

A Holy Offering to God

by Paul Washer

We must present our bodies as a living and holy sacrifice to God, cutting ourselves off from things that are not pleasing to Him and recognizing His supremacy and uniqueness.

Duration: 1:10:50

Scripture: Romans 12:1

Topics: "Offering"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a story about observing a man who smacks his head against a wall every time his watch beeps on the hour. The speaker uses this anecdote to illustrate how often we overlook our own faults and focus on the shortcomings of others. He emphasizes the importance of examining our own lives and aligning our actions with biblical principles. The speaker also highlights the significance of understanding and embracing God's love and sacrifice for us as the motivation for living a holy and obedient life.

Transcript

You know, when I was listening to our sister share about the camp, I think it's wonderful that people that would want to and be concerned about children and want to see their edification and their blessing, but isn't it also at the same time a sad indictment against our culture that God has to raise up people outside of the family, burden them and give them a heart for young children because their parents don't have that heart. When I heard about that little boy given over to his grandparents, to be honest with you, it just makes me want to find that man and horse whip him because he's destroying a little boy. You see, I'm going to say something and it's going to sound really hard.

Sometimes I just think that some people should just be neutered. I wonder why on earth they have children. Why? And even some Christian fathers or so-called Christian fathers, I wonder to myself, why did they ever get married? Because they don't seem to want to spend a lot of time with their wife or invest their life in their wife.

And then with the children, God has to raise up another person to come in and try to bless the children, try to salvage the children. I am not against Sunday schools or youth getting together or all sorts of things and camps. My boys have certainly had a wonderful time at this camp.

But when those things have to be done in order to replace a father, that's just a sad indictment against our culture. When you have to have women's groups in the church because the men are not discipling their own wives and pouring their lives into their own wives. When you have to have youth groups because men are not purposefully discipling their own children.

When you have to have Sunday school because men are not doing what they are supposed to be doing. You know, folks, you can pray and pray and pray all day that the Spirit of God will fall down upon a place, but unless you're willing to obey the Word of God, He's not going to fall down on anything. He says, I'm not going to bless your sacrifice.

He says, do what I told you to do with your wife. Do what I told you to do with your children. Then we'll talk.

Then we'll talk. You see, Leonard Ravenhill said this one time. If you find that I quote Leonard Ravenhill a lot, it's because I had a deep love for him.

He was a rarity in our age and a rarity in his. He was a man of God. And he said, all these preachers wanting to find a new definition for Christianity.

We don't need a new definition of Christianity. We need a new demonstration of Christianity. And do you know where that... Look, there's hardly anything more important in the Bible than Christ and His bride.

Would you agree? Christ and His bride. Well, how did God choose to demonstrate what that was supposed to look like? Through a preacher? No. Through a man and his wife.

Children and lost people ought to be able to look at a man and his wife and say, if that's how Christ loves the church, I would love to be a part of that. Got to look at the way a man cares for his children. And say, is that the way God cares for His children? I would love to be a part of that.

Just to show you how messed up we are. When you think of children and the care of children, you think of a woman. You think of woman's work.

That's what women do. That's what my wife does. That is a damnable lie.

It does not represent the fatherhood of God to His children. And that's what family is about. Marriage isn't created just to be marriage in itself.

Everything that God has made has a purpose. That purpose is to represent who He is and what He does. So when He made a family, the mother is not supposed to be the center of it.

The father is supposed to be the center of it. And He acts as a father, representing God the Father. And He represents Christ as a husband.

Oh men, please, don't think of great moves of God and all these things. If even the basic things we refuse to do. If even the basic things we refuse to do.

Well, let's go to Romans 12, verse 1. Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Now, we explained yesterday that the word, therefore, at the beginning of our passage is very important because it connects Romans 12

with the rest of the book of Romans that precedes it.

Chapters 1 through 11. And so, He's asking us to literally give the most precious thing we have, and that is our own lives. And we're to lay our lives down to give them to Christ.

And the motivation for that is this, the mercies of God. That God has been so merciful and so loving to us, that it should move us to offer our lives as a sacrifice. Now, those mercies are laid out for us in the first 11 chapters of Romans.

Again, yesterday we learned that this is very common with Paul. He will set out the theology of what God has done for us in Christ, and then he'll come to a certain point in his book where he says, now, based on everything God has done for you in Christ, this is what I want you to do. This is how you should live.

He does that here in Romans chapter 12. He does it in Ephesians chapter 4. After giving us the deepest theology in the entire Bible, in the book of Ephesians, the first three chapters, he gets to chapter 4 and he says, therefore, live this way. So, our motivation for the way we live comes from what God has done for us in Christ.

So if a person is ignorant, does not know much about God or what God has done for them in Christ, it is very, very difficult for them to be motivated to live the Christian life, unless their motivation is just based on pure romanticism and emotions, which makes for good singing, but it does not make for a great life. Now, it goes on, he says, present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice. The word present here is in the aorist tense.

It's not in the present tense in Greek. It indicates a once and for all thing. Do this.

Finally decide. How long, as Elijah said, will you limp between two opinions? If Baal is Baal, then go ahead and worship him. If God is God, then worship him.

Make a decision. God even uses the language sometimes in the prophets, you are wearying me. Have you ever had someone who one day he's for you, the next day he's against you? One guy, one day he's on the team, the next day he's not, he's back and forth and you just become tired of being around that kind of individual.

That's what it's talking about. Come on. Once and for all, let's make this decision.

And he says to present your bodies. And I indicated there that it's very important that he used the term bodies and he didn't use the term heart. Because heart in our modern language is so filled with a soupy, meaningless romanticism.

I have Jesus in my heart. I love Jesus with my heart. Don't judge my life because you don't know what's in my heart.

We talk about the heart as this thing totally independent of the rest of us. That we can love Jesus with all our heart, but it doesn't affect any other part of our life. Baal says no.

The heart is the very center of your affections, your will and your emotion. If Jesus has your heart, he will have your will. If he has your heart, he will have your emotions, your affections, your intellect.

And if he doesn't have any impact upon your hands and your feet and your eyes and your ears, which you do with your body, then you're deceiving yourself when you say Jesus has your heart. Because he most certainly does not. Now, he goes on and he says, offer your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.

Now, a living sacrifice. There's two ideas there. The first one is this.

God is calling us to a vibrant, vital relationship and servanthood. A zealous thing. Men are zealous about so many things.

I mean, it's absolutely amazing what men will do in order to gain something that's not eternal. There are men who have totally dedicated their lives to making money. I mean, they've ruined their marriages, they've ruined their children, they've ruined their health.

Everything just to make money. There are other men who will lose everything for the sake of their toys. For the sake of their hobbies.

They don't even gather money. They just get money in order to buy toys. And they ruin their marriage, they ruin their family, their children, themselves.

All for the sake of toys. They'll dedicate their lives to toys. There are other people who will literally enslave themselves to debt in order to have a house that's too big.

I mean, it's absolutely phenomenal. Or to buy clothes that have certain kind of stickers on them. So they can impress people they don't even like.

Or to have cars or nice things. It's pathetic how zealous men will be. They'll go to a football game and act like an idiot.

Paint their faces and their bodies and be sick for three days if their team loses. I mean, all the things that men will do. It's absolutely just crazy.

That's why the Puritans referred to sin as insanity. As insanity. I'm going to stop here because I've got to say something.

Because it just popped into my mind. I want to say this to the fathers and the young men here. It has nothing to do with my text, so forgive me.

That's why I got bad grades in preaching and seminary. But this needs to be said. I look at a bunch of, not so much here, I don't see this here.

But in the States, and I'm sure if you got to bigger cities in Canada. You see these 17, 18 year old boys. They got the cool car.

They got cool clothes. They got cool sissy looking haircuts. They've got everything.

And I want you just to imagine. This is the way I want my sons to be. There's these boys and all these girls.

And they're all in this room. And they're all impressed with their clothing and their cars. And they're all the things that they've got.

But what would happen. And I'm not saying this will happen. I'm not boasting.

I'm just giving you a dream of mine. And then in the midst of all that superficiality. My two boys walk in.

Again, this is my dream. I'm not saying it's a reality. It's a hope.

My two boys walk in the room. They've got clothes on from Walmart or Goodwill. Their shirts are just, you know, \$7 shirts they bought at the tractor supply store.

They just got normal blue jeans on. They drive an old beat up pickup truck that their dad helped them fix up. But when they walk in their room, they're tall.

They've got chests. They've got shoulders. They're noble.

They know how to stand. They know how to treat a young lady. Not to even touch her hand.

To show her the greatest respect. They know how to stand. And take on a whole group of men if necessary.

To protect the dignity of a young lady. Or even of an older person. I will submit to you that their nobility and their Christ-likeness will win the day.

See, I don't want my children. Why would I want them in style? With this world? That creates masculine girls and feminine boys? Why would I want them? You see, it's just something I wanted to throw in there. It's them, not the external.

You know, God is... Every king, down through the ages, has learned. This Catholic priest did the same thing. In order to really amaze people, you put on robes.

Real shiny robes. And all this beautiful, gaudy glory. Made by hand.

And you dress yourself up to make yourself look greater than you actually are. God's the only king who doesn't do that. He dresses Himself in Himself.

It's His character and His glory. It's the same way with a person. Just a young man with a strong jaw.

Tenderness and strength. Devoted totally to Christ. That's what we want.

That's what we want. Well, let's go on. It says, present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.

Now, living here, not only means we're to be zealous, but here is something that we must understand. Probably, I actually spoke to some of you yesterday, and you did not know who the McLeod brothers were. I couldn't believe that.

I mean, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. But the revivals and things that happened with the McLeod brothers and others are a demonstration of something. It is not by the strength of a man's hand.

It is not by the strength of a man's will. But this type of dedication to Christ is a product of the working of the Spirit of God. First of all, in regeneration.

Only a Christian, a person who's truly been regenerated by the Spirit of God, can live this kind of life. And only a Christian who continues to be filled with the Holy Spirit and is really seeking not to quench and

offend the Spirit, can live this kind of life. It's like I was listening to Ryan Fullerton preach a while back.

He's a young preacher in the States who I believe God is going to use in a tremendous way. And he was preaching out of Proverbs 31. You know, the Proverbs 31 woman.

And he said, now, you will say that this is against our culture. He goes, you're right. This Proverbs 31 woman is totally contrary to our culture.

But what you need to understand is the Proverbs 31 woman was also totally contrary to Hebrew culture. She's contrary to every culture. Because this is God's description of a woman, not culture's description of a woman.

And no woman can do this at all. There's never been a woman that can do this apart from the Spirit of God. You see, we're being asked to live a life that is not natural.

It's super natural. Super natural. It's above nature.

It's beyond nature. It's beyond us. But we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Who strengthens us. Now, he says, not only a living sacrifice, but a holy sacrifice. I love the story.

I've told it a million times about an old violinist. Famous, famous violinist. Who was very, very old and playing his last concert.

The whole world came to hear him play. And after he got through playing, it was absolutely marvelous. A young violinist, young boy, came up to him and said, Sir, I would give my life to play like you.

And the old man looked at him and said this, Son, I have given my life to play like me. This is something, again, that I learned from Leonard Ravenhill. Do you want God? Then you are going to have to cut yourself off from other things.

And that's just all there is. You're going to have to discover those things which God hates. And even though your culture will laugh at you, and most Christians will laugh at you, if you truly want God in your life, on your life, empowering you, then you're going to have to make some decisions.

There are certain things that you cannot participate in. Because you will grieve the Spirit, who is shown to us not as a charging bull, but as a dove, easily offended. Now, holiness, what does it mean? I mean, I want you to think for just a moment.

When you think of the word holy, what is it that comes into your mind? I would imagine that most of you would say, without sin. Right? It's holy. He's without sin.

Well, then let me ask you a question. What does righteous mean? You say, well, without sin. Well, then why do they use two different terms if they mean the same thing? Holiness does not primarily mean without sin.

Now, holiness is used in the Bible, oftentimes in reference to being without sin, or as being different than a man. But I'm going to explain to you why that is. Holiness comes from a Hebrew word, which means in its most basic root, to cut, to cut.

Now, the word not only means to cut, but to cut and separate. My wife has almost cut off every finger on her hand. She is the greatest cook in the world, but I want to get her one of those steel gloves to wear.

Because she starts going with that knife, but it's like a chainsaw in the kitchen. Especially, you never want to get in an argument with my wife while she's doing that, because then the knife goes like this. But I've always been amazed at how my mom and my wife, they sit there and they've got this cutting board.

And they'll lay a carrot across there, and I mean it's... And then they separate. It piles up and they separate it. They cut some more, and they separate it with the blade.

And they cut some more, and they separate with the blade. So the idea here is to cut, to sever, to cut off from the wrist, and then to move it to one side, to separate it. Now, what is God saying about Himself above all things when He says, I am holy? He is speaking primarily of His uniqueness, His separateness, His transcendentness.

He is not like anyone. No one is comparable to Him. Let me give you a way of looking at it here from Dr. Sproul.

What's more like God? I'm going to give you two creatures, and you tell me which one is more like God. An archangel in heaven, so majestic that if He were to show Himself to the world, it would probably crack it in two. An archangel in heaven, or a bacteria or worm crawling in your sewer system.

Which one is more like God? The answer is neither. God is so other and so great that you can honestly say that archangel is no closer to being like God than a worm in a toilet. Let me give you an example.

At this moment, I'm the tallest one in this room. You're all seated. I'm on a platform.

I'm on an average of probably three feet higher than the rest of you. Now, if I said, I'm three feet higher than the rest of you, so I'm closer to the sun. I'm closer to the sun.

I'm a lot closer to the sun than the rest of you. That would be absurd, wouldn't it? Absolutely absurd. Why? The sun is so far away.

It doesn't even matter. Well, that is a poor illustration. Because what I'm saying is, the distance is so great between me and the sun that the distance between you and I really is insignificant.

But with God, it's even different. More different. I'm not saying that God is like us, just bigger.

Or even infinitely bigger. What I'm saying is, God isn't like us at all. There's nothing to compare the two.

That's an amazing thing. Now, when we talk about God's separateness, we're now talking about His transcendence. He is above all things.

We're also talking about His supremacy. Undisputed supremacy. Another way of looking at it, He has no competitor.

He has no competitor. Okay? Now, before we go on, let's take that back and look at ourselves. What does it mean if we are holy? It means that God is supreme.

No, really supreme. Not just in our songs. Not just in our heart.

But in our actions, we demonstrate God is supreme and that there are no competitors at all to Him. Do you remember Jesus in the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount? Remember what He said? Blessed are the pure in heart. Most people, when they hear the word pure, they're thinking, you know, just very clean.

The word actually refers to unalloyed. No mixture. A good way of putting it is, blessed are those who have no competing loyalties in their heart.

That they truly recognize the supremacy of God and nothing is brought into competition with that. Now, here's another problem, though, according to the Book of Psalms. When there is no teaching on the attributes of God, no proper teaching on the attributes of God among God's people, they cannot hold Him as supreme.

In fact, what they will do is reduce Him and make Him even like us. And even lower than us, cause Him to be our servant. And even worse than that, they will make man the center of all things and God exists to serve them.

And that's what's happened in the big part of American Christianity. God exists for us. It's all about us.

Let me share with you a few things. There's a song that came out a few years ago. God loves people more than anything.

That's a lie. Sorry to bother you. I'm sorry to maybe ruin your self-esteem, but you're not the most important thing in the universe.

I mean, in most evangelical or evangelistic campaigns I've seen, they make man, literally God's not going to be happy unless you get saved. God's going to be happy even though you spend an eternity in hell. God's happiness is not dependent upon you.

As a matter of fact, what you should realize is if you go to hell, the last thing you will hear when you walk in through the doors of hell is all of creation, including your parents, if they're regenerate, and everyone else standing to their feet and applauding God because He's rid the earth of you. You say, I don't like language like that. You see how you can talk so much about Bible and wanting God and everything else, but when someone comes and says, okay, you really want to know what it's all about? This is what it's all about? You go, I don't like that because I'm not the center of the universe.

I want the Christianity where it's all about me. All about God saving me. All about how much God loves me.

Me, me, me, me. I'm sorry, my friend, that's not the New Testament. God does love us.

But do you know what God loves more than anything? Himself. Have you ever heard that? You see how we are? If I sit there, if I were to come before you this morning and say, God loves people more than anything, you'd go, yeah, let's sing a song! But if I tell you God loves Himself more than anything, you'd get angry. Isn't that amazing? You say, well, Brother Paul, how can you say that God loves Himself more than anything? Have you ever read how many times He told Israel, Israel, I'm not saving you because of you.

I'm saving you for My own sake. For My own glory. For the love of My own name will I save you.

Now, let me show you a little bit how this works. To be a rational being. Okay? To be a rational being.

And I teach this to our children in our children's catechism. To be a rational being, you must have a reason for what you do. Now, and what I teach our children when we talk about rationality, I teach them that if you go to, if you see it pouring down rain and you see a man standing out there in the middle of the rain and you walk out there and you say, Sir, why are you standing in the middle of the rain? And he says, I don't really know.

If you don't know, then you can pretty much figure this man is not rational. You see that? But if he says I'm standing in the rain because I'm waiting for a bus, that might not be a good reason, but at least he's rational. Okay, now a rational being, a high rational being, here's what we need to understand, will not only have a reason for what he does, he will always choose the highest reason for what he does.

The most supreme reason for what he does. Now, are you the most supreme reason? Are you the greatest virtue? Are you the greatest treasure? Absolutely not. So why does God do what he does? God chooses not only a reason for what he does, he chooses the highest reason.

And if he is the supreme being over all things, the highest reason he can choose for anything is himself and his own glory. As a matter of fact, if he was not motivated by himself, we would all go to hell because a holy God would never find any motivation in us to save us. All we've done is broke his law.

The mere fact that he can save us proves that he does things because of him, for his own glory and for the love he has for his Son. Now, let's talk about the glory of God for a moment. The Bible says over and over that God does everything that he does for his own glory.

Are you all in agreement with that? I mean, it's in the text. God does everything he does for his own glory. Now, if... This is kind of hard.

God does everything for his own glory. So you say, maybe immediately, what about me? How does that benefit me? Well, first of all, a proper creature wouldn't be thinking that way. All the proper creature would say if God does everything for his own glory, glory.

It's what he should do. But if we say, well, if God does everything for his own glory, how does that benefit his creature? Well, it does it this way. If we dismiss this service in a little while, and I'm standing at the door, and when you walk by, I pull out a piece of bubblegum and I hand it to you.

And say, here, here's some bubblegum. And you look at that bubblegum and you go, thank you! And then you run around the whole camp. Look! He gave me a piece of bubblegum! And then 30 years later, your grandchildren are sitting around in the living room and you're there rocking in a chair and they say, who's that man? Who's that picture over the mantle in the fireplace? Who is that? You say, that's Paul Washer.

What's he doing there? Thirty years ago, he gave me a piece of bubblegum. I mean, you need some serious counseling. Okay? That's not right.

But now, let's say that you're dying. You're dying. And there's no hope.

You need a heart transplant and you're on the list and you're about a thousand down. And I walk in the hospital and I say, and let's say it was legal, I walk in the hospital and I say, I understand you have a patient here, so and so, and they're dying and they need a heart. Yes.

Well, take mine. So they lay me on a table, they take out my heart, I die. They give you my heart and you wake up.

Then that kind of response would be appropriate, wouldn't it? I mean, you'd be telling the media. You would. You'd tell your grandchildren, the only reason you're here is because thirty years ago a man gave me his heart.

So what do we learn from that? The gift often demonstrates the magnitude of the love. Right? A great gift will often demonstrate the greatness of love and the greatness of benefit. Now, if God wanted to give you, if God wanted to demonstrate the greatest love He could ever demonstrate toward you, what would He do? He would give you His greatest gift.

What could that be? Here it is. Himself. Himself.

When we say that God does everything for His own glory, what we're saying is God orders everything in history, everything in creation, so that He can take the center stage and demonstrate how wonderful He is, how great He is, how glorious He is. Literally, to reveal everything about Him to the world. Everything is designed so that God can stand at center stage and show everybody His glory.

And that's the greatest gift He can give you, is to show you who He is. And the greatest judgment He can ever bring upon you is to pull back and show you nothing. He is the greatest thing He can give to His people.

So when He glorifies Himself, when He does everything for His own glory, when He orchestrates the entire world so that His glory might be known, He is giving His people the greatest gift possible. Himself. You see, this is a totally different way of looking at everything.

Most Christianity today is totally foreign to the idea of the supremacy of God. They will say God is great, God is this, but it's always in relation to God is great and God is wonderful because He thinks so much of me. Because He does so much for me.

Because it's all about me. No. God's greatness is independent of what He does for us.

But He demonstrates His greatness by what He does for us. I know it's a complicated thing, but this is what we need to see in order to understand the holiness of God. The holiness of God means that He is separate from absolutely everything and He is deserving of all love and all glory.

He is even deserving of His own love. A rational creature will choose the highest end always for what He does. He will always do the highest and most virtuous thing.

If God is the person most deserving of love, it is right that He loves Himself above all things. If He is the one who truly deserves first place, then it is right for Him to always take first place and it would be wrong for Him to take another place. He's always first.

He's always deserving of all love. For us to be holy does not mean primarily that we are avoiding sin. That's just a part of it.

What it means primarily is this, that we truly recognize that God is supreme. That we truly recognize that He is everything and there is no one else like Him and we have no competing loyalties in our hearts. We don't want God plus this, God plus that.

We don't equate something as important as God. No, God. God is everything.

Now, when that takes place, the result is when the world comes in and tries to tantalize you, when sin comes in and tries to tempt you, what do you do? No. Why? Because God is supreme. God deserves my allegiance.

God deserves my attention. God deserves everything about me. Every beat of my heart should beat for Him.

Every thought of my life should beat for Him. That is holiness. That is holiness.

A man separated unto the supremacy of God. A lot of times people say, well, keep God number one in your life. That's not biblical.

God says you shall have no other gods besides Me. Not before Me. Not beside Me.

And not even behind Me. God's not first on a list of things. God is first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth.

He's everything. And whatever you do has to fit inside of His will. It's not I'm going to give this to God and this over here belongs to someone else.

No. It's all God. Even when you marry, you marry for God.

You marry because it is His will. You have children because it is His will. You care for the children a certain way because of His will.

You do everything you do. Even when you eat and you drink, you do it because and for Him and for His glory. So you are a person consumed with God, which makes you a person who really, really functions in relationships also for His only.

Because since God is supreme and His will is supreme, you begin to understand that will, which is to love your neighbor as yourself, to lay down your life for your friends, to love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, to be kind and compassionate with your children as God says He is with His in Psalms 103 because God is supreme. And everything you do, you do unto His glory. That's why yesterday I was trying to teach that when you disciple your wife or you disciple your children, you can't do this thing of, OK, we're going to begin our discipleship time.

And then the whole of your life is not really lived out in the context of God, but you're going to take a half hour and do discipleship. That's not the way it functions. The way it functions is a man whose entire life is in the context of God's holiness, in the context of God's will, and then he moves in that context.

These are things that I want you to see. To be holy is to have no competing loyalties in your heart. To be holy is to be a man given to God.

Isn't it amazing how we can think that we're holy just because we keep a few rules? You know, a woman can say, my dress is this long. A man can say, I don't have a TV in my home. All these different things can be said, but you're not holy.

Because holiness means you're entirely given over to God as supreme. But also on the other side, someone who says they're entirely given over to God and that their life is supreme, and yet they're dressing immorally or they're watching filthy things on TV, that's a lie too. So to be holy is to love God as God loves Himself.

To see God as God sees Himself, which is utterly distinct. There is no one holy like the Lord. Now, we are to be a holy sacrifice.

Now, here's the point where it comes down, people think, to obedience. But I say it comes down to faith. Am I really going to believe God? Folks, if you can grab this, this will be very helpful to you.

You see, when I stood up there preaching last night, I thought I would have a much more secular audience. It turned out I believed that most were Christian. I was hoping for some sort of a... I don't know what I was hoping for.

I was hoping for secularists or atheists or university students. I was hoping they would all just come out in arms. So I stood up there and I said this, I said, you cannot patronize me.

Do not patronize me. You see, I'm not just a man with a religion and that's nice for me. You've got to understand, if Jesus Christ has not resurrected from the dead, then I'm the most pitiful human being on the planet.

I am a fool and not only a fool, I am a dangerous fool because I am following a ghost who does not exist. I've ruined my life. I've led my wife into lies.

I've led my children into lies. I'm standing before audiences and proclaiming a God who does not exist. I am the most pitiful man in the world.

Do you see that? So by faith though, because of a revelation through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and the preaching of the Gospel, I believe that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead. And therefore, I must live a certain way. It's the same thing here.

He's saying, listen, offer your life to God as a sacrifice. Become a slave to Christ. Now that takes some faith.

Because if Jesus Christ has not risen from the dead, He's asking you to throw your life away for nothing. But if He has risen from the dead, He's given you the key to life. Here's what Jesus said.

Someone who seeks to keep their life will lose it. That's what He says. And what does He mean? Someone who seeks to be the Lord of their own life, to determine the direction of their own life, to do what they see fit in their own eyes to do.

A person who chooses to keep his own life will lose it. Now this also refers to people who call themselves Christians. Now listen to me.

Christians, as I said yesterday, I think it was Tozer who said that Christians do not tell lies, they sing them. Though none go with me, still I will follow. No turning back, no turning back.

Though it cost me everything, I will go. Now, be careful when you sing those songs, because you could be indicting yourself. You will be held accountable on the Day of Judgment for every idle word, and that

includes hymn singing.

When you start singing a whole bunch of things that aren't realities in your life, don't do that. It's better to be quiet. Don't sing things that aren't true.

Make them true and sing them, but don't sing things that are not true. Lose everything for you, Jesus. Really? Really? You see, when you turn your life over as a sacrifice, you don't go to career day at college, except to be walking through the booths and praying, God, what do you want from me? What do you want from me? You see, a slave has a very, very simple life.

He really does. A slave doesn't have to worry about anything, except doing his master's will. And the master has to worry about everything else.

Lord, do you want me to go to college? Or do you want me to go to Afghanistan and preach for three weeks until they kill me? Lord, I've got to buy a car. I mean, I've got to get around somewhere. Lord, what can I do? I want to get the thing that's most right in your sight.

Lord, I need some clothes. How do you want me to dress? Lord, I've got money here you've given me. How do you want me to deal with it? Lord, I've got a career opportunity here.

I can make twice as much money if I just move to this other job. Of course, Lord, I'm going to have a lot less time with my wife and children. What do you want me to do? You don't even have to ask him that.

Just ask me, I'll tell you. Turn down the job and save your soul. You see, I have never seen the righteous forsaken on a seat begging for bread.

You enslave yourself to Christ. Christ will not fail thee. He's never failed anyone.

Young men and young women, how are you going to make your way through this world? You know nothing. You think you know everything. You know nothing.

When I teach young people, the first thing I ask them to do is I want all of you to go home and stand in front of the mirror and say this over and over and over a hundred times and then come back to class. I am stupid. I am stupid.

I am stupid. Now, I always say that with a twinkle in my eye and I always teach them what that means. It does not mean that they're not marvelously made.

What it means is this. You weren't born with wisdom. You have to learn it.

God has given you the ability to learn it. And it's that wisdom you must learn and walk as a slave to Christ in everything. And men, it is your task to teach your children to do this by your own lifestyle.

Lord, what do you want from me? Lord, this opportunity has arisen. If you say yes, I will take it. If you say no, I will not take it.

If it violates your scriptures, I will not do it. If it conflicts with some other area in my life regarding the will of God, I will deny it. To offer our lives as a sacrifice to God.

Now, he says a living sacrifice, a holy sacrifice, and he says an acceptable sacrifice. An acceptable sacrifice. That is a well-pleasing sacrifice.

Now, you've got to make a decision. Who are you going to live to please? Now, you have several options. You can live to please you.

Or your flesh. You can live to please other people. Or you can live to please God.

You say, well, I want to live to please God. Oh, hold it. Careful.

Are you sure? Yes, I do. Okay, let me ask you a question. How much time do you spend in the word of God to discern his will? Ah.

Then you really don't want to please God. Because, you see, if you really want to please him, you're going to find out what he wants. This is one of the things that I like to do.

And I do this in my own life, and it's very cutting. But it's... I'll ask a music minister. Have you studied from Genesis to Revelation to determine what God's will is with regard to worship? No.

Well, then what makes you think you can lead worship? Have you looked at the scriptures in the Old and New Testament with regard to marriage? To discern what God tells you about how you're supposed to treat your wife? Well, no. Well, then why should I believe that you want to be pleasing to Christ? If you're not even looking at what he told you to do. Raising children.

Where did you get your ideas? From grandmother? Where did she get hers? Well, she did all right. It's not a question of whether she did all right. Is she biblical? She did all right isn't going to stand on the day of judgment.

What's going to stand on the day of judgment is not result, but obedience to the word of God. I think grandparents should be greatly involved in children. Their grandchildren, if those grandparents are biblical, because I can tell you this.

Grandparents can destroy their grandchildren by holding on to old wives tales instead of the word of God. So if you really say, I want to be pleasing to him, then you've got to ask yourself a question. What do I do? What are the things I have to do in life? Well, I have to get dressed.

OK, good. Have you ever looked in Scripture to determine how God wants you to dress? No, most people just kind of look at magazines. You say, well, I've got to eat.

OK, now here's the question. You know, all those Christians are always against people drinking beer. We've got that one down.

You ever thought about gluttony? We laugh at that sin and it's as deadly as drunkenness. You say, well, you know, I want to be pleasing to God. Have you ever asked Him, how do you want me to eat? He's given you a body.

Have you ever asked Him, Lord, how am I supposed to take care of this thing? Robert Murray McShane, who I think was one of the godliest men who ever walked the planet. He died when he was 28. You know what his regret was? God gave me a message on a horse.

I have killed the horse. He said, I've killed myself because I didn't take care of myself. Now, I don't want to judge that at all because I'm not even worthy to carry his sandals.

But it's what he said. And it's been a reminder to me. And old godly men have quoted it to me quite often.

Paul, don't be Robert Murray McShane. Because he had a message on a horse. He killed the horse.

What will happen to the message? There's no one to carry it. So you see everything. You sit there and you go, man, I've got conflict at work.

And they're doing this and this and this. You go to the Scriptures. God, how do I respond to this? In everything.

If you want to be well-pleasing, that's what the book is about. It's to tell us how to be well-pleasing. What do you want from me? Young men, listen to me.

How many of you have studied intricately the Proverbs 31 woman? Young men. How many of you have studied? And you say, I'm not reading that. That's for girls.

Read it again. It wasn't written for girls. It was what a mother wrote to her son on how to choose a wife.

See, most people don't even know that. They only teach it to women. All these women get together and study Proverbs 31.

You know that young men ought to be getting together and studying Proverbs 31 because it was specifically written to young men in order that they not be deceived by a girl's beauty and marry a woman who would destroy their life because she wasn't godly and she didn't know anything about Proverbs 31. Do you see? Look, if we would just say... One of the greatest things that helped me was after many years of being a Christian was standing and looking in the mirror and saying, I'm not biblical. I'm not biblical.

And much of what I have taught was just handed down to me by someone else who wasn't biblical. Instead of actually looking in the Bible and saying, what does it actually say? Do you know how much of counseling... I would say 85% of all Christian counseling, at least in the West, at least 85% is nothing more than baptized secular psychology. The way that people view a human being or view a child is not based on Scripture.

It is based on Rogers, Skinner, and Freud. Three men who started their study in psychology because they hated Christ. Do you see how messed up we are? It's like a guy who walks up to me and he's got a big, big sore on his forehead.

And he goes, Brother Paul, I just can't figure this out. I've got this bleeding, open sore on my forehead. And I go, and? And he goes, well, can you pray or maybe ask God what's wrong with me? And I said, well, I'm no doctor, but I'll pray.

And so I decide, well, I'm going to follow this guy around. And I noticed he's got a watch with a timer on it. And every time the hour strikes, it goes off.

The watch goes off. Beep. And when it does, wherever he's at, he walks over to a wall and he smacks his head against the wall.

Then the next hour goes by. Beep. Boom.

Like that again and again. After about two days of scientific and very close observation, I walk up to him and I go, I think I've discerned your problem. It's the same way.

We sit there and go, our children are doing this and this is happening and this is happening and all these things are going on. And then someone lays out and says, OK, tell me about you as a husband. What are you doing? Well, you know, I'm over here.

Well, sir, this isn't biblical and this isn't biblical and this isn't biblical and this isn't biblical. Here, I'll show you. Look in here and look here and let's go over to Proverbs here, chapter 13.

Let's go here. All these things you're doing totally contradict Scripture. Ma'am, what are you doing? Well, I'm doing this, this, this.

Oh, but the Bible says this, this, this and this. And then a great many people will just get angry and say you're a legalist or you're not going to tell me what to do. Ma'am, I didn't tell you what to do.

I just showed you this verse. Do you see that? And what you've got to realize is that everything we do is connected. It's so connected.

If we're not walking in obedience... Let me give you an example. Have you ever heard the statement there's no love like a mother's love? Alright, now, men, please, if your wives jump up and start running towards me with all their nails like this, grab them and put them on the floor before they get to me. Can you show me that in Scripture? There's no love like a mother's love? I don't see that in Scripture.

I see there's no love like a father's love. And you say, well, no, the mother has a special bond. Okay, again, where do you get that? I know you're getting mad.

And I don't want to deny that moms love their children. Moms will fight an entire army to protect their children. But here's what I want you to see.

I want to show you the chain of events that can lead to destruction. A lot of mothers love their children the way they do because it's a parasitic relationship. Now, that's an ugly way of saying it, but it's true.

Here's what happens. You can test it. When a young girl comes along, say she's a godly girl, and the son sees this girl, determines this is God's girl for him, and he loves her, the mother of that son will often become that girl's worst nightmare.

Why is that? Because that girl to her, to that mom, is an adulteress. That girl has stolen her source of love, which is her son. Now, why has that son become the source of love for the mother? Because the father is not.

And she is having to feed off her children to get from them what they were never created to give her because she is not able to feed off her husband, because she is not receiving from him what she ought to receive, and therefore she must go to her children to find all of those things. And those children become so bound in her heart that when someone comes along, especially to take away the boy, she will hate them. You see how being unbiblical is just one chain of events after another.

So if we want to give our lives as a sacrifice to God, if we want to be well-pleasing, we must do it according to His Word. And here's what you need to see. The same thing the Apostle Paul said.

I haven't obtained that. You haven't obtained that. Paul the Apostle said he hadn't obtained it yet, but that wasn't an excuse, was it, for the Apostle Paul.

He said, leaving behind my failures, leaving behind everything, I'm pressing on. I'm pressing on. What I would ask you to do today is to do this.

Is to ask yourself honestly, even if you've been ministering the Gospel for 30 years, how biblical are all your ideas? Have you really sought out the Scriptures to determine this? Or have you gone to some cycle babble Christian book written by someone who literally has very little to do with Scripture, very little ability to exegete a text? Have you done that? Or have you actually gone to the Scriptures? And then if you realize, man, I'm not as biblical as I thought I was. Then you just say this. First of all, there is no condemnation in Christ.

This is not a bad thing to learn that we're not as biblical as we thought we were. It's a good thing to learn. And let's start the journey.

And oh, the journey's wonderful. Then you start going. Because I see people now, even Christians, they get in these situations where literally they've tried everything that modern day ministers put before them and none of it works and they feel like it's absolutely hopeless.

They go in the Word of God. They find the answers and can be set free because the truth will set you free. Let me give you another idea of how twisted we can become.

I shared this last night with a man who was very given to self-pity and that nobody loved him. I said, a man jumps off a bridge and he leaves a note behind that says, I'm killing myself because I just don't love me. I just can't learn to love me.

That's a very prominent thing that's said today. And even Christians will say, well, you know, in a sense that's true because Jesus said, love your neighbor as yourself and if you can't love yourself, you can't love your neighbor. That is a totally false, incorrect statement that is twisting that Scripture.

That Scripture doesn't mean that at all. That's not what he's saying. He's not saying, you've got to learn to love yourself because you really don't know how to love yourself.

And when you learn how to love yourself, you'll be able to love others. That's Oprah Winfrey. That's not Jesus.

Jesus is basically saying this, look, none of you have ever had a problem with loving yourself. You've all loved yourself. Now what I want you to do is go out and love your neighbor as much as you already love yourself.

You say, well, no, that man who jumped off the bridge didn't love himself. He loved himself more than anybody. I can tell you this, he loved himself more than he loved his wife because he jumped off a bridge to supposedly end his misery and he threw his wife into the greatest misery.

He loved himself more than he loved his children who will now be scarred for life because their dad did a Peter Pan off of a bridge. He loved himself more than God because instead of doing the will of God, he did his own. You see how much just psychobabble gets into the church? And we have got to get into Scripture to realize that much of what we're teaching is just stuff that culture has given us.

And when you base your Christianity even upon meetings like we're having tonight or camp meetings or getting excited, it just turns into a soupy mess. You've got to base your whole Christian life upon the Word of God. The rock! The foundation! The rock and foundation.

So if we want to be pleasing to God, we must go to the Word. See what the grammar says. What does the text actually teach? Now, I'm going to give you one more example.

I'm going to close my Bible to prove the sincerity that I am actually quitting. Let me give you another example of how you can take a Scripture and you think, man, that's what that means. Alright, guys, let's say there's a man who has a ministry to street people or feeding orphans or prison ministry.

What's the text he's going to take for his ministry usually? I was in prison. You didn't visit me. I was naked.

You didn't clothe me. I was hungry. And you didn't feed me.

And that's why we need to go into prisons and we need to evangelize and that's why we need to feed people who are starving and orphans and all these things. Well, we need to go to prison and we need to do all those things and we need to evangelize and we need to feed orphans. The only problem is that text has nothing to do with that.

Absolutely nothing! You see, you just take a text out and say this is what it means. No, that's not what that text means. Jesus is not saying I was a pedophile in prison and you didn't visit me.

The whole context is this. The ones that are in prison are brothers of Christ. They are brothers in Christ.

They are brothers in Christ who were thrown in prison because of their identification with Christ. And what He's teaching is the same thing that's taught in 1 John, the same thing that's taught in John 13, is this, the evidence that you're a true believer is that you will love your brothers and sisters in Christ even if it costs you your own life. So if a brother and sister in Christ is thrown in prison and they're beaten and they're without clothing and everything else, you love them so much that you will risk going into that prison because in those days, no one got fed in a prison unless people brought them food from the outside.

And so a Christian had to decide, do I love them enough to go in to that Christian, take them food and everything else, but when I do, the Romans are probably going to identify me as also a Christian and they're going to throw me in jail. So we'll take a verse, even for a good cause, and say, we need to evangelize in the prisons and we need to do this and this, but that's not what the text means. Sooner or later, someone has to stop and say, hey, where did you get that? And then look in church history and go, did anyone else interpret the Bible this way? No.

No. When did it start getting interpreted this way? Oh, about my grandpa's time. You see, that's why you just can't take wisdom because it came from grandpa or even from the preacher.

Is it biblical? Bear with me. One more. And I'll hand my Bible this time.

Romans 10. If you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth, you'll be saved. So we have people come forward and we say, well, now, if you want Jesus into your heart, if you believe in your heart right now, if you'll confess with your mouth, which means if you'll ask Christ to save you, if you'll call Jesus Lord, and if afterwards, you know, we present you before the church and you say Jesus is Lord, the text doesn't have anything to do with that.

Nothing. What does the text mean? First of all, there's a problem when we look at the text because he says not only if you believe in your heart, but if you confess with your mouth. So now we have a problem.

Is Paul contradicting Romans 4 and 5 where he says salvation is by faith alone? Or is it by faith alone and confession? You see? There's a problem. So what is he actually saying? This is what he's saying. Let's say that we're a church in Rome.

And about 20 of us are construction workers and we're working on something in the city of Rome. And we're having lunch. It's a great day.

And all of a sudden we hear boom. Boom. Boom.

Boom. And all the construction workers rise to their feet and we do too, the 20 of us who are Christians, and we're trembling. Because here's what happened.

Here comes Roman soldiers with a guarded regiment. They're carrying an altar. It's got a little fire burning on it.

It's got incense. And they say, come up and pledge allegiance to Caesar. And so all the construction workers who aren't Christian, they go up first and they take some incense and go like that and say, Kyrios esa.

Caesar is Lord. And then it gets to one of us. And one of the guys who we thought was a brother grabs the incense, throws it in the fire and goes, Kyrios esa.

Caesar is Lord. And they let him go. And then another brother walks up and goes, just stands there.

One of the soldiers pokes him in the side with the blunt of a spear. And he says, Kyrios Jesus. Jesus is Lord.

And they kill him. They march another one up. He says the same thing and they kill him and they kill him and they kill him.

And what Romans 10 is teaching is this. You are saved by faith in Christ, but the evidence of your conversion is that you will confess Jesus as Lord even though it costs you your life. And we take that text, twist it into this little pray this prayer and you'll be saved.

It's pathetic what we're doing. And we wonder, why is the power of God not falling down upon us? Because we've turned Christianity into a soup. A soup.

We must go to the text. We must go to the text. We must enslave ourselves to the text.

And we do not just take something because it was some evangelical thing handed down to us. We ask ourselves, does anybody believe this throughout history? And we find that much of what we believe in Western evangelicalism wasn't believed by anybody. God bless you.

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