

In View of God's Mercy—A Living Sacrifice

Romans 12:1,2

The book of Romans has some difficult things to understand but the overall message is very simple:

- All have sinned and stand guilty before God, both Jews and Gentiles
- All men are in need of salvation
- Salvation came through Jesus Christ and his death on the cross

In chapter 6, Paul shows us that it's through obedience to the gospel of Christ, we bury the old man in baptism and God raises us up with NEW LIFE.

At this time, we are out of the sinning business and adopted into God's family.

Then in chapter 12, Paul makes a shift from doctrinal to practical.

For the next 2 weeks, I want to focus on this chapter of Romans 12.

Title: **IN VIEW OF GOD'S MERCY—A LIVING SACRIFICE**

Rom. 12:1

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.*

Notice those words:

"By the mercies of God."

NIV

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, **in view of God's mercy** to offer you bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your true and proper worship.

Paul is saying, *Look at what God has done for you. Look at His mercy. Look at His grace. Look at the salvation He has provided.*

Rom. 3:9-18;23

Rom. 5:6-8

Rom. 6:22,23

Now, in light of all of that, here is how you ought to live.

Paul has spent the first eleven chapters of Romans explaining God's plan of redemption.

He has talked about:

Our sin, God's grace, Christ's death, our salvation

And then Paul says:

"Therefore..."

Because of everything God has done, **give yourself to Him (sacrifice your life)**

Notice that Paul doesn't say:

- "Give God Sunday morning."
- Give God the first part of your morning
- "Give God part of your money."

He says:

"Present your bodies as a living sacrifice"

In other words:

Give God everything!!

In the OT, when offering an animal sacrifice, all parts were used:

- The blood was used
- The fats and organs were used
- The meat, head, legs, hide, skin

All parts of the animal were used in some way...nothing was left out.

In the same way....we offer our bodies as a sacrifice to God...every day in every way!!

Our hands belong to Him.

Our feet belong to Him.

Our eyes belong to Him.

Our mouths belong to Him.

Our minds belong to Him.

Our time belongs to Him.

Our entire lives belong to Him.

Col. 3:1-4

Gal. 2:20
Rom. 6:13

- We don't just give ourselves to God one day a week
- We don't give ourselves to God when it's convenient

Our bodies have been redeemed, bought with the price of the blood of His Son...because of that...we offer Him our bodies every day as a sacrifice.

What does that mean? #1 it means, I bring glory to God

I Cor. 6:20

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

I Cor. 10:31

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Matt. 5:16

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Everything I do in life should bring glory to God...that's why I'm here!

#2 it means, my life is pleasing to Him

Burnt offering

Lev. 1:9

an aroma pleasing to the Lord

Grain offering

Lev. 2:9

an aroma pleasing to the Lord

peace offering

Lev. 3:5

Pleasing aroma to the Lord

Sin offering

Lev. 4:31

Pleasing aroma to the Lord

I Pet. 2:5

you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ

John 8:29

And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.

I want my words, my prayers, my worship, my actions, my life, to be a pleasing aroma to the Lord!!

"Which is your reasonable service"

The word **reasonable** carries the idea of something that is rational, logical, or appropriate.

Other versions:

“Spiritual worship”

“proper and true worship”

Paul is saying:

Considering what God has done for you, giving yourself completely to Him is the reasonable response.

God gave His Son for us.

- Is it reasonable that we give our lives to Him?

Christ died for us.

- Is it reasonable that we live for Him?

God saved us from sin.

- Is it reasonable that we obey Him?

Of course it is!

Think about the disciples of Jesus:

- Peter and Andrew left their nets
- James and John left their father and their business
- Matthew left his tax office
- Paul left his accomplishments and followed Christ--Phil. 3:7,8

Paul is saying, “In light of God’s mercy, love and grace”...because of everything He has done is doing and will do...it’s reasonable that we give our lives back to Him!

Christianity is not something we add to our life...it becomes our life!!

Obedience is our reasonable response to God’s love!!

What have you left to follow Jesus?

- Did you leave some old habits behind?
- Old friends behind?
- Did you drop envy, strife, covetousness to follow Him?
- Did you give up the pursuit of sinful pleasure and riches?

God has given us a NEW LIFE...it’s not too much to ask that we leave the old sinful life and focus our attention and our lives on doing His will and bringing Him glory!

OUR SALVATION SHOULD CHANGE THE WAY WE THINK

Romans 12:2

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.

Paul now moves from the body to the mind.

- Christianity isn't simply about changing what we do.
- God wants to change who we are.

Don't be conformed to the world.

Don't allow the world to influence you and shape you

Instead:

"Be ye transformed..."

To be conformed means to be pressed into the mold of something else.

The world is constantly trying to tell us:

- What to believe
- How to live
- What is right and wrong
- What will make us happy

Paul says, don't let the world mold you.

1 John 2:15-17 — “Do not love the world...”

James 4:4 — friendship with the world is enmity with God.

The Christian shouldn't look around and ask, “What is everybody else doing?”

He should ask, “What does God want me to do?”

This transformation begins in the MIND:

Ephesians 4:23 — “be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”

Colossians 3:2 — “Set your mind on things above.”

Philippians 2:5 — “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Phil. 4:8— “meditate on these things.”

Change the way you think, and it will begin to change the way you live

“that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

“Prove” carries the idea of **testing, recognizing, and approving what is genuine or pleasing.**

In other words, when our minds are being renewed by God's Word, we begin to recognize **what God wants us to do**

And notice the three descriptions of God's will:

God's will is GOOD.

God never asks us to do something that is harmful to us.

Psalm 19:7-8 — God's law is perfect, right, pure, and good.

God's will is ACCEPTABLE.

It is pleasing to God.

Ephesians 5:10 — “finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.”

The question isn't “Do I like it?”

The question is, “Does God approve of it?”

God's will is PERFECT.

It is complete, lacking nothing.

Psalm 18:30 — “As for God, His way is perfect.”

James 1:25

But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

- **Don't be conformed to the world** — Don't let the world determine how you live.
- **Be transformed by a renewed mind** — Let God's Word change how you think.
- **Prove God's will by the way you live** — show others that God's way really is good, acceptable, and perfect

Now, in verses 9-21, Paul is going to expand on this thought and go into greater detail on how we should live a life that is dedicated to God and His word.

We will look at this next week.

But as we close tonight is:

“In view of God’s mercy”(because of everything he has done for you), have you given your life to Him?

Take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to Thee
Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love
Thy my will and make it Thine, it shall be no longer mine
Take my heart it is Thine own, it shall be Thy royal throne

Frances R. Havergal, 1772