

Chapter 10

How to become a Living Sacrifice

Scripture References

(Romans 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."

The phrase 'a living sacrifice' appears in Romans 12:1 and refers to dedicating oneself entirely to God's purposes and will. When I think of this verse, my mind naturally goes to John 15:7, 'If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.' Abiding in Jesus means dwelling in His word and allowing it to live in believers' hearts.

To understand what it means to become a living sacrifice, we first need to examine the historical context of sacrifice in biblical times. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were commonly animal offerings made to atone for sins or express gratitude to God.

These offerings were usually dead sacrifices that represented the cost of sin and the need for redemption. However, Paul's encouragement marks a dramatic change; instead of offering dead animals, believers are now called to present their lives—alive and active—as a form of worship.

In summary, becoming a living sacrifice is both an act of worship and a way of life, marked by gratitude, service, and continual growth. Living a dedicated, sanctified life as a living sacrifice requires believers to exhibit Christ-like behavior in all areas—workplaces, homes, churches, and communities.

Key Benefits of Becoming a Living Sacrifice

Becoming a living sacrifice means believers dedicating themselves to live according to God's will and purpose. This act of surrender enables the renewal of the mind, fostering a deeper understanding of God's purpose and a greater ability to discern His will.

Becoming a living sacrifice helps believers discover and fulfill God's call on their lives, enabling them to achieve their God-given purpose and make a positive impact on the world.

As believers grow closer to God through prayer, solitude, and acts of worship, they experience His presence more deeply, resulting in greater peace, joy, and confidence in their lives and ministry.

Becoming a living sacrifice means believers must die to sin and worldly desires. Breaking free from sinful habits enhances their well-being and allows them to show others the life-changing, transformative power of their faith in Christ.

Becoming a living sacrifice involves following the Holy Spirit's inner promptings and dedicating oneself to helping others. This can show up in different ways, such as offering their time, resources, and skills to aid those in need.

In summary, the Holy Bible teaches that when believers focus on building faithful relationships rather than chasing material possessions, they will be rewarded both in this life and in the life to come.

Living Sacrifices Understand Mercy

Becoming a living sacrifice involves understanding that God's mercies include His grace, forgiveness, and love, demonstrated through Jesus Christ's sacrificial death.

Understanding these mercies urges believers to respond with gratitude by dedicating their lives entirely to Him, not only by avoiding sin but also by actively engaging in good works that mirror God's character.

When we practice empathy or compassion toward others, we uplift their spirits and demonstrate the love of Christ that dwells in our hearts. This is important in today's world, where many face challenges and hardships.

The Christian faith is founded on God's boundless mercy, demonstrated to all by his willingness to send his Son, Jesus Christ, as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

The mercy we received when we were saved was not based on anything we could do, and it stands as a powerful demonstration of God's unconditional love toward us. As a result of experiencing this profound mercy, all our thoughts, words, and actions must reflect this incredible gift.

When we sing, preach, pray, praise, and worship, we should do so with a deep awareness of God's mercy revealed in Jesus Christ, for it is through His sacrifice that we have been freed from sin and death and given the gift of eternal life.

God's mercy has genuinely transformed my life. I have been forgiven for my sins and received a new life in Christ. Since my conversion, my entire life has centered on worshiping and surrendering to His will. I am thankful for God's mercy and have a strong desire to live in a way that reflects His love and compassion for others.

(Matthew 5:7) "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Despite our mistakes and transgressions, God is always ready to forgive us if we seek forgiveness with a sincere heart. This act of forgiveness isn't based on our merit or worthiness but on God's infinite grace and love.

God's mercy shows His compassion for us. Even when we fail, His mercy gives us another chance to make things right. We can feel the depth of God's love and grace through forgiveness and compassion.

When God says that all our sins will be cast into the sea of forgetfulness, He means that their payment has been made. They will not be held against us now or on the last day, because they have been placed on Jesus, and God can now show us mercy.

The primary duty of a Christian should be to show mercy. When we forgive someone who has deeply hurt us, we release them from the obligation to be held accountable for their sin. We trust God to bring justice in His timing. Just as we need God's mercy daily, we must extend mercy to others.

It is vital to understand that the same God who can harden an unbeliever's heart is the one who also extends mercy and forgiveness to us. He has shown us grace and granted us pardon when we accepted His gift of salvation. Let us, therefore, live with gratitude and obedience to Him, knowing that His love and mercy have saved us.

May we live our lives recognizing and appreciating the efforts and sacrifices made by the people around us who strive to improve our lives. By acknowledging and showing empathy toward these individuals, we can help foster a culture of gratitude and support that uplifts everyone.

It's vital to understand that showing kindness to others benefits both the receiver and the giver. By recognizing and honoring the sacrifices of those around us, we can create a ripple effect that spreads positivity and compassion in our homes, workplaces, and communities.

Many hospitals advertise themselves as "hospitals of mercy," with some even including "Mercy Hospital" in their names and displaying prominent signs near their facilities to attract patients.

In summary, the word "mercy" has many meanings, but in a hospital setting, it often signifies a dedication to compassionate care for patients and their families.

Hospitals that use the name "Mercy Hospital" aim to foster comfort and reassurance for their patients, assuring them they will receive compassionate care during their stay.

Three Definitions of Mercy

1. Mercy is showing compassion or forgiveness to someone, especially an offender.
2. Mercy is a blessing that represents an act of divine favor or compassion.
3. Mercy would mean the court sentencing someone to imprisonment instead of death for murder.

Living Sacrifices Possess a Servant's Heart

(Psalms 24:3-4) (3) "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?" (4) "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

People whose lives are focused on God have a pure heart, which I call a servant's heart, because they set aside their own will and purpose, prioritizing God's will in everything they do.

They do this out of their deep devotion to their faith, making them a living sacrifice. Hence, their daily routine includes reading the Bible and praying, which helps them keep their minds focused on seeing the kingdom of God grow. They are not interested in fulfilling their desires or worldly pleasures; instead, they live a life of holiness and dedication to the Lord.

They actively strive to overcome the temptations of the flesh and its desires by cultivating a life in the Spirit. This process involves dedicated prayer and a strong commitment to their values, allowing them to navigate life's challenges with faith and purpose.

People who fully dedicate their lives to God understand that this world is temporary and that their true home is heaven. Their renewed hearts give them a unique perspective on life. They have compassionate hearts because Christ lives in them.

They have a heart full of love and tenderness, and may sometimes show emotions such as crying. They do not let their senses dictate their actions and are grateful for their new, tender heart.

People who offer themselves as a living sacrifice to God do not interact with each other the way the world does. They recognize that they are all brothers and sisters forming the body of Christ.

Five Ways to Become a Living Sacrifice

- 1. Let Go of Your Shyness:** When you worship the Lord, express your worship genuinely and from the heart, recognizing your importance to God at every moment. This means letting go of internal barriers, such as feeling unworthy or shy, that might hinder your complete worship. Doing so allows you to connect more deeply with God and find peace and fulfillment.
 - 2. Sacrifice Your Emotions:** "Deciding to sacrifice your emotions means not allowing immediate reactions to take over a situation, but rather carefully considering and responding to it. When you respond to a problem, you take the time to think and pray about it."
 - 3. Sacrifice Your Mindset:** "This could be rephrased as 'Let go of your stinking thinking, such as traditions, and thought patterns.'" This means you should read and start practicing what God's word says, let go of negative thought patterns, and make space for new ideas and opportunities to come into your life.
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4. Let Go of Your Past Experiences: Sometimes, holding on to past experiences can create obstacles to personal growth and progress. While reflecting on our past and learning from it is essential, it's equally crucial to recognize and release any negative emotions or self-imposed limitations that block our advancement.

5. Submit Your Body a Living Sacrifice: Bringing your body under submission to God's Holy Spirit is a profound call to live a life of selfless service and unwavering devotion, and to stand firm and resolute amid adversities and trials."

My Conclusion

We are nearing the close of this inspiring message on the importance of becoming a living sacrifice to the Lord. I recall when the thoughts for this message came to me. I was preparing for a fast to be ready for an upcoming revival. I felt tired and had put everything away so I could sleep, but for some reason, I felt like I needed to use the bathroom and freshen up before bed.

While in the bathroom, the Lord spoke this message into my spirit, and it immediately resonated with me. I have spent most of my life sacrificing as a long-distance truck driver, and God has used that vocation to reach the masses of broken humanity with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I take my walk with God seriously and take all these precautions to go before him. When He wakes me up at 3 am or 4 am to pray, I find a decent shirt to wear. Next, I wash my face, comb my hair, brush my teeth, and rinse with mouthwash.

After rinsing with my mouthwash, I grab one of my favorite Bibles, place it on a chair, and reach for a small pillow on the floor. I find some soft instrumental worship music to create a peaceful atmosphere, and I go before my King.

Before leaving for the Philippines on March 10, 2002, the Lord spoke to me early in the morning, and I wrote down what He told me. The Lord said, "My Son, here is what you do when you do not know what to do."

1. "Do not doubt I am with you, for I have brought you here."
 2. "Those who do not understand will see me working through you and start to believe that I am with you."
 3. "As long as you stay humble, I will work through you to touch others, for this is why I chose you for this time and era in history, and never doubt that I am with you."
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Notes

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal dashed lines.

