

Crucified to Live

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding Romans 6 and the union with Christ in death before presenting one's body as a living sacrifice to God.

Duration: 26:48

Scripture: Matthew 9:2-7, John 5:8-9, John 9:1-3, John 14:12, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 3:20

Topics: "Death To Self"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker uses the analogy of receiving a car to explain the concept of surrendering oneself to God. He emphasizes that just as receiving a car involves handing over the keys, title, and registration, surrendering to God requires giving up control of our bodies and plans. The speaker highlights that young people often have their own agendas and plans, which can hinder them from fully surrendering to God. He encourages the audience to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God, acknowledging that they need their bodies to carry out His work. The sermon references Romans 12 and Ephesians 3 to support the idea of surrendering to God's agenda rather than our own.

Transcript

Two scriptures I'd like to have you turn to, Romans chapter 12 and Ephesians chapter 3. In many years after coming into the Alliance, and that's quite a while ago actually, soon be 30 years, seems like yesterday, I had the privilege of speaking at weekend holiday youth conferences. I'm not sure they still prevail, but in those days on Labor Day, Memorial Day, the other holidays, young people would go to someplace in the region and they'd bring a speaker in. I happened to be one of those that had the privilege of being brought in.

And I can recall on several occasions using the first chapter of Romans 12, I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable under God, which is your reasonable service. And I presented the claims of Christ, the call of Christ, the commitment of the believer, and gave an invitation for young people who would surrender their lives to the Lord as a living sacrifice that he could use them as he wished. And they responded.

And I can recall on occasions when the front of the church would be filled with young people that were zealously, earnestly seeking God's best for their life. But you know, something about it that troubled me. It took quite a while, but in due course, I realized something.

I'm sure it's occurred to you, but it took a long time for me. I think some cases are very dense. But I did finally arrive at this conviction that Romans 12 comes after Romans 6. Now, it doesn't seem very, very difficult, does it? But to talk to someone about Romans 12-1 before they've understood Romans 6 is a little difficult.

Because Romans 12-1 says, present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable under God, which is your reasonable service. But our bodies, what are they? Well, they're the vehicles of our personality and our plans and our intentions. And as such, we need them.

And as long as I have plans of my own and aspirations of my own, a program of my own, I'm going to need to have the vehicle by which I can complete and conclude that program. Otherwise, it's just imagination. So, I need a brain with which to think and take my ideas and develop them and structure them.

And I need eyes to see in order to get the material with which to form this plan. I need ears to hear the comments of others, needs of others. I need hands to affect the work and feet to take me where the work is to be done.

I need a body. It's important to me. Now, as long as that body has a job to do, and I am in charge of that job, it looks to me as though there's going to be a little bit of conflict.

Suppose one of you were to say to me, and I'm not expecting this at all, but suppose one of you were to say, for some reason, brother, I just feel that the Lord is leading me to give you a car. And I have it out in front here, and I have the title ready to be transferred to you. And I have, here's the key, here's the registration, and I want to give it to you.

So, we go out to the car, and we look at it. And even though I have a car, I grew up in the Great Depression, and we had something we called the NRA, National Recovery Act. To me, it became another thing, never refuse anything.

So, following the NRA, I would go out with you to the car, and you'd say, get in, get in, here, just go ahead, get in. And I'd get in, and then you'd say, well, move over a little, make room for me. Now, I'm beginning to have a few questions about what this outright gift is going to mean, because I'm sitting about in the middle of the seat, or taking my half in the middle, and you're sitting next to the door.

Say, go ahead, put the key in, put the key in, turn it on. Now, I'll tell you what we'll do. You run the gas, and I'll run the brake, and you steer to the right, I'll steer to the left.

Now, as I said, I'm not very smart, but I am too smart to take a gift, even a car, with those kinds of conditions, because I know if we try to drive that way, we're going to have a wreck, because you'll want to be zigging, when I want to be zagging, and it won't work. Telephone pole will jump right out in the middle in front of us. We'll have a calamity.

You see, if you're going to give me the car, then you hand me the keys, and the title, and the registration, and say, and I'll say thank you, and you say goodbye, and it's mine to run. Now, with the young people, what I failed to tell them was that their bodies, their personalities, their bodies were the vehicle, and they were driving that vehicle. They had their own program, their own agenda, their own plans, and as long as they were in charge, there wasn't any way in the world that they could present it to the Lord as a living sacrifice, however well-intentioned their offer to it might be, because they still had a program.

They still had plans. They still had their own agenda that they fixed, and the Lord may have a totally different agenda, and totally different plans, and an altogether other kind of program. Now you say, here Lord, here's my body.

I'm presenting it to you, and that ought to mean that he is as free to work through you as the father was to work through him, but it doesn't work that way with most of us, because we've not recognized the problem. Two people can't occupy the same space, and they can't two bodies can't occupy the same space, and two drivers can't drive the same car, and two personalities can't control the same body. Now the Lord Jesus at 33 years of age, 30 years, excuse me, roughly according to our common calendar, actually because of the difference between the calendars, it was about, he was still 30 years of age, but it wasn't 38, 38 is about 26 or 27 AD by our calendar, because there's a four-year difference in there.

At any rate, he went down to hear John preach at Jericho, and the Lord Jesus went down to the river bank and into the water to be baptized. Now baptism, as I understand it, is a picture of our identification and our union with Christ in his death, in his burial, and in his resurrection. It's a picture of a relationship that's already been established.

It doesn't produce the relationship, it typifies and it testifies to the relationship. Death, death crucified with Christ, that's what you're saying, he died for me, was buried for me, and he was quickened and raised for me. And by going into the water, you're saying, and I've reckoned that I am crucified with Christ, and buried with Christ, and quickened with Christ, and raised with him, my sins are forgiven, I'm pardoned, that's what baptism is.

To us, it was death to sin, sins, this willingness to govern, or this dedication, this commitment, this principle of governing our own lives, which is the essence of sin, I'm going to do what I want to do, that's the attitude, the soliloquy of the sinner. Now in repentance, it's Lord, what do you want me to do? We resavingly embrace Christ, and we subsequently are baptized. Now the Lord was baptized, picture of union with, in death, to what could Christ die? Certainly not to sin, the father had just broken the silence in a few moments, and said, this is my beloved son, in whom I'm well pleased, there was no sin in him, but then to what could he die? Because baptism is a picture of death, to what could the son of God die? Well, there was something to which he could die, he was the eternal son, by him were all things made that were made, and even then, all things by him were held together, even though he's incarnate, he's still the eternal son.

Now, he's here as a man, the God man, Emmanuel, God come in the flesh, very God of very God, very man of very man, and he had rights, did he not? What were some of the rights of the son of God? The right to honor for his name, he'd been worshipped by angels, by cherubim and seraphim, he spoke and world sprang into being, all things were made by him, and governed and sustained by him, and now for the purpose of redemption, he's clothed himself with human personality, and he's going down into the water, symbolizing death, to what can the son of God die?

The right to his rights, he had rights, the right to his name, to honor, to worship, all of this, but for the purpose of redemption, he's willing to relinquish the right to his rights, we find it, do we not?

In that verse that says, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of man, thought it not something to robbery or to be grasped after, seized upon to be equal with God, but he humbled himself and took upon himself the form of a servant, being made in fashion as a man, and if you please, he accepted the limitations of his humanity, and from that time, strangely enough, everything done

by Christ was done not by him as the son, everything that was done as son, he could have done, but if he had done it as son, he never could have said, as the father sent me, so send I you, he accepted the limitations of his humanity, and everything done by Christ in the three years of his public ministry was done by the father through the Holy Spirit, 47 times in the

gospel of John, he says something to this effect, I do not speak of myself, I speak as I received commandment of the father, the father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works, I only do what I see the father do, he had no agenda, from that time on, he had no agenda, he did not originate, he did not initiate, he was absolutely and totally dependent upon the father, you remember when he went down to the pool and all the sick were lying there, and he walked around, said, hello Harry, hi Joe, how are you Bill, stepped over one, across another, around another, until he comes to one person lying there, and said, will thou be made whole, I have no man to take me to the water when the angel troubles it, rise, stand upon thy feet, take up thy bed, thy sins are forgiven thee, the man rose and was

healed, and as they were walking away, one of the disciples said, Lord, what about this, was he a worse sinner than those others that you didn't do anything for, or was he better, or was it his peril, why did you heal one man, leave all the rest of them there, you know what the Lord's answer was, I only do what I see my father do, in worship, in prayer, in God, the father had given to God the son, a vision of a certain man being healed, he spoke to that man, that man was healed, none of the rest were, they never asked him, he said, apparently the father had said to him, anyone that asks you, you can heal, otherwise you can only initiate where you see me previously having done the work, what am I saying, I'm saying when he went into the water, in baptism, it was a symbol of the

relinquishing of his right to his rights, his right to act in his essential deity, his son, he accepted the limitations of his humanity, he presented his body to the father, and everything done by him was done by the father through the spirit, and what is he asking of us, that we present our bodies to him, the way he presented his body to the father, now in order to do that, we have to have the same, not in substance, but the same kind of an attitude, he died to the right to his rights, we're not talking now about sins, those have been dealt with before we came to Christ, we're now talking about the right to our rights, do you have rights, of course you do, not, they're not sinful to exercise those rights, you have a right to your talent, God gave it to you, but he gave it to you, no

strings attached, you have a right to your time, he gave it to you, no strings attached, you have a right to your name, your reputation, you have a right to a lot of rights that are not sinful, time and talent and abilities and intelligence, oh so many rights, and to exercise them is not wrong, or it could be wrong if you did it for your own, but just to exercise them in the normal course of events is not wrong, but what's he asking you to do, he's asking you to reckon yourself to be dead, I am crucified with Christ, said Paul, there was a time historically when it occurred, the day Christ died, I died, the day my substitute went to the cross for me, in the eyes of God the Father, it was me with and in my substitute, but now it remains for me, it remains for me to enter into that deeper

repentance or deeper change of mind about who's going to exercise the rule, he says present your body a living sacrifice, well as long as I have my agenda, even a good agenda, as long as I have my program and my plans and my aspirations, I can't present my body as a living sacrifice, because it's mockery, it doesn't work, that's what's wrong with it, I still got a plan for it, so I can't give it to him, but when I come to the place that I understand what this means, this being crucified to live, where I voluntarily, if you please go behind the cross and put my hands up over the nails, father from today on, as long as I live, I'm going to stay

here, crucified with Christ, the day he died for me, I died with him, but today I am entering into this deeper relationship where I have no

aspirations and no plans and no program, but your will for my life, thy will be done in my life as it is in heaven, and I want to stay here on the cross, crucified with Christ, now what happens, you're here voluntarily, voluntarily, not by force, he didn't make you, you chose, because it's wise to choose, you see, any plan you make for yourself is inferior for the ones that he'll have for you, you got to face that right at the outset, so it's not a bad deal anyway, it's pretty good in fact, he's not going to show it to you, oh I have so many people in years that have come to me and I just wish God would show me his plan for my life, and I've had to ask why, why do you want him to show you his plan for your life, so you can initial it approved by big me, is that what you have in mind, why

do you want him to, well so you can amend it if you don't like what's in it, friend you don't need to know the plan for, that the Lord's made for your life, all you do need to know is the Lord, if you're satisfied that he is who he say he is, then you can take his plan sight unseen, you don't need to approve it or vet it or put it through a committee or any of the other things we do in political organization, be it corporate or public, it's not necessary, you know him, he loved you, he died for you, if you had all the love in the world, you couldn't generate love for yourself as great as his, if you had all the wisdom in the world, you couldn't generate wisdom that's more available to you than his, so let's stop all this nonsense, oh if I just knew the will of God, if you knew the will of

God for your life, you'd run like everything to keep from having it happen, I know you, I don't trust you anymore and I trust myself, remember years ago when I first understood this union with Christ and his death, I said Lord, let's forget about all that praying I did when I said show me your plan for my life, I don't need to know the plan, I just need to know the planner and I'll take it sight unseen, now I can present, say Lord, here I am, I'm going to stay here, this is the attitude I have toward myself, no more agenda making now, no more program making now, as far as my life's concerned, it's in your hand, now Lord, I can present my brain to you, so that living in me, you can use my brain to think your thoughts and get the back in the world again, and I can present my eyes to you,

Lord Jesus, so that living in me, you can use my eyes to see lost men as sheep scattered without a shepherd, I can present my ears to you, Lord Jesus, so that living in me, you can use my ears to hear the cry of those caught in the briars of sin, the traps of the enemy and their own failures, I can present my feet to you, Lord Jesus, so you can use my feet to go anywhere you want to go, I can present my hands to you, Lord, so you can use my hands to lift the fallen and feed the hungry and guide the blind, I can present my heart to you, Lord Jesus, so that living in me, you can have a heart to be broken again for the lost, I can present my lips to you, Lord Jesus, so that living in me, you can use my lips to speak your word of redeeming love, I can't do it, Lord, the one thing I've learned

about this life called Christian life is that I can't live it, it's yours, it's not mine, but Lord Jesus, if you'll make a deal with me, and it's your idea in the first place, I'll just stay here, crucified with you, nevertheless, I'll live, yet not I, it won't be me, but it'll be you, Lord Jesus, living in me, your own life.

Now, that was what Paul said the Christian life was, and that's what he wants it to be. Oh, can you see the terrible mistake I made when I talked to young people about Romans 12 before I explained to them about Romans 6? And I don't want to make that mistake with you.

I want you to understand that first you embrace your union with Christ in death before you can make your presentation of your body and living sacrifice meaningful. Let us bow our hearts in prayer. Father of Jesus, we lift our hearts to thee this morning to thank you and to praise you that you've given to us this marvelous opportunity of entering into a vital living relationship with thy dear son.

He prayed, Father, that we might be in union with him the way he was with you, so that he could be in union with us the way you were with him. And that's exactly what we want today. We know it all begins when we see ourselves by faith joined with Christ in his death.

Help us to realize, Father, it's not crucified to be exterminated, to be obliterated, but it's crucified to live. Crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Seal the word to our hearts, make it clear to our minds, stir our spirits to respond, our wills to so well that the lamb that was slain may in us see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

We ask in his worthy name. Amen.

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