

A LIVING SACRIFICE

Christian Character in Action Series: Lesson 1

25 February 2022

If we call ourselves Christians, then other people ought to be able to see some evidence of that claim. God urges us to present our lives to Him as a living sacrifice, to strive to be holy as a service to Him. Today we will try to determine what kind of life is counted as acceptable unto God.

Rom 12:1 There are several points that should be observed from this verse:

- This request from God is so important that He pleads with us to do this: **“I beseech you...”**
- God’s many mercies toward us is sufficient reason for us to desire to give our best to Him: **“By the mercies of God...”**
- Almighty God could demand that we give Him service, but instead He ASKS that we PRESENT it to Him: **“...that ye present...”**
 - As a token of your love and appreciation for God’s many gifts and mercies, wouldn’t you be happy to try and give something back to Him and possibly give Him a blessing? (Psalm 103:1, 2, 22; 104:1).
- This is a personal sacrifice: **“...that ye present YOUR bodies.”**
 - You must be concerned about your own service to the Lord. Stop trying to make the brethren do right. Focus on doing right yourself.
- The Lord isn’t asking us to die for Him. He is asking us to live for Him: **“A living sacrifice.”**
- If you are going to give your life to the Lord, make sure it is a holy life that you are presenting to Him: **“...holy...”** Don’t expect God to accept you the way you are with all your wicked habits and flaws.
 - Ask the Lord to help you clean up your thoughts, your heart, the things you do with your hands, the places you go with your feet, what you allow your eyes to see and your ears to listen to.
 - If you love the Lord, you will do what he tells you to do and separate yourself from everything that does not please Him.
- Make sure the life you present to God is acceptable: **“Acceptable unto God...”**
 - You have the instructions in the Holy Bible. There is no excuse not to know what God finds acceptable or not acceptable.
 - How are you spending your time? How are you spending your money? Is it acceptable to God?
 - Your sacrifice to God means more to Him than any of the Old Testament sacrifices. Those animals didn’t have a choice. You choose how much of yourself you are willing to sacrifice to the Lord.
- The Lord is not being unreasonable when He asks us to live right: **“which is your reasonable service.”**
 - God has given us so many blessings that it makes sense that I should want to give everything to Him that He asks of me.

WHAT DOES THE LORD ASK OF US?

1. **John 13:35** — **Love one another**. That is how people will know that you follow Jesus as a disciple.
 - a. You may speak the truth of the Bible, but if people hear a report about Christians mistreating one another in our church, they will not believe anything we say.
 - b. We need to avoid fighting back when we are mistreated, cheated, or abused. Sacrifice your pride to maintain your good testimony. Present your body a living sacrifice.
 - i. That is how people will know and believe that you have something they don't have.

 2. **John 3:16-18** — Show the brethren that you love them by laying down your life (sacrifice your time, comforts, etc. to pass on the good that God has bestowed upon you).
 - a. Has God been good to you and taught you how to live a holy life, raise a godly family, read, study, and teach the bible, have a happy marriage, be a good friend and neighbor, stay out of debt, have a sound mind, etc.? You have this world's good! Don't keep it to yourself. Pass the knowledge on so others can enjoy the blessings also.
 - i. Notice: This speaks of this world's **good**, not this world's "*goods*." This passage does not teach that you should give all your stuff away to others.

 3. **Luke 14:15-21** — Don't make excuses to not to participate in the service of God. He will become angry.
 - a. We all have legitimate cares and duties, but they should never be counted as more important than the Lord and His desire to spend time with us.
 - i. Present your bodies a living sacrifice. It may be inconvenient, but it ought to be important to you to devote some time to the Lord.

 4. **Matthew 19:16-29** — Don't hold such a tight grip on your worldly possessions and activities that occupy your time. You will miss out on the blessings that you could have by following the Lord Jesus.
 - a. You will find out that it is much more rewarding to lay up your treasures in heaven than it is to cling to your worldly treasures.
 - b. Following Jesus may cost you friendships from your old life. But you will gain much better friendships in the Lord's family.
 - c. To follow Jesus, you may have to give up some personal time, money, sinful habits, unsaved friends. But you won't miss those things because what you will get in return is much better.
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