

# A Living Sacrifice Part I

by George Verwer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of total commitment to Jesus Christ, based on Romans 12, and encourages listeners to examine their priorities and values to ensure they are living according to the commands of God and following the example of Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 59:51

**Scripture:** Genesis 22:1-14, Matthew 6:33, Acts 4:12, Romans 12:1-2, Romans 12:10, 2 Timothy 2:2

**Topics:** "Living Sacrifice"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of sharing the message of total commitment to Jesus Christ. He refers to 2 Timothy 2:2, which encourages believers to pass on what they have learned to faithful men who can teach others. The speaker then focuses on Romans 12:1, which calls for believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God. He compares this to Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac and highlights the need for believers to have a 100% total commitment and surrender to Christ. The message concludes with a challenge to live out this commitment and to praise God for salvation from sin and judgment.

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## Transcript

I'd like you to turn to Romans chapter 12. I want you to understand something from the very beginning of our time together. What we give you, at least a lot of what we give you, one of the purposes is that you may go from here and give it to others.

You all know 2 Timothy 2.2. What you've heard of me among faithful witnesses, commit thou to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. So that should be one of the main texts of this conference. In most of my messages I'm going to give you a simple outline and any of you who know how to preach can go out with this outline and give the message in your own language, I hope better than I can give it.

The message I'm going to give you tonight, the outline is the message I was preaching when I was 18 years of age. I haven't given this particular message for many many years and yet the Lord brought this back to my heart as I was interceding and asking Him. And I remember as a young man, I didn't know much about speaking.

Going out and giving this simple message and almost every time seeing people stricken by the spirit and committing their lives to Christ. The message is based on Romans chapter 12. The message is called,

## The Logic of Total Commitment to Jesus Christ.

Some people have asked, What's the message of OM? It's hard to answer that in one sentence. But certainly one of the answers is that the message of OM is the message of total commitment to Jesus Christ. It's the message of Romans 12.1 By the way in your discipleship manual, there's a group of chapters you're supposed to read every week until you have it memorized and the first chapter listed there is Romans chapter 12.

I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your body a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your body a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. After eleven chapters of theological truth, Paul says now in the light of that, this is what you are to do.

After eleven chapters of theological truth, Paul says now in the light of that, this is what you are to do. You are to give your body, you are to give your life a 100% total commitment and surrender to Jesus Christ. You are to present your body and your life wholly acceptable unto God.

A living sacrifice. Immediately our minds go back to Abraham on Mount Moriah. Immediately our minds go back to Abraham on Mount Moriah.

And Abraham's life and the test that he went through to take his son Isaac and to offer him up as a sacrifice to God and as the knife flashed in the sun and he was about to give his only son to God, God stopped him. And as the knife flashed in the sun and he was about to give his only son to God, God stopped him. And God provided another sacrifice.

And I always think of that when I think of this verse that I am to present my body as a living sacrifice. I am to offer myself up to death and yet I live. If it wasn't for the fact that as a young man of 17 If it wasn't for the fact that as a young man of 17 and again almost every year I made this commitment again and again and again of my body to God I would have been wiped out years ago.

I certainly wouldn't be here tonight. And I used to say I yearn to see more of you young men and women as well out teaching and preaching this message of full commitment. And when you start preaching it and teaching it it will also help you live it.

And you know why some of us don't preach this message? Because we're not sure whether in fact we've ever put our lives on that altar and whether we really are fully committed. And so how do you preach about commitment? And I believe the devil of course is very clever. He's always condemning us.

He's always trying to get us to feel that we're not good enough to speak that we're not good enough for anything. That's the work of the devil. When I began preaching this there were many things in my life that had to go yet.

It is a false teaching that full surrender and full dedication is a one shot experience or even a one year experience. Keith Miller in his book Taste of New Wine says the totally committed life is a life of continually committing one's problems and one's life to God as the difficulties are revealed to us from our subconscious. And I don't know about you but at the beginning of this conference I've already felt and I've just been praying the need for myself, George Burwell to present himself again as a living sacrifice.

And that's what I want to do tonight. He says this is all reasonable service. In other versions it speaks about reasonable worship.

I don't believe we can separate worship and service. They're together. I hope you'll get into this 12th chapter.

I was going to and I was praying about going verse by verse. But then the Holy Spirit brought this outline to my heart. Reasons why total commitment is the logical road for the believer.

God is reasonable. He is logical. He has sense to what he does.

The first reason for the logic or why this commitment is so logical I've written down is the commands of God. I believe one of the greatest problems for most of us is the lack of authority the word of God has in our lives. This book is the word of God.

These commands, these instructions these I beseech you they're not to be played with. We're not here to get the word of George Burwell or anybody else. We are here to listen and to know what says the Lord.

And that's why we must open the word of God. And we must as we open the word of God realize this is the final and absolute authority for all conduct in the life of the believer. The church in many places in India today we know has lost its power.

Why? Because the word of God has been put to one side and though it may be read it is not accepted as the final absolute immovable authority in the life of the believer. It's not accepted in the life of the believer. So when we study Romans 12 all these commandments all these instructions all these exhortations it's a serious thing.

And if we come across any area where we feel that we have failed we immediately deal with it in our lives through repentance and calling upon the name of the Lord. Let me give an example. Look at verse 10.

We're commanded in verse 10 be, that's a command kindly affectionate one to another with brother Leela in honor preferring one another in other words be quick to honor others to esteem others better than yourself. Now that's the word of God. And as I read that even now I'm convicted because I know that many times I am not kindly and affectionate to others.

And so immediately if I am open to the work of the Holy Spirit immediately I will be convicted and immediately I will have to repent and cry out to God for forgiveness and renewal in that one verse alone. But because the devil has deceived us we don't give enough importance to the word of God and we don't really accept the authority of the word of God.

We read these verses and we go out this very same day and do the same stupid things week in and week out How many of our teams are known for the kindly affection the brotherly love for one another for preferring one another the Hindiwala esteeming the Keralawala better than himself the Keralawala esteeming the Bihari better than himself the foreigner esteeming the Indian better than himself the Indian esteeming the foreigner how much of this real Biblical Christianity do we really have in our team and it's because the word of God is not the final authority on our team we discuss these things we argue about this and that we defend ourselves we justify ourselves we say this is my personality this is the way I am but you see that pushes aside that lays aside the authority of the word of God

it waters down the commands of God it makes void the grace of God and the word of God and as we study the word of God in this new and this revolutionary way the way we should study it it is like a sword it is like a hammer it is like a hot burning iron and we will hardly ever get through our quiet time without repenting and broken and calling on the name of the Lord for cleansing and renewal and when we start to do that we'll start to know daily revival in our lives and so one of the reasons for the logic of total commitment is simply the commands of God simply the commands of God in other words God said it that's it God said it one man says God said it I believe it that settles it now the devil is very clever in this gets Christians arguing about all kinds of things in scripture that are

not very clear and there are things in scripture that are not clear but the scripture is concerning the major doctrines and the scripture is concerning the way you and I should be living they are extremely clear you ever find anybody arguing over whether we should love one another or not of course not we all agree on that and then go have a fight over some petty issues and by doing that we make void over a hundred fifty some verses on the subject of love the commands of God Jesus was very simple Jesus would have never got along in some of our bible conferences he wouldn't have been invited back he was too simple I mean he gave such simple teachings and he he just my God he sent people out and as we look into the word of God and the teachings of Jesus we are overwhelmed by the simplicity

and one of the deepest things in all the world is the simplicity of Jesus Christ one of his simple statements was this if you love me keep my commandments so simple yet so profound if you love me keep my commandments and so the commands of God are one of the first and main reasons why total commitment and total surrender is the logical way to live we could give so many verses hundreds to show that we should be totally committed to God one of the best one of the best is where Jesus said that the first commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength that's total commitment the second reason is the example of Jesus Christ of course there are so many pictures of the Lord Jesus and his life so totally given over to others we all know for example in John chapter 13 after

the Lord's supper verse 4 Jesus rose laid aside his garments he took a towel he dirtied himself and the next verse he began to wash the disciples feet I believe I believe many of our communion services are the most hypocritical thing that the church ever engages we gather around the Lord's table we take of that cup and that wine and then we go away living our same selfish life instead of taking up the towel and laying our lives down for one another we just live our same selfish life that is the height of hypocrisy and after Jesus washed their feet we see what he said look at verse 14 if I then your Lord and master have washed your feet ye also ought to wash one another's feet for I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you the example of Jesus Christ is one of the

main things that motivates us to lay our lives down and to give our lives wholly to God and to his work then of course we know Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane in the 18th chapter of John's gospel we have Jesus in the garden it's recorded more clearly in some of the other gospels how Jesus let great drops of blood we won't take time to turn to it you know the story that cross said you know he didn't want it himself and he went through in that garden what many of us are going to go through as we contemplate a life of total commitment to Jesus Christ and we will back up oh that we may follow the example of Jesus not my will but mine will be done O God those are the words that flow daily from the life of the true disciple not my will but mine let us not presume let us not be fooled in the

thinking that because we are on OM because we are in Christian work that we are totally dedicated to Christ that is ludicrous many of us have not yet had our big test we are committed stage one praise God

for it and I just praise God for every one of you I praise God that you got this far I don't believe you would be here if you didn't be in business for God we first came to India to talk to top missionaries to talk to leading missionaries to talk to leading Christians they said this is all very nice very idealistic young men serving Christ all day selling books giving out gospel village after village week after week this is wonderful they said there is only one problem nobody will do it only one problem they said you will not get Indian young men to do this work unless you give them a

salary you will not get them to do it at least for more than a few weeks it's too hard it does not appeal to people there is no future in it what future is it after three years somebody just calls you a book wala you have no house you are living in a trap like a common trap who is going to do this work and only by a miracle of God he has slowly added to the numbers of people who are willing to go on in this work some of you who are new and you may see the problem you may see the weakness but if you could have been here ten years ago you would realize what a miracle you are looking at in this room tonight and the price that many Indian brothers had paid to be in this work losing friends losing homes losing jobs giving up sums of money selling their possessions Indians to be a part of this

renegade movement of people with no future and when you have been around ten years in India by foreign brothers who are often very critical then we will talk to you about stage one meanwhile may you be a humble broken listener for the glory of God because as we have seen over the past ten years that the Indian brothers basically in the long run fit at the job better than the finest and with God it's the Lord it's the whole race it's not the spit and the fire at the starting line and the bust of smoke that goes off as you kick your heels but it's who gets to the end of the race that's what counts who dies the truth of the matter is that ten years has proven that God is really no respect for persons whether you're Indian or foreign or Bihari or Kerala that really isn't the thing it's what

in the heart that counts with God that really isn't the thing it's what in the heart that really isn't the what in the heart that really isn't the thing it's what in the heart that really isn't the thing it's what in the heart isn't the thing it's that isn't the thing it's for some it centers around their wife or husband for others it centers around their family for others it centers around a job a good future For others, it centers around some fear.

Everybody's different, and we're all tested in different ways. What may be very easy for me is very hard for you. What may be very hard for you is easy for me.

And so we are constantly in need of fresh, new dedication and commitment to the Lord Jesus. Jesus is our example. The third reason is the death of Jesus Christ.

We've talked about the life of Jesus Christ, now the death of Jesus Christ. Was it C.T. Studd who once said, if Jesus Christ gave his life on a cross for me, is there anything too great to give to him? The cross of Jesus Christ, the death of Jesus Christ, God's son on the cross, demands total commitment on your and my part as a response. Just think of our blessed Jesus Christ.

Being nailed to a piece of wood. I think of the things we often complain about in OM, the hardships we have, the difficulties we endure in the back of the truck. I would like to interview after the meeting those who have shed blood for Jesus Christ.

Very few of us. And then it may have been a scratch, maybe a stone. Our Lord Jesus Christ let those spikes go right through his beautiful, perfect hand.

The pain beyond anything we can ever imagine and was nailed and hung for you and for me and for me that the man surrendered on my part. No, what blasphemy, the cheap, the cheap commitment that the church is giving today to one who bore our sins on the cross, what blasphemy. And we have been lost in a great barrage of words and deeper life feelings and Holy Spirit talk.

We are lost in a jungle of words and to find men today who are living these things, who are demonstrating these things, where do you find these men? The death of Jesus Christ. Every day he should challenge us to lay down our lives. Do you think much of what he saved you from? You know, when we have these praise meetings, if Jesus was more real to us, when the leader said we are going to have praise, we would have to run around pushing people down.

Wait your turn please brother, wait your turn please. People would be leaping out of the chairs praising God, first of all for salvation from hell and death and judgment. I was talking to Dr. Schaefer about this and he says that we of this generation are so brainwashed that we cannot respond to God like past generations.

When Jonathan Edwards gave his message about men just being hung on a thin thread of God's mercy about to be dropped into hell, people froze with fear, they wept, they fell down, they cried out. If he came and gave that message to me, most people wouldn't think much of that, they certainly wouldn't weep. Do you see much weeping in the church today? The church has lost her ability to weep and because we have lost our ability to weep, we have lost a lot of other things with it.

Jesus wept, the shortest verse in the Bible. Paul wept. Again and again we read about Paul and his tears.

What about us? We really really appreciate what God has done for us. He saved us from hell. He saved us from so much.

Where would we be tonight if we didn't know Jesus Christ? I can't imagine where I'd be. The trouble I was already in at 16. I don't know where I'd be today and what I'd think about.

I just want to rededicate my life. I just want to come back and surrender as an act of thanksgiving. There's a story about World War I. They were using gas in the war.

And one man, his mask was not working, not functioning properly. And he was about to collapse. When a friend took his mask and gave it to him.

And this friend took the broken mask and fell to the ground poisoned. He was permanently damaged. The rest of his life he had to spend in a hospital.

But the man whose life was saved was given the good mask. He used to visit the hospital everyday. He used to bring books.

He used to read. He used to do all kinds of things for the man in the hospital. And the nurses, they were in amazing dedication.

To this sick man. What was the reason? Because the man in that bed had taken his gas. Jesus Christ took the gas.

He took the pain. He took the death that you and I deserve. And now we should just serve him.

We should just give ourselves to him everyday as an act of thanksgiving. To say thank you Jesus for bearing that sin, that death, that death that I deserve. The fourth reason why this total commitment is so logical, so reasonable is the physical condition of the world.

You know there are even unconverted people who are very, very dedicated to others. Many of them make shame of Christians. They see the condition of the world.

The lack of food. Of suffering. The sick.

And they give their lives to serve others. I have met such people. I have read about such people.

The conditions of the world cause them to say as long as I have a healthy body the most logical thing is to give myself to others, to serve others and to try to leave the world a little better place than when I came into it. Some communists are like that. Don't think of all communists as sort of heat filled people with horns sticking out of their heads.

If I had lived in the Soviet Union in the days of Lenin If I had to choose between Rasputin, the religious maniac, and Lenin I think my choice probably would have gone towards Lenin. I don't know if you want to follow Christians or follow Lenin. I would have followed Lenin.

Because there are many people who in their lives in order to be honest and follow Christians and in order to sacrifice their lives are dedicated to Christians.

There was one time in Russia before the revolution when a great number of these people I don't know, maybe 10 or 100 thousand, I don't remember they marched on the palace of the Tsar, the leader of Russia who was a very religious man and they only wanted to read a petition sincere, dedicated men, workers they came down to see tens of thousands of them singing they had no weapons they just wanted to read a petition and after they stood for a while the guards came out one of the greatest slaughters of history they slaughtered and killed thousands of children and wives and husbands and they laid in a great pool of blood before the palace that was the seed of the revolution that swept the Soviet Union and Lenin with a handful of men dedicated men took over one third of the world and one of

the reasons is because the Church of Jesus Christ in the Soviet Union years before that had no weapons had left the way of Christ and was so far from dedication and commitment that the words probably were no longer in their vocabulary that is a story that the night Lenin was planning one of the major moves of the revolution the leading priests were in Moscow having a gigantic argument and discussion on the color and the length and the types of robes they should be wearing behind the altar in the church now as believers in Jesus Christ we also should have and must have social conscience the physical needs of the people of India should break our hearts deadly to the foot of the cross how can I possibly go around and waste money when there are people who don't have enough food in this world

and others don't have anything and how can we turn our minds towards doing that how can we make our lives better and enjoy our lives when others do not have food to eat and clothes to wear what does the word of God say about despising the poor about despising the poor not taking care of the poor and you know it's amazing if I go back to the west as I do and offend a few wealthy people in the meetings who are totally good Christians oh I really get taken to task for that oh my shouldn't do that you are offending these people these are good people God has blessed them God has given them their wealth and how can you possibly speak that way and so if I offend one rich man especially if he is a deacon in the church that is a

terrible thing but the fact that millions go to bed tonight in the

gutters without food and without clothing well you know that's just part of life what can you do I can only say that if that is Christianity if that is Christianity I don't want any part of it I'm not going to judge rich people that's God's job but my Bible is very clear about these things and to me the world situation the man told me all my money all my power all my energy everything I've got for others to me that's as logical as ABC and for me that's the fifth reason the spiritual condition of the world if the physical condition of the world should motivate us what can we say of the spiritual condition the Bible says men are lost men are on the road to hell and that makes that gutter in the streets of Calcutta that makes that almost a first class hotel and if you told me I had to sleep

in the gutters of Calcutta for five years to avoid going to hell I'm going there tomorrow night and this is the lack of understanding of this is why the church so easily swung into socialism and social gospel and away from the real full message of the gospel you'll find very few people caught up in the social gospel who believe in hell I don't understand hell I leave that with God but he has made it clear in his words that no man would sin still on his heart and that's all men can go into the presence of God when we look out over this world when we look out over this world all the people do you really believe they're lost do you really believe they're lost all these people in Paradis in all of Orissa the masses of Bihar do you really believe they're lost do you really believe they're lost

if you say you do then the next logical thing is the total commitment of your life to rescue them and to reach them and to love them and to share with them the only way of escape and the spiritual state of the church is in the same category demands a full commitment the sixth thing that demands total commitment is the shortness of this life tell me your big thought these days what you're going to do next year what does the word of God say take no thought for tomorrow there's enough trouble today and yet so easy it is to live in the future many believers in India live in the future they don't really like it they don't really like it out here they feel they'll finish the punishment tour and one of the reasons they keep going is that they know soon it'll be over and they can go home and just

forget about it praise God there are many who are not like that you may never get home you have no guarantee you will be alive tomorrow not one guarantee nobody in this room life is so short we think of that girl in Belgium young girl life ahead of her goes into the bathroom five minutes she's dead you have no guarantee shortness of life there's a grass that today isn't tomorrow is gone so little time why waste any of it why misuse why take any of it in hard hard activities and then of course it soon returns it could be at any time we have the bedding of the fig tree we have the increase of knowledge prophecy after prophecy rapidly being fulfilled Jesus Christ is coming what a challenge to give all in the few remaining days months, years that we have before we're with him in the glory

never again never again to work upon this beaten up earth and as we go around churches how we see the things that Christians are doing we see the way they spend their time it is wonderful if they really believed that we were probably going to live on the earth for eternity and all how we cling to the things of this world you know it used to be when you came out of nowhere there was only a few of us no there was no rule I mean everybody just sold everything that's the only way we could live and we just had so many possessions to sell we didn't know what to do with that might be short the word of God needs to be printed Bibles need to be printed everything needs to be converted into cash and into literature as soon as possible just simple logic just ABC oh I'm sure some of it was culturally

motivated but today it's different today nobody asks any questions it's a big movement you just keep your stuff at home leave your clothing at home leave your junk at home let your father watch it you go and play discipleship for two years and you go back and pick up where you left off and then such people wonder why after two years at OM they never do find any reality because there is no reality to the one who just comes to play around just to sniff and see just to taste reality comes to the man who puts his hands in the pierced hands of Jesus and says to die for you is my one desire to live for you is my one birth and if you're from India then your big desire is to eventually get a cassette recorder that you can send home to mommy and daddy and so instead of thinking what we can give

what we can forsake for the cause of Jesus many times it's what we can get what we can have what we can save what can I get out of this after two years I'm not saying there are many like that but it's a danger it's a danger may God open our hearts shortness of life causes me to want to make every day count I have just two other points keep it short tonight you're tired the example of secular men I wish I could keep you here all night I'd like to read this book to you tonight that's what I'd like to do it's one of the most unpleasant books I've ever read on this deck above one in the morning about two years ago I got a hold of this book and I read about dedicated men I read

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