

Romans 12: The Living Sacrifice **06-18-17 PM**

Romans 1-8 consisted of Paul explaining the scheme of redemption and the division of Jew and Gentile. He explained why Jesus had to die for our sins, and what that death accomplish. Romans 9-11 explained the place of Israel in this; not that God did not love Israel, but that Israel failed to love God. Ultimately, God offered Israel better things through the covenant of Christ. Beginning in chapter 12 Paul now discusses the way of Christ, the lifestyle of a Christian. It begins with sacrifice.

Throughout the NT, we are told that all Christians are priests of God (Revelation 1:6, 1 Peter 2:5-11). As such we are called to offer up spiritual sacrifices. In the OT, it was the priests who were charged with bringing sacrifices to God. According to Hebrews 5:1, priests offered two types of sacrifices: to remove sin and to offer gifts to God. Fundamentally, it was the High Priest who made the ultimate sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 9:12). Today, our High Priest is Jesus, who has offered the ultimate sacrifice for sin: Himself. He has offered one sin offering for all time and all men. We are cleansed by His offering through baptism. We return to that offering when we sin (1 John 1:7-9). If we sin without repentance we despise it (Hebrews 6:4-6).

Therefore, the purpose of our priesthood is to make sacrifices as gifts to God. We can learn from the OT the character of sacrifice so that we make our reasonable service to God.

1. It needs to be what God desires: Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:3-4)
2. It needs to be how God desires: Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2)
3. It needs to be a sacrifice: David (1 Chronicles 21:24)
4. It needs to be offered with willing hearts: Priests of Judah (Malachi 1:7-13, 2 Corinthians 9:7)

Considering these characteristics we are prepared as priests to make ourselves living sacrifices. This concept is explained as Paul continues. He tells us in Romans 12:2 that we need a constant renewing of our minds. In a parallel statement in Ephesians 4:22-24, Paul tells us that renewing our minds means putting on the New Self, which is Christ and the mind of Christ. We have the mind of Christ per 1 Corinthians 2:16 through the Scriptures. As Paul continues on Romans 12, he describes a lifestyle that puts others first, as did Christ. This is the theme of the remaining portions of Romans.

Romans 12:1-5 calls us to be priests. This means a lifestyle of sanctification (Sanctification: set apart and holy). It is a lifestyle of Christian interaction. The Old Testament teaches us about sacrifices; how and what God desires matters most; it needs to be a sacrifice; it needs to with the right attitude.

The Plan of Salvation in Romans

Hearing and BelievingRomans 10:17

Confessing Jesus as LordRomans 10:9

Repentance from sinRomans 6:11-13

Baptism into ChristRomans 6:3-4

Remaining faithfulRomans 12:1-2