

Lord Let Your Fire Fall!

by Edgar Reich

To be a living sacrifice, we must surrender ourselves to God, deny ourselves, and renew our minds, allowing Him to transform us and use us for His purposes.

Duration: 32:57

Scripture: Romans 12:1

Topics: "Living Sacrifice"

Description

In this sermon titled 'Let Your Fire Fall, Lord,' the preacher focuses on Romans chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. He emphasizes the importance of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices to God and not conforming to the ways of the world. The preacher highlights the example of Chinese Christians who prioritize the Bible, are willing to suffer for their faith, and continue to witness despite the risks. He also warns about the consequences of hidden sin and encourages believers to rely on God's faithfulness in times of temptation.

Transcript

The title for tonight's message is Let Your Fire Fall, Lord. Let Your Fire Fall, Lord. And the message comes from Romans chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. I believe you all know these verses by heart.

Romans 12, 1 and 2. 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. And do not be conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Beloved sisters and brothers, we will take a closer look at parts of these two verses.

And the first question is, what is a living sacrifice? In order to have a sacrifice, one must have an altar. The altar for sacrifices is explained in the Old Testament. It was a square altar made from bronze with four horns.

There was a fire pan for the fire underneath the grate or grill. When the temple was built by Solomon, the fire was kept going 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. They kept the fire going.

It was an altar with heat. And below the grill there is fire. Blood had to be spilled, as the wages of sin is death.

Innocent animals were killed, and each sacrifice was a foreshadow of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He was killed for us. He became the sacrifice, the Lamb of God, that we might have eternal life if we believe on Him and as we follow Him.

Now, in the old days, the sacrifices were animals, either young bulls or goats or sheep, and they were laid on the grill and they were burned to become a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord. Thousands of innocent animals had to be killed, each a foreshadow of the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, God cannot sin, and He hates sin.

There must be death for sin for there to be new life. Each animal offered represented the crimson thread of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which He shed for us. Praise God.

Now, when I read in 2 Chronicles 7, one during the temple dedication when Solomon had finished the temple, and when he had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burned offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. Fire fell from heaven and consumed the sacrifice on the altar, and I got so excited when I read this. I cried, Oh Lord, Oh Lord, let Your fire fall on me.

Let Your fire fall on America and Canada. And the Lord answered in my spirit and said, My son, I want to let the fire fall, but the sacrifice is missing. The sacrifice is missing.

There is no sacrifice on my altar for me to consume and to send my fire. And I wept. I shed tears, and I thought about this, and I examined myself, and I thought I was getting to the point of being a living sacrifice, going to this altar.

You see, when we go to the altar of God to lie down, there is a fire on the altar. There is a grate or grill that is searing with heat. And when I lie down on that altar, there is hurt.

My flesh is searing because, you see, there are impurities in me which are called sin. This is what God wants to burn in me. It is the self.

It is the old flesh. It is the outward man. God won't burn the inner man.

The inner man in Scripture is called the heavenly man. The heavenly person is born again. I'll live forever.

But there are things of me that must be burned. And I have the choice at any moment to walk away from that altar of God, to walk away from the hurt, to walk away from the burning and sizzling. And often I have crawled off that altar when things got too hot for me, so there was no sacrifice.

There is a story told of a lady going to a jeweler. And as she walked into the jewelry store, she saw in a corner a silversmith working. He had a torch out and he was heating up some silver with his torch.

While the lady was waiting for someone to wait on her, she said to the silversmith, What are you doing? And he answered and he said, I am dealing with the little black spots in this silver. I'm purifying the silver. Because the silver, if I just use it as it is, will break apart.

It won't hold. It must be purified in this heat. And the lady said to him, Well, what happens if you heat it up too much? And the silversmith said, I will spoil the silver if I heat it up too much.

And so she said to him, Well, when do you know when the silver is done? He said, Oh, that's easy. When I see my face shining in that silver, I know the silver is done. And beloved, that is the same with us.

When Jesus sees his face in us, then we are purified. And now, sometimes Jesus might not take the torch away at all. Would you still continue to love God that might call you or your baby or a loved one to martyrdom? I was sharing some of the underground church stories, and one young lady said, You're driving me away with these stories.

And what she was really saying was, I don't know if I can love a God that might ask for my baby. I don't know if I can love a God who might take someone that is a loved one to me. You see, martyrdom is happening in many parts of the world.

The fire is falling in China. People are willing to testify, and they know it can cost their lives. In North Korea, they're willing to testify.

There, it is a severe penalty for three generations of the family. In Iran, they're willing to be a living sacrifice. They know if they testify, there's a great chance that they will end up in prison.

There was recently a story given to us from Brother Greg of a prayer meeting happening in China. A Canadian pastor went there, and he was hoping to be able to minister and help the underground church. The prayer meeting was called for 4 a.m. in the morning, and he was there.

His interpreter whispered to him, Do you see those seven ladies sitting in the front row? Each of them has raised the dead. The prayer meeting went on. They praised God for one hour before 5 a.m. Then it became very quiet.

For the next four hours, they sought God, for God to speak to them, for God to reveal himself to them. You see, that's commitment. I'm not talking about so much raising the dead, but getting up at 4 a.m. and praying before the Lord.

That is a sacrifice, beloved, for the next five hours. God raises the dead. They have the faith, yes, but it is God who does this.

I went out on the streets of New York with some of my brothers, and we did street preaching near Ground Zero and street preaching on Wall Street and street preaching on the Staten Island Ferry and at City Hall. You know, before I went out there, I had fasted one day a week. Three of my brothers had fasted 40 days before going out on the streets of New York.

What is sacrifice, beloved? What is your sacrifice? What is my sacrifice? Am I a living sacrifice? Am I wholly acceptable unto God? You see, holiness and acceptability to God goes with God hating sin. Sin no more. Submit and surrender.

God will send us tests. We get off the altar when we sin. We're not there when we give in to sin.

Beloved, there are several categories of sinning, and I'll just mention a few of these. There is, of course, the obvious and willful sinning where you murder someone, where you do great evil, and where you violate the Ten Commandments. That is quite obvious.

But then there are hidden sins, and Psalm 19.12 refers to hidden sins. And Psalm 19.12 says, And in 1 Timothy 5.24, this matter of hidden sins is repeated. Here it says, There are two types of hidden sin here.

In the first group, people cannot see their own mistakes. To give you some example, worry. Do you ever worry? I sometimes find myself worrying, and I don't want to.

But worry is really unbelief. Maybe I worry for my health, or I worry for food. I worry for paying the rent, or I worry about keeping my job.

I worry about my illness. Perhaps I have overextended myself, and I cannot pay the bills. But we believe God for many things we say with our mouth.

And we believe that, yes, yes, God can take care of the lilies of the field. Praise God, we shout. But God cannot take care of you and me.

Are we not much more of value than a sparrow, says God? He counts you in my hair, beloved. Praise God. So, other hidden sins that we don't really acknowledge are fretting their fears, their unbelief.

Then there's another group of hidden sins, which is a known sin to you. You know about it. Only you and God know about it.

And this is the type of sin that 1 Timothy 5.24 is talking about, which will be revealed. And to give you one example of that, or two examples, you can't stand someone in church. You hate their laugh.

They don't always agree with you. Somehow they do things differently from you and me. And so you say, well, I can live without that person.

I don't want to be too close to them, and I'll go and sit on the other side. Doesn't God say that that is sin? He says to love our brothers and sisters. You have split the church, beloved.

I have split the church if I do that. Or if we look at pornography and dwell on that, we know that there is a result of hidden sin. In the story of Achan in Joshua 7, we find that Achan stole a few things.

You know, stealing today isn't so bad. Well, some people need things, and yes, they steal. But when we look at the reaction of God in verse 30, in the last verse of that chapter, it says that God was fiercely angry, and there was a cross to Achan stealing.

You see, there was a loss of corporate blessing for the whole nation of Israel. There was a loss of individual blessing and protection. And the cost was that as the children of Israel went in battle against a small little town called Ai, they had sent 3,000 soldiers, they were beaten, and 36 of the men lost their lives.

Scripture doesn't tell us how many were wounded, but 36 lost their lives. There were 36 families affected. There was a wife with each family.

There were children with each family. They were now orphans. And then the wife of Achan lost her life.

The children, the sons and daughters, were killed, and he himself was killed. And even the animals he owned needed to be killed. And there is a price that we pay for hidden sin, beloved.

We can't hide it anyhow. In Habakkuk chapter 2, verse 11, it says, For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the timbers will answer it. You see, all of our sins are recorded.

We know all of these new little recording devices and cameras and spy cameras and so on, but God invented all of this much before we did. And so the stones and the wall will record everything. The beam from the timbers will answer it.

And then in Matthew 10, verse 26, Jesus said, All hidden things will be revealed. Besides hidden sin, there is also what is called presumptuous sin. Presumptuous sin is found in Psalm 19, verse 13.

And there the psalmist wrote, Psalm 19, verse 13, Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sin. These are culturally acceptable sins. They include white lies.

Maybe they include going on a bus sometimes without a ticket, or perhaps we exceed the speed limits. Even good Christians make assumptions that these things are okay. And even if we don't worship God one day a week, when we do cash up in our laundry and everything else, it's okay.

I can make that decision. I'm under grace. These are presumptuous sins.

Or we say, Lord, I've tried witnessing. I'm not too good at it. You'll understand, Lord.

I don't want to do that anymore. And that is a presumptuous sin. The Lord tells me to witness.

He says, I am the church. And then bring the church to the neighborhood. But I just can't do it, Lord.

You'll understand. And what we do is we don't rely on the Holy Spirit to help us to witness. So we're all alone.

And of course, we're never really successful. Then there are Christians that use presumptuous sin to judge you and your motives. They make themselves judge over others.

They make themselves God. They make forgiveness conditional. And yet God is clear.

God says, forgive 70 times 7. Don't judge, lest you be judged. Just forgive. Don't make conditions.

And then when I first became a Christian, I had a tough, tough time. I went to a church where there were many people without the joy of the Lord. They didn't have the smile on their face.

And I found it so tough to relate to the Christians there. I felt much more comfortable with my own people, with people at work, with those that I knew. They were much kinder.

They were much more human than my fellow Christians at work. They all seemed to have a critical spirit, come after me all the time. And I just didn't feel comfortable.

And I wanted to leave. And then God said, no, don't leave. And I said, why not? And God said, well, you haven't loved anyone.

So you start to learn how to love. And so I stayed there. And over 3 1/2 years, I loved them.

And then after the 3 1/2 years, they started to love me. So as Christians, we comply often only with 20% of scriptures. That is what the underground church is telling the Western church, that we comply with 20% of scriptures.

Beloved, are we truly a living sacrifice? Can I shout to the Lord? Can I say to him, Lord, let your fire fall, Lord? Or will the Lord answer and say, I want to let the fire fall, but there is no sacrifice. The sacrifice is missing. Then there is another category, sins of the lips.

Proverbs 10 verse 19 says, in the multitude of words, sin is not lacking. But he who restrains his lips is wise. And so scripture says, let your yes be yes.

Let your no's be no's. How often have you and I changed our minds? We make promises, and then we don't keep them with our lips. We gossip.

We put a whole forest on fire. There is another category of sins, sins of the eyes. We desire people that are not ours, and that is sin.

We desire things we look at. We men love cars, and we look at cars, and we want that new car so badly, it is actually covetousness. We don't have the money to buy the car, so save for it.

Oh no, oh no, I can't do that. I put myself into debt, and scripture says that your debtor then owes you, owns you. There are jealousies through sins of the eyes.

That dress looks so good and so beautiful, we cannot say no. Besetting sins is another category, addictions. Hebrews 12 says, therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Now when we talk about addictions, we talk about the obvious ones, about drinking, gambling, sex sins. We don't talk so much about the parasitic sins that won't leave you alone. By the way, each one of you has one of them.

And even as I'm mentioning it, you know what that is. Some of you are not taking care of your body. Your body belongs to the Lord.

He has bought it with a price, so take care of it. Some of you are grounded in materialism, you've got to have things. Some of your parasitic sin might be pride.

Somebody says something and you fly off the handle. Some of you have a parasite called anger. Some of you have a parasite called unforgiveness.

Some of you have a parasite of bitterness and fear. And I have a parasite too. And I must continuously go to the Lord to deal with that and to not give in to it.

It's called denial. It's called denying the self. We're not on the altar, beloved, when we're sinning.

We should deny ourselves. We have crawled off the altar because it became too hot. You see, there must be death to the old self for there to be new life.

And then the verse says that it is a reasonable service to God. That it is our reasonable service to go onto that hot altar to burn a little. And God uses willing people.

He doesn't force us. We lie on the altar even if it's hot. We deny ourselves.

We take up the cross and we follow Him. Yes, we can take the heat. Yes, we can take what the Lord brings to us because He promises us in 1 Corinthians 10.13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man.

But God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you're able to bear. But with a temptation will also make the way of his escape that you may be able to bear it. And He says, I'll never leave you nor forsake you.

I'll help you. I'll keep you from falling if you ask me. And then the verse includes and do not be conformed to this world says the Lord in Romans 12.2 So how are we conformed to the world? What do we do? Well, we fight.

We argue. We look for entertainment. We look for sports.

We look for television. We look for the internet. When the telephone rings, we practically jump on it.

We interrupt everything. You see, fire is falling in the underground church of China. They don't know, the preachers, they don't know how to take care of all of the new people coming to the Lord.

Isn't that wonderful? Now, when you talk to a Chinese Christian, it's a different experience. First point, number A, he talks Bible only. He talks in psalms and hymns.

He talks about the Lord. He doesn't have time for sports. He doesn't have time for television.

Second point, he's prepared to suffer. He knows he's hated because of his witness and not everyone will listen to him. And point C, he'll witness anyhow.

And you might be embarrassed when you're with him because he'll witness to everyone surrounding you. And then point D, he's prepared to die any moment. He's ready to give up his life for the Lord.

And point E, he's always on the lookout for police because he's prepared to run. And Matthew 10.23 says, but when they persecute you in the city, run to another. So these Chinese run from the police to tell the gospel even more to others.

And then it says in the verse, be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Beloved, yes, we need a renewing of our mind to be able to become a living sacrifice. Now, we cannot perform brain surgery on ourselves.

When we go to a hospital and we need an operation, we sign a form. On the form we state, I hereby permit the surgeon to perform my surgery. You cannot do it yourself.

Likewise, we submit to the Lord Jesus. We surrender to him and we say, Lord Jesus, please perform this surgery on my mind. Renew my mind.

Because without you we can do nothing. Guilt or self-pity are not enough. Beloved, I testify, I tried to do this myself.

I tried so hard. I tried very hard. I tried with much determination.

I tried for many years and I couldn't do it. I failed and failed and failed. Then I signed the form and I said, Lord Jesus, please perform this surgery on my mind.

By the way, I'm still in surgery, but I'm also lying down. You see, I need holiness. You see, I need purity.

I need surrender. I need submission. I signed the form for the Lord Jesus.

Perform surgery on me, Lord, I said. You see, the fire is falling in Iran. In Iran, thousands of Christians are coming to the Lord.

They had 500 Christians in the 1970s and they said the church was dead then. Now they have over a million. And the martyr, Mehdi Dehaj, wrote, I have always envied those Christians who are martyred for the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a privilege to live and to die for our Lord. Other Iranian Christians were in a prison. They were told, we will set you free if you don't witness.

And they said, what do you mean? What do you mean? We must share this wonderful salvation that God has given us. They decided to stay in prison with torture. Could I do that? Could I be a living sacrifice? The Lord is renewing my mind.

And I require self-denial. So what is part of being a living sacrifice? It is surrender to the Lord Jesus. It is brain surgery.

It requires self-denial. It hurts. It hurts.

Some of me is burning. It requires fasting. It requires not doing the things we could do.

It requires witnessing daily and putting others first, loving them. There must be death for new life. God does not consume us with fire from above to kill us.

Oh no. He just wants to pour it, burn the self, the sin, the flesh, so that he can shine through you and me. He will show us his will for us.

He wants to use us mightily for his glory. He wants to send fire from heaven to set us ablaze for his glory. He wants to make us shine with his glory.

Perhaps some of you will pray with me. Lord, help me to be a living sacrifice. Lord, let your fire fall on me.

Cleanse me. Purify me. Make me holy.

And consume me. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, my own heart is so convicted by you.

You are that great, incredible God. Oh Father, you know how much I want to be a living sacrifice to you, Lord. And how much I have failed you.

And I just ask you for forgiveness on this day, Lord. I ask you to forgive me, to cleanse me. Lord, make me holy in accordance with your will.

Lord Jesus, give me that new mind. Transform my mind. Give me a new mind, Father, through your Son, Jesus, that I might do those things that are pleasing to you.

That help me to walk in the way you want me to walk. That help me to do your will, oh God. Let it be your will and my obedience.

For I ask this in Christ's holy name. Amen.

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