

# Gospel Meetings - Part 5

by Paul Washer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of presenting our bodies as living and holy sacrifices to God, motivated by the mercies of God and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.*

**Duration:** 1:17:54

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1, Hebrews 4:12

**Topics:** "Gospel"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by sharing an illustration about a violinist who dedicated his entire life to his craft. He emphasizes that Olympic athletes and concert pianists also sacrifice their personal lives for their pursuits. The preacher then turns to the book of Romans, specifically chapter 12, urging believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God. He highlights the importance of giving oneself fully to God and not conforming to the ways of the world. The motivation for this surrender is found in the mercies of God, as demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice. The preacher concludes by encouraging young men aspiring to ministry to first focus on learning Greek and Hebrew before entering the ministry.

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## Transcript

...our Bibles to the book of Romans chapter 12, Romans chapter 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. Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, help us, and we will be helped. In Christ's name, amen. Just in way of summary, of iteration, we began with the idea that Paul is urging his people, urging the people of God to do what? To give the most precious thing they have in their possession over, over to God.

And what is that? Their very life. It is a small thing to give away houses and lands. It is a small thing to limit your spending.

It is a small thing to curtail your activities in other areas in order to give these things to God. But it is quite another thing to give yourself to God, body, mind and soul. Every part of you given over to Him.

It is the same thing as Jesus is addressing and the law addresses when it says, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, with every part of you. He is not an accessory to your life. He is your life or he is nothing.

And Paul is urging the people to move into that. And then he says that the motivation for that is the mercies of God. What can motivate a man to give away all that he is to God? Simply this, that Christ shed his own blood for his soul.

No other motivation is needed. I remember a while back we were teaching in Europe with a dear friend of mine, Charles Leiter, and he got up to teach on on Christ, on the beauty of Christ, especially manifested in the cross of Christ. And the man, although he's not the most, he doesn't reflect a lot of times the greatest of passion when he was teaching, it was quite unusual.

God was really working. He was literally pouring himself out to this group of men, telling them about the beauty of Christ and Christ being our reward. And I'll never forget after he finished.

The first question from the floor was this. And what else do we get when we go to heaven? And literally, my heart broke in two, his heart broke in two. What else do we get? Just what else do you need? I guess just what else do you want to even ask? That question is to betray, is to tell that Christ is not enough.

It's to understand about you that you don't even know who Christ is. Christ is all. Let me put it this way to God, the Father.

Christ is all he ought to be all to you. And so the great motivation for living the Christian life is what? Christ died on the cross. And I went into it some last night when I said that one of the great problems in America today is not that it's gospel hardened, it's gospel ignorant, it's gospel ignorant, because those behind in the pulpit are ignorant of the gospel.

Several years ago, when the movie The Passion came out and I never saw the movie, I don't have problems with the movie, but it was not something that I would want to see. I was getting emails from all over the place. Brother Paul, what do you think about The Passion and people were pointing out errors and theological things that weren't true and all so on and so forth.

And I wrote almost every one of them back. I do not have as much problem with Mel Gibson's film as I do with your preaching, because it's not Mel Gibson's film that is hurting America. It's the pulpits in conservative churches or supposedly conservative churches.

That the cross of Jesus Christ is not about a man being martyred by Romans and Jews. Most people do not have a clue of the transaction that actually occurred on that tree. That we are sins are.

Well, let me give it to you this way. I was in Eastern Europe about eight years ago and I was teaching all day and I was very tired and it was a Germanic type of seminary. And so I decided, well, I'll go in the library and see if I can find a book to read.

And I went in there and I finally found this book, The Cross of Christ. It was not Stott's book. That's a pretty good book.

It was another book. It was The Cross of Christ. So I pulled it off and I began to read through it.

And as I made my way through that book, I found out this is what the man said. When Jesus Christ was on that tree, God the Father looked down at his suffering. The suffering that was inflicted upon him by the hands of the Romans and Jews, and the Father counted that as payment for our sin.

That is heresy. Problem is, some of you are sitting there right now wondering why. It's heresy.

And why is it heresy? We are not, and I don't know any other way to say this, we are not saved simply because the Romans beat up Jesus and nailed him to a tree. We are not saved so much by what the Romans did to Christ when he was on that tree. But we are saved by what God the Father did to Christ when he was on that tree.

That he bore our sin and God the Father crushed him under the full force of his holy wrath. Hear these evangelists today, they come up and they'll say, now the first thing I want all of you to know is God is not an angry God. Do you know that's a direct contradiction to Scripture? The Bible says God's angry every day.

And why wouldn't he be? A holy God looking down at this perverted mess called humanity, and he's not going to be angry? Of course he's angry. And in order for God to save wicked men, something must be done. And what is that thing that must be done? Wrath must be poured out, justice must be satisfied.

And that occurred on that tree when Christ bore our sin, stood in our law place, and God the Father poured out the justice upon his head that was due you. In that we find our motivation, that such a great price was paid for us. By the entire Godhead, that such a price was paid.

I'm often telling young men that you should live between two days and that is the day that Christ hung before all men and the day all men will stand before Christ. This is to be our motivation. Come hell or high water, whether we see reward and fulfillment of promise in this life or not, it does not matter.

I need nothing else. Christ died for me. To suggest there's a need of a greater motivation is to suggest that Christ's cross has very little value in our lives.

And so Paul puts this before us in the first 11 chapters, that why should we offer our lives as living and holy sacrifices? Because Christ died for us. Now we go on. He says, present your bodies.

First of all, present, as I said last night, not a not a almost weekly rededicating your life. One of the greatest travesties in American evangelism is this idea of you need to rededicate your life. Most people who are rededicating their life do not need to rededicate their life.

They need to get saved. They are simply not converted. And because the gospel that we preach is so low and as I said, because church discipline is no longer practiced, because we do not love people as much as Jesus did, who commanded us to practice church discipline, because we do not do these things.

The church is filled up with goats. And we spend our time trying to disciple goats to act like sheep, when the only thing that can make a goat a sheep is the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit of God. And once a man gets saved, you'd be surprised how little trouble you have with him.

And so we're to present our bodies as believers raised from the dead. Our old man has died. We've been raised up with Christ to walk in newness of life.

We should now no longer present our bodies as instruments of unrighteousness, but present our bodies as dead to sin and alive unto God. And the idea of presenting body here is extremely important because it keeps us from this almost sickly, superstitious, superficial, romantic view of the Christian life. He has my heart.

I can tell you this. He does not have your heart if he does not have the rest of you. The evidence that he truly has your heart is that he has your mind and he has your ears and he has your eyes and he has your tongue and he has your hands and your feet and the rest of you.

I can remember several, several years ago, a long time ago when I was in seminary, a man that that taught there and I think still hangs around there a bit. I dearly loved Roy Fish and I can remember him telling us of how one time in his life, I don't know if it's up in an attic or where it was, but he opened up a trunk and he said, now this is just something that happened to him. He opened up a trunk and he just bowed down on his knees and he said, God, I just I give you my mind.

And I give you my eyes and I give you my ears. And I give you my heart and I give you my hands and I give you my feet and I give you everything that I am. I just pour it in like I'm pouring it into this trunk.

I just turn it over to you. I am yours for once and for all. How long will you limp between two opinions? If this world is all there is, then just go live in it.

And if it's not, then make a decision this day whom you will save. Sir, so he goes on and he says to offer our bodies as a living and a holy sacrifice. I think this word living is very important, but I think there's two ideas possibly going on here.

We know that, first of all, the idea is this of a zealous. Offering, it is a zealous thing, it is a lively thing, it is a full bodied, full hearty thing that we turn him on, not grudgingly following him, not doing this because it's something expected of us or something that we ought to do. No, it's this lavishing our lives upon God.

Grace has been lavished upon us. We lavish our life to him. The woman who breaks the alabaster vial and she just opens up the perfume, she pours it on his feet, she just lavishes it.

She's extravagant. It's the idea of just being extravagantly given over to God in service. So many of you act like you're doing God a favor.

He needs no favor because he has no needs. It is never a favor we do, God, when we pour our life out before him. It is a privilege for us, but it meets no need in him.

To have lively, a lively giving over, lively, zealously, not up to what limit do I have to give, but can I go further than what's asked of me? It's a lively. But I think there's another idea here because because here's something that you need to understand dead. How can I put this? Well, let me just back up for a second.

A great part of Christianity is nothing more than morality. People, so many people in churches, they do not have a passion for Christ, they do not have a desire for Christ, they're not looking unto Christ, they're not hoping towards him, they're not excited about Christ, their whole life is just this, their morality. Their morality, it's religious duty and religious working and see how good that I am.

That is not the Christian life. The Christian life is not just a morality. It is a passion for Christ.

And we have a passion for Christ because as those dead in their sin, we have been quickened by the Holy Spirit. And now we serve him in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are creatures who have been made alive.

This is not a dead religion. This is not a fleshly following of God. This is not just morality.

What it is, is this, we are new creations. We were dead in our sin. We were raised by the Holy Spirit.

And now the Bible teaches that everyone who is raised by the Spirit is led by the Spirit and empowered by the Spirit to serve God. Now, would your life be described as that? Would someone look at you and say, indeed, this person is energized by the Holy Spirit. There is a power in this person that is much more than just dedicated flesh.

Is that in your life? One of the things, especially among Baptists, we are so reactionary in our theology, we see all these cults and sects and TV evangelists and every so committing every sort of heresy on the face of the earth about the Holy Spirit. And we look at that. And so we not only move away from their false doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but we move past Scripture and actually move away from the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures.

We're afraid of the Holy Spirit. You don't really, you can't love your wife the way you're supposed to love your wife, laying down your life for her, except quickened and empowered by the Holy Spirit. You can't witness except quickened and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

You cannot say no to godliness, except in the power of the Holy Spirit to be led by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit. So this sacrifice we give to him is not this grudging moral duty. I'm just going to do the right thing.

It is a passionate, spirit led, spirit empowered, giving over of our lives to God. Now, it goes on a living and a holy sacrifice, a holy sacrifice. Now, there's two sides to holiness that you need to understand.

There is a negative and a positive in our call to holiness. And as I shared with you earlier, when I when my little boys were learning to walk, they would grab a hold of a table or a chair and they would balance themselves. And then I would stand just at arm's length and they would have to make a decision.

They learned, first of all, that they couldn't have their cake and eat it, too, that if they really and truly wanted to come to father. Then they really and truly had to let go of the table. They couldn't have one without the other.

It is the same way with regard to holiness. You cannot be a holy instrument useful to God and at the same time hold on to the world. It just doesn't work that way.

I remember I love this illustration. I use it all the time about a violinist in Europe. And he was exceptional, one of the greatest.

And he had become an old man. He was a great player and he was playing his last concert and he played and it was absolutely magnificent. And a young boy who was a violinist being trained to be a violinist came up to him and said, sir, I would give my life to play like that.

And the old man looked at him and said, son, I have given my life to play like this. If you truly want, you know, I just sometimes I'm amazed at these Olympic athletes. They do not have a life.

I'm amazed at a concert pianist. He does not have a life. Literally, you can say of this type of person, someone who's a cyclist in the Tour de France, he does not have a life.

He really doesn't. His whole life is died. He's died to almost everything, every normal activity that everyone else deals with and gives so importance to.

He has died to it in order to do what? Set his eye, his mind on one thing. That's why I believe Paul used that type of illustration with regard to the Christian life. This idea, if we want to truly be pleasing to God and we truly want to live our life before him in a manner that is pleasing, there has to be a focus.

I'm amazed that there is this. I understand that there is this type of saw that can cut through six inches of steel and all it uses is water. Now, you could rain a deluge upon a piece of steel and it's not going to do anything to it.

But it takes all that water and it focuses it to that. It's smaller coming out like through a pinhole and all the force of that water going through that one tiny spigot is enough to cut straight through steel. Our lives are so confused.

And why are our lives so confused? Why is it that we cannot serve God? Jesus said this blessed or the pure in heart. Now, most of us have this wrong idea of what he's saying. We think of clean.

We think of pure. The idea is a heart, an alloyed heart without a mixture, a heart that has no competing loyalties. Nothing, there's just one thing that it's focused upon, and that is how we are to be to be a holy people.

Now, let me share with you some things about holiness that I think are very important. Sometimes I'll ask somebody, what does it mean to be holy? And they'll say, well, you know, without sin. OK, what does it mean to be righteous? And they'll go, well, means you're without sin.

And I go, well, then what's the difference between holiness and righteousness? And I go, well, then what's the difference between holiness and righteousness? The fact of the matter is they are different terms, and it's very important, I feel, to understand this righteousness deals with conformity to the character and the will of God. It's like God and his law is the standard and you completely conform to that standard. That is righteousness.

Well, then what is holiness? Holiness comes from the idea of being cut or separate, being set apart, something being being. Let me give you an example. Let's say that my wife, she's a very good cook and she's got her cutting board out there and she's got like the carrots going like this.

And she just that Ginsu knife of hers, she just starts chopping or whatever. And as she chops, as she cuts, she separates, chops, separates, set apart. Now, what does it mean that God is holy? Does it mean simply that he's without sin? Well, that's a great emphasis, but I don't think that's the core meaning of him being holy.

I think the idea is that he is totally and completely distinct. He is totally and completely unique. He is separated from absolutely everything.

It's not that God is like us, just bigger. He's not like us at all. There is none holy like the Lord.

There is none like him. I always ask this question. What's more like God and an archangel in heaven or a worm floating around in a pond? People always say, well, that's I mean, the archangels more like God than that worm.

No. Neither of them are like God. They're not even close.

I mean, he's not like an archangel, just bigger. He is completely distinct. He is unique.

There is none like him. Here's everything else. And here's God.

He's distinct in his justice. He's distinct in his sinlessness. He's distinct in his love.

There's none holy like the Lord. There's none like him in all these things that he is. He's distinct in his sinlessness.

He's separate. What does it mean for us to be holy? Does it mean that we follow all the rules? Well, you can follow all the rules and not be holy. Holiness has this idea of being separate unto God.

You have these two ideas. One, first of all, all that is wicked, all that is displeasing to God. I separate myself from that.

But if you stay there, it's a very boring, legalistic life. So holiness is not just identifying everything that's wicked and wrong and separating from it. You can do that for your own glory.

It's not an end to itself. That's where the Pharisees were at. But it's separating from all of this in order to be separated unto God.

Holiness is more a matter of the heart, that you recognize him as of infinite worth above everything else and you separate your life unto him. It is a thing of passion, a thing of esteem and of worth. You have judged him in a sense.

You have judged him in a sense. Infinitely more worthy than absolutely everything else. And so you've dropped this and you've run to him.

It's not a thing of morality. Christianity, in a sense, we can say is not a moral religion, even though we ought to be an extremely moral people. But it's not just about keeping rules.

It's about a heart given over to God. Let me give an example. I'm going to go home tomorrow and Lord willing, and let's just say I go home.

I don't have my keys. I ring the doorbell and my wife opens up the door and I grab her, hug her and give her a big kiss. And she says, well, what was all that about? And I said, well, it says here in the Christian, good Christian husband manual on page thirty five that this is exactly what I'm supposed to do when I come home.

I don't know how long you've been married. She's going to feed me that book. I don't know how long you've been married, but it's going to break her heart in a million pieces.

I don't want you to kiss me because it's the right thing to do. I want you to kiss me because you love me. Because you want me, because you desire me, because I am your passion.

You see the difference? This Christianity of doing the right thing, take your doing the right thing and go to a dumpster somewhere. This is about him. You treat him like an impersonal thing.

Like a moral regulation. Like a moral obligation. Like some great principle.

He is a person, I remind you. He can be grieved, I remind you. So holiness is not just I do all the right things.

No, holiness is the only reason I run from these things, because I want to run to you. That's it. And you see what you need to understand, people will say, Brother Paul, I have a new relationship with God.

And I'll always ask him, well, that's wonderful. Do you have a new relationship with sin? Because if you don't have a new relationship with sin, you don't have a new relationship with God. For example, when I got married to my wife, that moment that I said I do and she said I do, I had a new relationship with my wife.

But I also had a new relationship with every woman on the face of the earth. My relationship with my wife, with that woman, Charo Casado de Nunez, my relationship with her changed the moment I said I do. But my relationship changed with every other woman on the face of the earth at the same time.

I no longer in any shape, form or fashion belong to them or could be with them. Totally now. No more.

Why? I belong to one. Just one to offer our lives as a living and holy sacrifice is not I'm going to do these things and separate from these things so that I can be in God's good graces or so that he'll bless my life or so that I do the right thing and get some reward in heaven. The thing of holiness is, Lord, I take my life back.

I no longer present my members to these things. In order to present my members to you. To you now, it's called a sacrifice because indeed it is one when people talk about giving their lives and sacrifice to God or devoting themselves to God or dedicated service to God.

You have no idea how much Catholicism has warped our thinking. We see it as a monkish, morbid, living in a monastery, digging a hole and living in it, eating terrible dried vegetables and drinking water and beating ourselves in the back and well, OK, fine, I'll just die to every pleasure and passion known to man and I will follow this grudging, horrible sackcloth robe type of life. I will not give up my life until I get to glory Catholicism, but not Christianity, he who loses his life, I have come that they might have life and life in abundance.

Oh, my goodness. I have never met a missionary. I have never met a man in his later years who has served the Lord that's ever regretted anything he handed over to Christ.

Never, never. I remember a man of Doris, very, very famous in Condor, Kanki in Peru, the Aguarone Indians. She was one of the few.

She was a beautiful. You could tell I met her when she was probably in her 60s. We met in the jungle.

I was I pulled into a military post and I heard that she was like an hour and a half down the river. So I took a boat and went down to find her just because I'd heard so much of this woman. She was from Germany or Switzerland or something.

And just she had literally lived her life among the Aguarone Indians. And so I went there to where I heard she was, a certain village, and I started to walk towards what I thought might have been her her little hut. And some Indians stopped me and they said, no, no.

I said, well, she's sleeping. So I sat outside for about an hour and a half. And all of a sudden I hear some rustling around and she comes out and she's got this little cotton dress on and these rubber flip flops and her legs were eaten up with his songos.

It's like a chigger on steroids. And she walks out. And the moment I looked at her, I just broke down crying.

And I talked to her about her life. No regret. No regret.

The only one, if there was a regret, was I have not given Him more. How He has blessed my life. How He has been my Lord and my Savior and my Redeemer and my Friend.

How He has energized me. How He has given me good things. It'll take an eternity to tell.

You see, your problem is you don't believe Him. That is your problem. Why don't you just stand up and say, I'm an atheist.

I don't believe God. I hate any concept of God. Get out of my way and let me out of here.

Just go do that. Rather than keep walking in the life that you're in. Oh yes, I believe there's a God and I believe in Jesus and everything else.

But I really don't believe anything that He says with regard to my life. I believe I know better and I believe if I follow my own way and do what's right in my own eyes, that I'll have the life I always wanted. Instead of, He has a claim upon me as Creator.

If He had not created me, I would not be. He has a claim upon me as Sustainer. If He were to turn away from me, I would turn to dust.

He has a claim upon me as Redeemer. He shed His own blood for my soul. Knowing of all these things He has done for me, I must believe He is a most gracious and good God.

I shall follow Him. I shall begin to take every aspect of my life and search Scripture to determine what saith the Lord. And I'll submit to it, not grudgingly and not thinking, oh, I'll do this and it'll ruin my life on this earth and maybe I'll have a better life in the next.

No, I will do it because I believe what He says. And I believe that He will bless and prosper in ways I could never know. Not in ways like those heretical TV preachers.

It's not that they promise too much from God. It's their carnal mind, they want carnal things. But God has better things for us.

He's given us a down payment of His Holy Spirit. What more do you want? The comfort and peace that comes from Him. The power and the animation that comes from the Spirit working in us.

The fullness of the Spirit, the presence of God, His joy, His comfort. He leadeth me, O blessed thought. This is a holy sacrifice.

But it is no sacrifice to those who have given it. No sacrifice. Only regret.

Only regret. If I were to die right now, my only regret is how little I have given over to Him. How much I have kept for myself.

And everything I have kept for myself. The Christian life in a way is like manna that came down from heaven. What they kept rotted and turned to worms.

In the same way, that part of our life that we keep back from Him turns to rot. Turns to rot. Now, a living and holy sacrifice.

Acceptable. Pleasing to God. Acceptable to God.

Men are by and large, pleasers of men. That's what they are. Everyone wants to be accepted by men.

Even the boldest men want to be accepted by other men. And much of what they do is determined based upon what they think other men expect of them. We are people pleasers.

We are men pleasers. We say we're not, but our whole life betrays our confession. I want to please men.

Be accepted by men in the world. But do you not understand? There is a day coming when you will stand before God. You are worried about being accepted of men.

Then, there is a day you will have to be judged. Will you be acceptable to God? That is the one with which you have to do. It's all a matter of comparison and contrast.

Of degrees. What do you mean, Brother Paul? I was preaching one time in a place, and after I got through preaching, there were people so mad at me that literally I thought, they're going to kill me. And as I was walking out, a man came by me and he grabbed me by the shoulder and he looked me in the eye and he said, you're not afraid of anybody, are you? And I looked at him and I said, as a matter of fact, I am.

I am probably one of the weakest men in this building. I said, I get nervous if I have to take something back at Walmart. He said, you just literally told off everybody in this building and they're ready to kill you.

How can you tell me you're more fearful of men than everyone else in this building put together? I said, because I am. And he said, then how did you do that? I said, well, let me just give you an illustration. Let's say that there's a man standing in front of me that is five foot two, weighs ninety eight pounds, soaking wet and can't bench press ten pounds.

And let's say that I'm afraid of him. He said, OK, and then let's say that standing right beside him is a man that's six foot six, can bench 700 pounds and is one of the meanest, biggest, onrious men on the face of the earth. He says, OK, I said, now I'm afraid of both of them.

He said, OK, but what does that mean? I said, I'm afraid of both of them, but which one do I fear the most? He said, that guy, the big one. And I said, and that's the one that I'm going to seek to please. You see, I may be afraid of you, but you're nothing.

You are a grasshopper compared to God. All the nations, if they were to gather all the nations together, they would not be a drop in the bucket compared to God. So if I'm fearful of you, that does not matter, because as one Puritan used to say, I think it was John Trapp, one fear driveth out another.

I may fear you, but if I know something of God, I will fear him in a greater way. And that fear of God will drive out my fear of you. It's the same way.

Is there a tendency in all of us to want to be acceptable to other men? Of course there is. But if we believe that God is what he says he is. Then our desire to be acceptable to men will be driven out by the reality of the need to be acceptable to God.

What does it matter if other men judge you? What does it matter if other men mock you? What does it matter if other men call you a fool? The only thing that's going to matter is that day you stand naked before God. You see, I don't preach in order to balance your checkbook or help you get your best life now or fill you with self-esteem. My only burden, the thing that will keep me up tonight, is not any of those things.

My burden will be this. How well will it go with you on the day you stand before God? That's the question. So a sacrifice acceptable to God.

And then he goes on here and he says, which is your spiritual service of worship? This word spiritual can also be translated reasonable, reasonable. I was in Peru many, many years ago and I took six months of language class there and I would go and I would learn for a couple of hours and I go sit in the cafeteria because everyone else wanted to learn English and I was learning Spanish. And it was just great opportunity to witness to people.

Well, this girl came and sat down beside me and I don't know if she was trying to win some brownie points or what it was, but she sat down beside me and she says, my brother, I believe in God, but my brother's an atheist. And so I looked at her and I said, yes, OK, and I have more respect for your brother than I have for you. And she said, what are you? You know, it's like everyone looked at me, you know, like, what you're cruel.

I said, no, I have more respect for your atheistic brother than I do for you. I said, your atheistic brother is wrong, but at least he's consistent to his profession. He does not believe there is a God.

He does not believe there is a Christ. He does not believe that blood was shed for him. And so he lives what's right in his own eyes.

He does as he chooses. You, on the other hand, are totally and completely inconsistent and hypocritical. You say you believe in God.

You say you believe that there is a Christ who shed his own blood for your soul. And yet you live just like your brother. The most reasonable thing you can do.

If God is God and Christ is Christ and the Gospels are true, the most reasonable thing you can do is offer your life to him as a holy, a living and acceptable sacrifice. It's absolute absurdity to do anything else. Sir, do you believe in God? Yes, I do.

Do you believe that Jesus is his Christ? Yes, I do. Do you believe that he died and rose again from the dead and is the only, only savior from sin? Yes, I do. Do you believe that he's coming again to judge the living and the dead? Yes, I do.

Then, sir, why does Scripture have nothing to do with you? You do not seek to live your life according to his word. You do not seek to help your family according to his word. You do not seek to admonish your

children.

Sir, you're telling me that you believe your own children are one day going to stand before God and be judged, but you're more concerned about taking them to a soccer game. That is absolutely asinine. It's insane.

The most reasonable thing a man can do, a woman can do, a child can do if they believe all this is true, is to give their life to it. Give their life to it. Give their life to it.

And again, this is not some morbid religious task. And again, it does not just affect a hope for eternity, but it has great benefit in this life also. You call my little boys in here and ask them if they're happy that their dad is a Christian, because the reason why their dad plays with them all the time, even though he puts in 12 hour days, the reason why dad plays with them all the time is because Christ died for their dad.

The reason why their dad doesn't have hardly any friends outside of his family, the reason why their dad doesn't have any hobbies, the reason why dad never has time for himself is because dad has believed the gospel that he's to lay down his life for his wife and his children. Ask my wife sometime if she's glad, not just for the next life, but for this one, that her husband is a Christian. So don't think it's this other worldly thing.

I know for sure my life would be a disaster even if it still existed, if it were not for Christ. It's your spiritual service of worship. It's the only reasonable thing that a man can do.

Then he goes on and he gives this command. Do not be conformed to this world. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Do not be conformed to this world. When we used to build churches in Peru, in the high mountains, in Ceja de Selva, the eyebrow of the jungle, we'd build them out of adobe and it's amazing that all the adobe bricks looked alike. How'd you get all those bricks the same shape? Well, it's easy.

We have a box. It's about this big, has a bottom to it. You take some dried sand and you throw it all in that box just loosely and then you pack it full of mud.

You flip it over and it gets loose because of the dry sand and it comes out of the mold. And there you have it, a brick that looks just like every other brick. That's what the world seeks to do.

It has accomplished that very thing in the lives of those who are not in Christ. But the moment you are in Christ, that mold is broken. Now, you know what's going on right now, some people are saying, well, I know a bunch of Christians and they're just like the world.

No, you know a bunch of people who profess Christ and are not Christians, who look just like the world. We don't judge based upon what we see. We judge based upon what Scripture tells us.

You see someone who looks like the world, acts like the world, talks like the world and has the world's desires. It's because they are of the world. You say, but they say they believe in Jesus.

And Jesus said, many will come before me on that day. Many will say, Lord, Lord, emphatically declare Him to be Lord. And yet they do not know Him and He does not know them.

Never forget that in Matthew 7, when it says, few are those who find it. He is not saying that there's the world out here that will not find the way to life. They're going to hell and destruction.

And then there's the church over here. You know, all the professing people here and there's few of them and they go to heaven. That's not what that's teaching in the context.

What it's teaching in the context is this. Among those who profess faith in Christ, among those who profess discipleship, among those who say, Lord, Lord, few of those will find it. That's the context.

The life, the world seeks to put a mold upon you. It's a mold of basically self. You do everything for self and you say, well, you know, yes, I'm I'm free.

No, you're not. You're in bondage to self, self idolatry. You do everything for yourself.

That is why there is quarreling and wars and strife among you. That's why that exists in your marriage and everywhere else. You do everything for self.

Instead of for God, you're in a mold just like the rest of the world, you need to have a great house and you need to have a Hummer and you need to have a great job and you need to have the right kind of shirt and you have all these things. Most of the people in this country dress dictated by what other people tell them they ought to be wearing. Do you realize that it's just a mold, a mold, a mold and you're not free from it? But if you're a believer, you are to be free from it and you are to realize that and stand in that and stop allowing this mold to be pressed upon you.

What do you care? What a supermodel wears, what do you care about what people say a nice house is? What do you care about what some car company tells you you ought to be driving? What do you care about the world says with regard to what a man should be or what a woman should be? Don't you see? Now, I want you to see something that is so very important. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but powers and principalities and mights and dominion. Here we are in the 21st century.

Here we are in a so-called scientific age, even though I would say it was almost a post-scientific age. We're postmodern. We believe all these things.

We don't believe most things. I mean, on and on. We have all these theories about a materialistic and material universe.

And what we don't realize is there is a reality out there that is so real and dark and sinister. And it has you by the ears and it's pressing a mold upon you so that you fit easily through the door of hell. There is a devil in this world.

There are demons in this world and you are not their victim. You are their willing accomplice. They're putting a mold upon you and you gladly take it upon yourself.

But the Bible says, do not be conformed to this world. Now, what about this world? The Bible says that this world is passing away. When I was 17 years old, I learned a very important lesson.

My father and I were out. We had a horse ranch, cattle ranch. We had about 25 head of quarter horses and about 200 head of charlotte cattle.

And we're building fences all the time. And he and I were out there and we're in the middle of this field and we're building a fence. And as we're running with the wire, spreading it out before we put the come along on it in order to stretch it out there, we're running along there.

We're talking all of a sudden. My father screamed and I caught him and we fell to the ground. And when I rolled him over, he was dead.

My father was very smart. My father was a tremendous athlete. He was signed to play with the White Sox by Whitey Ford.

My father was dead. I realized something. Green grass turns brown, leaves get shaken and fall off trees.

Men in their strength, if they live long enough, become old men in their weakness. Beautiful women lose all their beauty. Gold turns to dust.

Clothes rot. Civilizations rise up and fall. Babylon is a pile of rocks.

The Roman Empire is a tourist attraction. And their Caesars and their lords and their masters are all gone. And yet you, after all this evidence, you seek after the same thing they seek after.

Now, how intelligent is that? Are you going to realize one day I thought to myself, am I going to be as famous as George Washington? No. Well, he's dead. No one really cares.

Will they really care that I'm dead? I remember at my father's funeral, he'd been dead for three days and all the men were talking about, well, what are we going to do now with the company and all these different things? Hey, who won the game last night? He was dead. And the place, as it says in the book of Psalms, acknowledged him no more. That's what they're going to do to you.

You're going to die. The world is passing away. Actually, some Greek scholars say that the whole thing is actually saying that it's not just passing away, but it's being pushed out by a force.

God is pushing it out. He's pushing it out to one day it will be said there was no place found for them. Don't you see? Don't you see what you're here's the thing and all this goofy church growth preaching out there.

This is what they're doing and all those slick, nice churches that make you feel good about yourself. All they are are preachers building churches on the bones of unconverted church members. But they don't tell you about these things.

They use these things to get you in the church. Well, I'm telling you completely the opposite. Everything in this world is passing away.

Your job, your clothing, your house, your car, everything. And not only that, you, sir, are passing away. And every cemetery on the face of the earth bears witness to your mortality.

You are going to die, but you keep chasing the dream. You keep chasing the dream, the proverbial carrot in front of the donkey. Always chasing it, always chasing it until eventually goes right off the cliff.

What do churches do? They turn the Church of Jesus Christ into a six flags over Jesus. They keep carnal people entertained so that they'll keep coming back to church. Some of you may be in a church like that.

It's got activities for everything. You like scuba diving? They do scuba diving. You like hang gliding? They do hang gliding.

You like rappelling? They'll do that. You like coffee shops? They'll do that. This, that, everything to do what? To draw you.

But they're drawing you to your own carnal lust instead of drawing you to Jesus Christ, the only one who can save you. What kind of church would you have, Brother Paul? It wouldn't be entertaining. There'd be only one reason to be there.

Christ. And the hope of eternal salvation. That's what would be there.

If that's not enough for you, nothing else can save you. But because churches are formed that way, here's what happens. They keep you convinced of your niceness, of your nice family, of your nice American way of life, of your nice little moral things you do every once in a while, how you're nicer than everyone else.

And they take your mind totally off of the reality. You live in a fallen world. Everything in this world is passing away, being pushed out.

There is one God and one Christ before whom you will stand. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed, be transformed. I think it's amazing that when I come to the word conformed, do not be conformed to this world.

Then I come to the word transform. The word is from which we get the word metamorphosis. The word conformed seems mechanical.

This one seems organic. This one seems mechanical. This one seems organic.

Now, what do I mean by that? Be conformed. He's saying that do not allow the world to press upon you a mechanical shape. You see, the believer is no longer like the world.

Your nature has been changed. You're a different creature. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature.

But the world is trying to press upon the believer this mechanical, hard, ugly, rigid form. But it doesn't fit us. So when believers live like the world and seek the things of the world, it's like they're trying to fit into a form that they just don't fit and they're miserable.

And praise God for that misery. Pity the man who can chase after the things of this world and be happy because it means he's never been changed. He's not a new creature and he doesn't belong to God.

So the world is mechanically forcing down on you a mold. It's artificial. It's wrong.

It's steel. It's rigid. It doesn't fit.

But the idea of being transformed carries with it not the idea that God comes and presses this external mold on you to try to make you be something you're not. But it's this idea that now you are connected as a branch to the vine. And as you renew your mind in the Word of God, you are being transformed in a spiritual way.

It is actual reality. It is a life being changed and transformed by the power of God. It is like a branch connected to a powerful vine full of sap.

And that sap flows from that vine into the branch and the branch just explodes with fruit. It is not something forced or something you have to wrangle or create. It just happens.

If you truly are a believer, but the element that is so important here that we need to understand is sanctification is a work of God, it is God who works within you. But at the same time, sanctification is a work of the believer. So what is the believer to do? It all begins with the mind.

It begins with the mind. It begins with the mind. I can't tell you how many times people have come up to me and they go, well, you know, I don't want none of that theology stuff.

I just want Jesus. I don't want none of that doctrine. I just want Jesus.

And I go, OK, well, let me get this straight. You don't want any of that theology. You just want God.

So you want God, you want the benefits of a relationship with God. But theology means literally a discourse about God. So you want all the benefits of God, but you don't want to know anything about him.

So what you're saying, you said, well, I don't want none of that doctrine stuff. I just want Jesus. Now, let me get this straight.

You want the benefits of Christ, but you don't want any of his teaching. Wow, that sounds just like American Christianity. It begins with truth.

Truth is the only thing we have. We look at what Scripture says, we are not guided by our own instrument panel. We are not to be guided by the ways of the world.

We are not to be guided by what seems right in our own mind. We are not to be guided by some talk show hosts. We're to be guided by thus saith the Lord.

So he says, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by what? The renewing of your mind. And especially with young people, you think, man, I am this radical Christian. Have you ever noticed these these Christian song groups, you know, the radical ones? You ever noticed them? You ever just looked at them? Man, we're radical.

We're not like the world and all this stuff. I've been with some of them. And I've seen some godly people and I've seen some of these groups that they're no more saved than a dirt clod.

But have you ever noticed you look at them? We're saved, we're radical and we're not like the world. Their hair, their clothing, their facial expression and everything is just like the world. Everything about their external appearance is the world.

That's it. And they're going, we're not like the world. Yes, you are.

You look just like the world. You act just like the world. You talk just like the world.

You're not radical because you wear a Jesus freak T-shirt or cross around your neck. You're radical because you begin to understand the truths of God and conform your life to it. And I know that argument.

I remember one time I went to this town is about 10,000 people or something. And this guy, after I preached like this, he goes, but Brother Paul, he was a young guy. He goes, you don't understand.

He goes, I minister on the streets. And I said, this town has 10,000 people, what kind of streets do you have? He goes, I'm on the streets, man. I'm doing the inner city.

Don't you mean kind of inner town? I mean, and he goes, and man, you know, I need to I need to be relevant. I said, listen to me. Not only did I minister in the inner city of the Dallas Fort Worth area, I lived with street people for a while.

I had male prostitutes sleeping in the next bed right beside me. And they didn't give a flip if I had an earring in my ear or my hair was in style or anything, because I looked like a Midwest farm boy. The only thing they cared about is I loved them enough to be there.

So don't come to me that you're going to be relevant to the world by the way you look. You're not relevant to the world because you look like the world. You're relevant to the world because you're completely the opposite.

And if you're the opposite on the inside, you're going to be opposite on the outside. So don't come to me with your hair flipping all over and more collars around your neck than any girl I ever dated. Silly, goofy people.

You look like you stepped out of a GQ magazine and you're not like the world. You look just like the world. It's a reflection of your heart.

Like dear Leonard Ravenhill used to say, now you understand why I preach in a lot of Baptist churches once. But it's true. And somebody needs to say it because no one else is.

You're so you're so concerned in the church and everything else. And these silly little preachers running around are so concerned about being culturally sensitive that they don't care to be biblically sensitive. What do I care if the whole world turns its back on the congregation? I'm pastoring.

The whole world isn't going to judge me. God is. You want to be seeker friendly? That's wonderful.

Do it. Just realize this. There's only one seeker and it's God.

And if you want to be friendly to somebody, you better be friendly to him. It's his church. Church is being built today by whole teams of ministerial teams and life coaches going out into a city with a questionnaire saying, what kind of church does this city want? And whatever you want, that's the church will give.

No, God, how do you want your bride to be? And we'll do it even if the whole world rejects it. Because this isn't about the world, it's about you and your glory and service to you goes on. And he says, be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Now, I know I'm going long here, but don't worry, I'm not tired. So I want to show you some things that are very, very important. Yeah, you're clapping now.

Just look for a moment at I am astounded. Young men, let me share with you something, and I'm not going to teach this to you out of my success. I'm going to teach this to you out of my failure.

Young men, you want to be in the ministry. Good. Then get out of the ministry.

You want to really win the world, you want to be a benefit, get out of the ministry. You have no business in it, most of you, and here's what you need to do. You need to learn Greek, you need to learn Hebrew, you need to read about 20 chapters a day from Genesis to Revelation until that Bible.

You can quote almost from every chapter. You need to give yourself to the study of the word of God. You want to help the world, but you don't even qualify, according to First Timothy, chapter three, to be a minister.

You don't submit to a local church or a local body of believers. You don't have elders. You don't know what you're doing.

You're just running out with the same sort of Christianity. Stop it before you hurt more people. Go find out what God says.

A man of God is not created just in a day. He's not created in three weeks. He's not created because he went through some silly evangelism course or a six month course at some place to make you a missionary.

You need to just get along with God and you need to be in the word of God for hours a day and do nothing else. And just I know I know what I'm saying is so radical to you. And I'm not I'm saying some things just to shock you.

I'm not saying you can't minister and other things, but you've got to put your priority where it belongs. You have got to do what I wish someone would have told me to do. And don't go to seminary to learn how to do youth ministry.

That's dumb. We didn't learn how to teach kids to play games. Every youth minister magazine I see the guy skydiving or jumping off cliffs or doing.

So what is this? You're not called to be a recreational director. You're called to be a man of God. You go to seminary, go to seminary to do this, to study Greek, to study Hebrew, to study church history and biblical hermeneutics.

When you get those tools, then lock yourself away for a few years until you've practically memorized the Bible, then come out. But no one wants to pay their dues. No one wants to become a man.

It's the same way with adolescence today. Adolescence doesn't exist. There's no such thing.

You're either a boy or a man. But because we have adolescence, then boys can participate in the privileges of men without ever assuming the responsibilities thereof. It's the same way.

We've got a lot of young guys out there ministering and they take that privilege upon themselves even though they have not assumed the responsibility thereof. There's a sense John the Baptist was in the wilderness. Leonard Ravenhill used to say this all the time.

John the Baptist in the wilderness for 30 years so he could minister for six months. We take some silly little course that has nothing to do even with the attributes of God. It's just how to do certain pragmatic things.

And we think we're ready to go to Jerusalem and preach. Now, how did I get off on this? When I look in the Scripture, the centrality of the word of God is absolutely mind boggling. I mean, you look at you look at the

Hebrew literature, you look at you look at the Old Testament, you just you just see that the centrality of this thing.

That every question of life has an answer, everything needed to be done has a description on how to go about it. The word of God, Moses said, this is not a vain thing for you. This law is not a trifle, it's not poetry, it's not something to read once a week, it is your life.

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers. Do you realize you cannot identify the wicked? You cannot identify the sinners in their path and you cannot identify the scoffers unless you have a standard to compare them to. The word of God.

The greatest gift I can give my children is the knowledge of the word of God. What do I care if they get in Yale and then go to hell? What do I care if they're captain of the soccer team? What do I care? In order to in order to be able to do what Psalms one tells us to do, you have to be able to identify the wicked, the sinners and the scoffers. And you can only do that by holding them up to a standard, which is the word of God.

His delight is in the law of the Lord. Is your delight in the law of the Lord? Do you delight in it? Do you look at this stuff and go, wow, did you see this? His delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law he meditates day and night. You know, after many, many years of ministry, I've come to a reality.

I've come to a decision that's to be taken literally. Don't be as slow as me to learn that. That's to be taken literally day and night.

That pretty much takes up all the time, doesn't it? Day and night, he meditates upon the law. Well, Brother Paul, I can't read the Bible all day. That's why you memorize it.

That's why you memorize it, so that when you're out there hauling hay or whatever you're doing, washing dishes, you just meditate. Meditating. We're not people of the book.

Come on, come on. Don't don't don't say that. Baptists are not people of the book.

Presbyterians aren't people of the book. Unless it's some other book that I don't know about. We're not people of the book.

Because look at this guy, he is a people of the book. He meditates on this law day and night. And what is the result? He doesn't have to go to church to get psyched up.

He doesn't have to go to some acquire the fire conference. He doesn't have to do any of this silly stuff that we use as a replacement for the real. What does he do? He doesn't do anything.

He meditates upon the law day and night. And because he is so firmly planted in that law, like streams of water, he's yielding fruit in its season. And whatever he does in the will of God just prospers.

Do you see that? Do you see how important that is? It's absolutely amazing. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet. By that very definition, many of you here tonight who are sound and faithful church members are walking in darkness.

You're walking in darkness because there's not enough word in you to be a lamp in that dark road of raising children. I don't want an answer, just but just think this in your own mind. And that dark road of raising children, that dark and difficult path, have you identified what the scripture teaches? About raising children, are you meditating on that, memorizing it and making it a reality in your home, sir? Then the word of God is not a lamp unto your feet.

Are you loving your wife and seeking to progress towards that goal of obedience? Are you loving your wife according to the what the what the word of God says is the word of God directing your feet in that difficult path of loving your wife? Notice I said difficult path. That's the problem. So you bought into Hollywood's lie that if it's really love, it'll be easy.

No. God's love will be difficult because what he's going to do, sir, is he's going to call you to lay down your life for your wife, whether you think she deserves it or not. As a matter of fact, he's going to call you to lay down your life for her, even if she doesn't deserve it, even if she never reciprocates what you watch on television.

Is the word of God a lamp unto your feet? You watch things like Grey's Anatomy. You ought to be on your face repenting because you have so grieved the Holy Spirit. It's unbelievable.

Don't come in here wanting revival because I don't carry it around in my pocket. I see these young men, seminary students, they want the power of God on their life. They no more have a clue about that.

And a man on the moon watch all sorts of things on television, playing all kinds of video games, doing all this stuff. You have no clue what you're talking about here. We have men of God of old going to desert for 40 days and cry out to God.

You see what I'm saying? Is the word a lamp unto your feet? You see, Brother Paul, you're being awful hard tonight. Yes, I am. And I'm sad about that.

It hurts me to say these things. But I'm supposed to say them. Why? To cut you.

One poet once said about the old prophets, he said this, I am the prophet and I smolder and burn. I scream and cry and wonder why you never seem to learn to hear with your own ears and with your own eyes to see. I am the prophet.

Won't you listen to me? And then the poet goes on and he says this, I am the sword that cuts his people apart. And I am the one who heals their faithless heart. The word of God is supposed to be prophetic.

It's supposed to cut, especially in this time and day and age when the church looks as much like the world almost as the world. And when boys are rising up to so-called be ministers of God and do it based on statistics, church growth and cultural sensitivity studies. And I'm not saying that we need to go to the world and find out the message that they think they need and then go to God, hear his message and tailor it in order to fit the world.

We go to God and we come with a message to the world, whether they like it or not, because it's the only thing that can heal them, save them. They don't know what they need. You don't need me to coddle you in your sin.

You need me to tell you to repent. And you know what? I praise God because I have elders and men around me that tell me to repent. He says how blessed is the man.

Look at, look for a moment, just for a moment. Go to the book of Psalms. I want to show you something.

It's a terrifying verse. Psalms 50 verse 21. These things you have done and I kept silent.

This is the Lord speaking. You thought that I was just like you. Today's preaching and today's ecclesiastical movements are trying to give people a God that is according to what they want.

God says you thought I was like you. I'm not like you. Today's God in America looks more like Santa Claus than he is the Yahweh of the Bible.

It's terrible. Sunday morning is the greatest hour of idolatry in this country. Why? Because I can prove it.

If I just handed out a sheet of paper and told everyone to write down, to write down. Scriptures regarding the holiness of God, the justice of God, the love of God, the anger of God, the wrath of God, all the things about God, they wouldn't be able to do it. And then if I became into their church and began to preach on the attributes of God, they would become angry and you would see some of the finest church members jump up and say, I could never love a God like that.

I hate that kind of God. But it's the very Orthodox Christian God that's been preached for two thousand years. When people worship God today, most of them are committing idolatry because they're worshipping the God they've created with their own mind and they worship what they made.

It's unbelievable. This God you can put in your pocket, this God who is all about you. This God who is not just nor holy.

No, my friend, one of the greatest mistakes, the greatest mistake you can ever make is the mistake about who God is. Look what he says. He says, you thought that I was like you.

I will reprove you and state the case in order before your eyes. Now consider this. You who forget God or I will tear you in pieces and there will be none to deliver.

Whoa. He's not a tame.

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