God because He is angry with you
 - Serve God because He is about to Strick you with a lightning-bolt
 - But it's ALL because of His mercy.

- We SERVE God Because of His Great LOVE & Mercy

Romans 8:32 (NKJV)

32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

- *Is that David Livingstone wrote in his journal on one occasion concerning his “selfless” life: “People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paying back a small part of the great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? a sacrifice which brings its own blest reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind and a bright hope of glorious destiny hereafter? Away with the word in such a view and with such a thought! It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege.” Giving and Living, by Samuel Young, Baker Book House, p.71*

- The Response to His MERCY & GRACE

- SERVE GOD with your LIFE
- SERVE OTHERS with your LIFE

- I love that song – I Will Serve YOU

- I will serve You
because I love you
you have give n life to me
I was nothing until you found me
you have given life to me
- Heartaches, broken people
ruined lives are why you died on calvary
your touch is what I long for
you have given life to me

4. Present your Bodies As A LIVING Sacrifice v. 1d

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

○ **1. Present your BODIES a LIVING Sacrifice**

▪ **The Jewish Christian**

- Would know exactly what Paul was talking about here

○ The OT sacrificial system

- They could picture well the vivid details of placing the sacrificial lamb upon the altar as an act of worship to Jehovah.
- Placing their hands on the animal has the Priest killed the animal
- The animal being sacrificed was being killed for their sins
- So they could have a relationship with God
- This animal is NOT COMING BACK

- The Sacrificial Lamb

- Was actually a picture of what Jesus would do for them as the Lamb of God...

- Die for the sins of the world

▪ **BUT LIVING Sacrifice**

- It's NOT

- About Public displays of being Religious.

- About giving just a PART of yourself to the Lord.
- It's ALL about giving your WHOLE self to the Lord.
 - Our eyes – what we see
 - Our ears – What we hear
 - Our Hands and Feet – what we do
- Our lives are to be placed on the altar
 - God has made us BRAND NEW
 - The OLD MAN must NOT COME BACK...
 - I no longer LIVE for ME – I LIVE FOR HIM
- Are we LIVING for Jesus everyday
 - Take up your CROSS Daily and Follow me

• **6. Holy, Acceptable to God v. 1e**

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

*1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, **holy, acceptable to God**, which is your reasonable service.*

- **1. Context**
 - In the Old Testament
 - Every sacrifice had to be holy and acceptable to God
 - He shall bring a male without blemish (Leviticus 1:10)
- **2nd Holy – Acceptable**

▪ **Holy –**

- Greek: Hagios
- Means:
 - Characteristic of God, separated to God
 - Applied to persons as separated to God's service; In the moral sense of sharing God's purity; Of pure, clean sacrifices and offerings
 - This speaks of something that has been set apart for God's own use.
 - It speaks of a sacrifice that is pure and "unblemished".

▪ **Acceptable –**

- Greek: Euarestos
- Means: ("good" + "pleasing") – well pleasing, acceptable
- This reminds me of how God viewed the sacrifices prescribed in the Old Testament

Leviticus 1:9 (NKJV)

9 but he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

▪ **Application**

- Be HOLY - Set Apart For God
- Giving God our BEST with the RIGHT HEART

• **Seventh: Reasonable Service v. 1f**

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, **which is your reasonable service.**

○ **1. Reasonable –**

- Greek: Logikos
- Means: Pertaining to the reason or logic; agreeable to reason, logical
- Application
 - It's logical to worship God in this way
 - It just makes sense.
 - When you look at how God has been so merciful to us, the best way we can respond to Him is in worship.
 - **Chuck Smith; "To commit my life to God for Him to direct is logical, because God knows the end of a matter from the beginning. God's wisdom is so much greater than mine. He has never made a mistake and never will. I have made many mistakes and still do. It makes good sense to seek His counsel and guidance and to give my life to His direction."**

○ **2nd Reasonable Service = Worship**

Romans 12:1 (NASB95)

1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, **which is your spiritual service of worship.**

- **1st To Worship God - Loving Adoration**

John 4:24 (NKJV)

24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

- What is worship?
 - Worship – Greek: Proskuneo
 - Means: To kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence; to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence
 - From the Inside out
- **2nd Service and Sacrifice are to be part of our Worship**
 - You are not your own

1 Corinthians 6:20 (NKJV)

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

- EVERYONE IS CALLED to SERVE
 - This is not just for Pastors & Leaders
 - BUT ALL Christians are CALLED to give up their lives and serve Jesus
 - Serve Jesus
 - In Your HOME
 - In Your Church
 - In Your Work
- Serve Him with YOUR LIFE

As A Living Sacrifice, We Commit Our Mind's To The Lord v. 2

- **1. Do Not Be Conformed to this World v. 2a**

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

○ **1. And do not be conformed to this world**

▪ **Conformed –**

- Greek: suschematizo –
- Means:
 - To conform one's self (i.e. one's mind and character) to another's pattern
 - Paul's painting a picture of clay being squished into a mold, a mold that is shaped by the world.
 - *Phillips paraphrases it: "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold."*

▪ **World –**

- Greek: aion –
- Means: forever, perpetuity of time; period of time, age
 - Aion is usually better expressed by age
 - The "spirit of the age" or perhaps the "culture of the age".
 - It's keeping up with the current trends and fashions.
 - It's the pursuit of staying perpetually "cool".
- Things to Remember about this "world" –
 - The More things CHANGE the More they stay the same

- Satan is called the “god of this world (aion)” (2 Cor. 4:4)

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV)

4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

- We still need to be in the world
 - BUT NOT OF the World

- **2. Application - What shapes me?**

- **1. Don't Love the World**

1 John 2:15–16 (NKJV)

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

- **2. Recognize How is the world attempting to shape us?**

- Education System
 - Has been brain washing people for decades
 - Taking God out of schools and putting evil humanistic philosophies
- Entertainment
 - TV
 - News
 - Programs

- Remember they don't call it TEL- A - VISION & PROGRAMING for no reason
- Movies
- Sporting Events
- Fashion –
 - How do you dress?
- Morality –
 - They have completely different standards
- *Wiersbe; “If the world controls your thinking, you are a conformer; if God controls your thinking, you are a transformer.”*

• **2. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind v. 2b**

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

○ **1. Be Transformed**

▪ **Transformed –**

- Greek: Metamorphoo –
- Means:
 - To change into another form, to transform, to transfigure
 - It speaks of a permanent change, not a temporary one.
 - Present Passive Imperative –

- Allow yourself to **continually** be in a place where you are permanently changed from the inside out.
- **2. By The Renewing Of Your Mind**
 - **Renewing –**
 - Greek: Anakainosis
 - Means:
 - (“again” + “new”) – a renewal, renovation, complete change for the better
 - We don’t have our minds replaced with a new brain
 - But our old minds are changed into something better.
 - It’s the way you think.
 - God wants to change the way we think.
 - **Remember**
 - The mind is the battle ground between
 - Conforming to the world and being transformed is within the mind of the believer.
 - Christians must think differently
 - Critical
 - This is why we stay in the WORD
 - Stay in Fellowship
 - Christians that are NOT doing this can drift away

- **3. How is Renewing Done**

- **1st The Word**

Psalm 1:1–3 (NKJV)

1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.
3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

John 17:17 (NKJV)

17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

- **2nd The Holy Spirit**

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)

5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

- We need to learn to be yielding our lives to the Holy Spirit –

- Allowing Him to work in our hearts and minds.

- **3rd Faith – Trusting in the unseen**

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (NKJV)

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.
17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,
18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

- We are renewed the more we learn to trust God for all our situations.

- 4th Change your thinking.

Philippians 4:8–9 (NKJV)

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

- Memorizing Scripture.

- 5th Fellowship

Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV)

25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

- Critical we are in Church

- **3. Prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God v. 2c**

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, **that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

- **1. That you may Prove**

- 1st Prove –

- Greek: Dokimazo –

- Means:

- To test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), as metals; to recognize as genuine after examination

▪ **2nd Good –**

- Greek: Agathos
- Means:
 - Of good constitution or nature; useful; agreeable, joyful; excellent
 - There is nothing bad or evil about God's will.
 - God's will for us is pure and good.

▪ **3rd Acceptable –**

- Greek: Euarestos –
- Means
 - Well pleasing, acceptable
 - God's will is wonderful.

▪ **4th Perfect –**

- Greek: Teleios –
- Means:
 - Finished; lacking nothing necessary to completeness
 - God's will is PERFECT
 - We don't need to be seeking things outside of God's will to be complete people.

▪ **5th Will –**

- Greek: Thelema

- Means:
 - What one wishes or has determined shall be done; will, choice, inclination, desire, pleasure
 - Following HIS WILL

Closing

• **Remember GRACE**

- **How to live out the will of God**
 - Keep in mind the Mercy of God to you –
 - Past, present, and future!
 - As an act of intelligent worship
 - Present your bodies a living sacrifice
 - Resist conformity
 - Do not be conformed
 - By focus on God's word and fellowship with Him
 - Be transformed by the renewing of your mind
 - Then, your life will be in the will of God
- **All of us are a work in progress**
 - God is Faithful to finish what He starts (Phil. 1:6)

• **Accept the Challenge for 2026**

- **Grab hold of the Exhortation and Challenge we have studied this morning!**

- We are faced with a decision
 - It's not something we can RUN FROM
 - To say, "I'll think about it later" is in fact to say "No" to the challenge
- **Will we respond with ready and open hearts?**
 - Will we SAY
 - Here I am Lord!
 - I offer all I am, and all I have!
 - I offer you my heart and mind
 - Renew me that I may serve YOU
- Illustration - Cortez
 - When Cortez landed at Vera Cruz in 1519 to begin his conquest of Mexico with small force of 700 men
 - He purposely set fire to his fleet of 11 ships.
 - His men on the shore watched their only means of retreat sinking to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico.
 - With no means of retreat, there was only one direction to move, forward into the Mexican interior to meet whatever might come their way.
 - In the same way, there is simply no retreat for the Christian
 - There is only one direction to go, forward!
 - The Great Song

- I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
No turning back, no turning back.
- Tho' none go with me, I still will follow,
Tho' none go with me I still will follow,
Tho' none go with me, I still will follow;
No turning back, no turning back.
- My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus;
My cross I'll carry till I see Jesus,
My cross I'll carry till I see Jesus;
No turning back, No turning back.
- The world behind me, the cross before me,
The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
No turning back, no turning back.