

# Offer Your Bodies a Living Sacrifice

by Paul Washer

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*The sermon calls us to present our bodies a living sacrifice to Christ, motivated by the knowledge of God's sovereignty and providence, and to disciple our children in the same way.*

**Duration:** 57:14

**Scripture:** Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:1, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 4:1

**Topics:** "Sacrifice"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the radical depravity and evil nature of mankind, highlighting that there is no hope for self-righteousness. The first 11 chapters of the book of Romans are discussed, where Paul presents the theology of God, Christ, and man's sinful state. The preacher emphasizes that after understanding the great things God has done for humanity through Christ, believers should respond by giving their lives away for Him. The motivation for the Christian life is rooted in the knowledge of what God has done for us in Christ.

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## Transcript

Kennedy stuff. Making it more than a song. Making it a reality, a reality.

Now, let's look at our text. Paul says, therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice. Now, what he's asking us to do here is to lay down our lives.

If you've studied the book of Job, you realize that at least there Satan got something right. He said, you can take away everything a man has and you haven't taken away everything you touch his body. And that is where you will see whether or not he is true.

I mean, he can lose cars and homes and land and fame and even relationships. But you grab ahold of his body and you start ripping it into with excruciating pain and you will see this man curse you. Well, that's true.

Paul is not asking us just to increase our tithing. Paul is not asking us to buy a used car instead of a new one. Paul isn't just asking us to change some certain thing in our lifestyle.

Paul is asking something. Almost immoral from us that we would give away our lives, present our lives not continuously here, but present our lives once and for all to make a decision that everything we are, everything we are belongs to Christ, period. Not songs, not poetry, not word and not crying at a camp

meeting, no reality that everything that we are, that we take it and it belongs to him now, we are slaves, we are slaves, we belong to Christ.

Now. He is asking us. To do the most difficult thing that can be done by a human being, he is asking us to give away the thing most precious to us as human beings.

Now we need to ask ourselves, what's the motivation? Why should I do this? Why? I mean, what force, what power, what influence, what thing could move me to do this? I mean, this is this is above everything else. What could move me to give away my life entirely to Christ? Well, if you look in the first word of our text, he says, therefore, he says, therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God. Now.

What he's saying is this, I am telling you to give your entire life away once and for all for Christ. And you say, well, what's the motivation? He says, therefore, I urge you, I plead with you to do this by the mercies of God. So what's the motivation for giving your life away? The mercies of God.

And what are these mercies? The first word in our text, therefore, tells us. These mercies are the first 11 chapters of this book. What Paul is saying here is based on everything I have told you about God and about what God has done for you in Jesus Christ, based on everything I've told you now do this, give your life away.

It's the only proper, rational response. Give your life away because of what I've told you in the first 11 chapters. Now, hold your place here in the book of Romans and go to Ephesians for a moment.

Look at Ephesians chapter four and verse one. Do you notice what word it begins with? Therefore, now most theologians would agree, I'm in agreement with it anyways, that the first three chapters of the book of Ephesians are the deepest theology in the entire Bible. There is nothing probably more deeper, more with more eternal wind blowing through it than the first three chapters of Ephesians.

So for three chapters, Paul labors to tell us everything God has done for us in Christ. And then in chapter four, verse one, he says, therefore, and that's the transition. What does he say, therefore, I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.

So he's doing the exact same thing for three chapters. He has told you everything that God has done for you in Christ. And then he gets the four and he says, therefore, live this way.

Live this way, go back to Romans in the first 11 chapters of Romans, he tells us everything God has done for us in Christ. He comes to chapter 12 and he says, therefore, live this way. So what is the motivation for the Christian life? What is it that can move us to give absolutely our entire being to Jesus? It is the knowledge of what God has done for us in Christ.

Now, if you look in the first three chapters of the book of Romans, what do we have? Paul labors with all his might to do something that men hate, even people who go to evangelical churches hate. He labors for three chapters just to condemn us all. That's his purpose to shut all men up to sin, to show all men how radically depraved, how evil that they truly are.

And he cuts off from man every hope of self-righteousness. Man now has nothing to stand upon. He is guilty, guilty, guilty, and there's nothing he can do about it.

He is condemned. He's gone. And then he gets to chapter four.

And what does he do? He starts talking about God and Christ and he starts talking about faith. Chapter four, chapter five, it is about faith, faith, faith, faith. Then he gets to chapter six, dealing in four and five.

He's dealing with this. We're condemned by our sin. How can we be saved through faith in Jesus Christ? By faith, we are justified.

But then he gets to chapter six, seven and eight. And there's another problem, not just the condemnation of sin, but the power of sin in the believer's life. And so he takes three chapters and deals with that.

So in chapters one and three through three tells us how sinful we are in chapters four and five, he tells us we can be saved by faith in chapter six, seven and eight. He deals with how the Christian can overcome sin in his life. And then he gets to chapters nine, 10 and 11.

And he tells us how faithful God is in his sovereignty and providence. And then he comes to 12 and he says, now live this way. Since God is this way, since God has done all these things for you, when all you deserved was condemnation and an eternal hell, since God has done all this now live this way, this is the way you need to live now.

We live in a world and we live in an evangelicalism that is always off balance. I mean, you can say that about all of us. That we're like a pendulum and we swing back and forth, we're in a time now we live in a very, very superficial age when people are driven by feelings and emotions and songs and all sorts of things, what we need to be is a people of understanding.

Not just emotion. But a people of understanding, we must understand who God is, we must understand what we were before Christ, we must understand what Christ has done for us. And the more we grow in that knowledge, you say.

The more motivated we will be to live the Christian life. Let me give you an example, if I handed you a bologna sandwich at lunch, would you kiss my hands? Weeping, would you fall down on the floor, grab my hands, kiss them and weep? Saying, thank you, thank you, thank you, of course you wouldn't. But there are places in the third world where if I gave a bologna sandwich out, they would do just that.

They would fall down on their knees and cry out and kiss my hands. Why? Because of their need, because of their need. Now, why do men not appreciate the cross? Because they do not recognize their need.

Why do they not recognize their need? Because it seems out of style for preachers to talk about how sinful everyone is, how needy they truly are. You see, when when it is laid out before you, how sinful you are. And you realize you have no hope whatsoever, but in Christ, then Christ will become precious to you.

But how can you know how sinful you are unless someone tells you about God, isn't it amazing? I would wager that most of you in this room. Who have been Christians for many years. Have never sat in a church that took you through the attributes of God.

For more than a few weeks, how many of you have ever studied the attributes of God, who God is, according to Jeremiah, chapter nine, it's the most important information, it's the most important knowledge you can have is who is God. As a matter of fact, Psalms tells us that if you don't have the knowledge of God, you will do all sorts of things in his name that are wrong. Yet few pastors, few preachers, few seminaries teach on the attributes of God.

So how can you know how sinful you are unless you know who God is, you see how it's all connected. One of the reasons we have no motivation in our life, our little motivation to live the Christian life is because my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. They do not understand who God is, they do not understand who they were, they do not understand what Christ has done and they do not understand what they have become and they do not understand the future that is waiting for them.

And therefore, they lack all the drive and emotion to truly give their lives to Christ. We live in an age that says, I don't want none of that doctrine stuff, I just want Jesus. I don't want any of that theology stuff, I just want God.

Well, there's a problem there when you say I don't want theology, I just want God. You're saying I want all the benefits of God, but I don't want to know anything about him. When you say I just want Jesus, I don't want any doctrine.

Doctrine comes from a Hebrew word meaning teaching. You're saying I want all the benefits of Jesus, but I don't want any of his teaching. Have you ever seen a guy that was rather homely, ugly? Didn't have a whole lot going for him.

I mean, he wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed. He's just there's just not much going for him. And he marries a woman that seems to be absolutely she's everything, she's beautiful, she's marvelous, she's amazing, she's intelligent, she's just everything.

And he treats her like he's doing her a favor by being with her. Now, a big part of that is simply this ignorance. He does not have a grasp on reality at all.

He thinks wrong thoughts about himself, he thinks wrong thoughts about her, and it ruins everything, doesn't it? That's one of our problems in Christianity. We do not know who God is in the scriptures. The doctrine of God is almost entirely ignored.

That's why the church tries to stay alive with pragmatism and gimmicks and everything else, because it doesn't know their God doesn't know it's God. So we don't know God, we don't know who we were, and so we can't really appreciate the salvation that was given. We don't know anything about the spectacular, eternal nature of Christ.

And therefore, we can't truly comprehend what it means that the son of God died for us. What he did on that tree has been reduced down to four spiritual laws or five things God wants you to know. So we don't understand how glorious the gospel is and therefore we really can't get excited about it.

You see, all these things are so important to understand. The reason why we most lack the motivation to follow Christ with all our heart is because we don't know. Who God is, who we were, what he's done for us in the person of Jesus Christ.

And so what is one of the greatest needs, we're going to see that in a little while in this text to seek God. In prayer. And to seek God in his word.

And not just to seek him in his word to find promises or little tidbits, but to seek him in his word that we might know, truly know who he is. That we might truly understand the gospel and then be motivated, see that that's why Paul is writing this letter, we don't have a systematic theology in the New Testament, but the closest thing we have is the Book of Romans and Paul labors for 11 chapters under the inspiration of

the Holy Spirit and with all his intellectual might to present to the people who is God, who is Christ, who is man, what has God done for man? And then he says, now that you know all these great and marvelous things about God and his work for you in Christ, now go out. Give your life away for him, give your life away, give your life away.

When you have a little tiny God who's done a little tiny thing for you. You say giving my life away is just too much to ask. But when you have a great God who's done great things for you, it is not too much to ask.

So therefore, Paul says, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God to present your bodies, a living and holy sacrifice. Now, notice Paul says here the beginning phrase, therefore, I urge you, brethren. Now, there's two things I want to point out here that are very important.

First of all, Paul is talking to the church. That doesn't mean that everyone is reading this letter in that church is converted, but he's assuming their conversion, therefore, brethren now, brethren. What can we learn from this? You ever noticed in First Corinthians 15, Paul sets out in the first four verses a very concise and powerful definition of the gospel tells us what the gospel is.

Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures. He was buried, he was raised from the dead on the third day, according to the scriptures, he sets out a wonderful definition of the gospel. Now, isn't it unusual that he's writing to brethren there? He's writing to Christians.

Now, the point I want to make is this. So many people think that the gospel is for lost people. The gospel is for lost people, but it is even more.

For converted people, the more you and I understand. About what truly happened on that cross, the more you and I will be driven to serve Christ, not out of legalism. Not out of some fear or dread, but simply out of joyful appreciation.

Look what he did for me. How can I do anything else and your children? Now, let me say this. We destroy our children because we have bought in to the spirit of this age.

Your children will go to public school. A lot of them and they will be trained for somewhere around 15000 hours in ungodly secular thought, and then they'll go to Sunday school and they'll color a picture of Noah's Ark. And you think that's going to stand against the lies that they are being told? They're going to hear little stories, how far our Christianity has fallen, men.

And I'm getting off the subject a little, we're going to go back to it if we have time, but men, your primary responsibility in your home after your wife is you to disciple your own children. And if you don't do it, you're in sin. You are in sin, and if you turn it over to a Sunday school teacher, you are in sin and you are to be teaching these children more than just stories about animals that went into Noah's Ark, you're to be teaching them about God.

About radical depravity, about blood atonement, about propitiation, expiation, justification, sanctification, you are to teach your children, you have been told that they are dumb and they cannot learn. That's absolutely preposterous, men under God's authority. If a new generation, we talk about the future church, future, there's not much hope for the future church, I'll be honest with you, because every generation is getting worse.

So if we're going to turn this around, we got to take that future church out there and we got to start teaching them things so that they're not ignorant of the gospel. And that is the primary responsibility of every dad in this room. We'll talk about that later, like Leonard Ravenhill used to say, now you understand why I preach in a lot of places once and only once.

I'm not here to make friends. Here to tell you the truth, says, therefore, I urge you, brethren, now I want you to see something here, if you notice, I'm not really telling a lot of jokes and I'm not really being lighthearted, neither is Paul here. Look what he says.

Therefore, I urge you. I plead with you. I beg you.

The point that Paul is making here is, look, this is not some little thing I'm talking about. If you are truly in Christ, you have been called to give your life to him, give your life to him. Listen to me.

This is not some kind of halfway sort of thing that you can do or not do. No, he's saying I plead with you. I urge you.

I beg you. Listen to me. Your primary task in this world is to lay down your life for Jesus Christ to hell with your worldly desires, because that's where they're going.

To hell with your desires for lands and cars and houses with mortgages that are far too large, because that's where it's all going to hell with you just wanting to give your children all the things that you never had. It was the things you never had that made you the man you are. And it's the things that you will give your children that will kill them.

We'll raise up a generation since World War Two. We've raised one generation of spoiled, rotten brats that have given birth to another generation of soft, spoiled, rotten brats. Congratulations.

That's what happens when dads want to give to their children all the things they never had instead of the character. Of Christ, I says, I'm urging you turn away from the world, we're going to hear in chapter two, turn away from the world, don't do this, don't do this, man. Give your life to Christ and you say, why look to Calvary? Look to the God who is so holy, he would condemn you with one look, look to your past and your radical depravity that is so shameful, you could not share it with another human being and you would never want it exposed.

And then look to God's son who died on that tree for you. You need no other motivation. Motivation.

Christ dying for sinners is the motivation, any other motivation, if you want to follow Jesus because he'll fix your marriage, if you want to follow Jesus because he'll give you a better life, that's idolatry. Follow Christ. For the sake of Christ, he is worthy, he's worthy.

We go on, he says, therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God to do what? To present your bodies. To present your bodies now, this word present here. It's it's it's not present tense.

He's not saying, look, I I urge you every day to present your bodies now, there is a sense in which every day, every moment you and I have to make a decision, but he's talking about something more, more monumental here. He's talking about something more once and for all sort of thing. It's like it's like the prophet when he comes to Israel and he challenges them.

How long will you keep limping between two opinions? If Baal is Baal, then go serve Baal. If Yahweh is God, then serve Yahweh. Stop limping, Israel, once and for all, make your decision, stop going back and forth and back and forth once and for all, make your decision, men, by God's grace.

We must do this when our wives and our children watch us limping back and forth. One day, hot one day, cold one day, God, the next day, the world back and forth and back and forth and back and forth, they begin to think this whole thing isn't even real. I mean, if a mature man who claims loyalty to Christ can't do this, then how can his wife and his children, what he's saying is, look, there comes a time when once and for all you make a decision.

People do this all the time, even in the secular world. You hear of Olympians, I mean, they're six years old and they make a decision, I want to be the best power lifter that's ever lived. I want to be the best track star that's and what do they do their entire life is sacrificed to that, isn't it? I mean, that kid goes to school, but before school, take a swimmer, for example, before school, he's in the pool.

Then he goes to school, then he gets out of school, he's back in the pool, every other kid is playing out in the yard, doing all kinds of fun things, eating all kinds of stuff that he wants to eat and everything. Not this kid, everything is the pool, everything is eating right, his entire life is focused in on one goal, and that is to win a medal that will perish. That's not even gold, you and I are to do this.

Years and years and years ago, as a young man, I was struggling and fighting through depression and Leonard Ravenhill sent me a track and it said others can, you cannot. And what he was basically saying was, yeah, others maybe have the freedom to do to do all kinds of things. But if you truly want to be a man of God, you're going to have to limit many of even the good things in your life in order to choose the better things.

Man, listen to me. This idea of once and for all making a choice for Christ. Of being a broad shouldered man, a deep chested man, a loyal man.

To a king, the king, the only king. And to serve him and to be an example, not just to other church people, no, to be an example to a wife, to a wife, to be an example to children. This is my dad.

He will die for Christ. This is my dad. He follows Christ.

That's what needs to happen, that's once and for all making a decision, I had a professor. It's seminary and he was a he was, as the Puritans used to say, he was a goodly man, he was a he was a good man and he told us a story. He was a very consecrated man.

He told us a story about one time just fed up with himself. Now, a lot of people may hear this and mock it and think it's an exaggeration or dramatic, and I really don't care. People who never do anything dramatic are usually one pulse away from dead.

But my professor, he said that as a young man, he went up, went up to his attic and he found an old trunk and he opened that trunk and he said, we're going to have a burial service right here. And he said, he said, I took my I went like this, Lord, you got my brain, it belongs to you, I'm not putting anything in it except what you want me to put in it, it belongs to you. Lord, these ears, you've got them, they belong to you, they were made only to hear you, not to hear anything else.

And these eyes, Lord, especially for men, this is important, says, Lord, these were meant to look upon you. To look upon you and Lord, this tongue, Lord, these hands, Lord, these feet, these knees, they all belong to you, men, at least that's a good illustration. Of the way that we ought to live, you say, well, there's ladies in here, too, yes, there are, and they're listening.

Why do you keep addressing men? This is what I have discovered. Men, you and I can talk all day long with our chests out about how we are to lead our families. And that we are the leaders of our families and the heads of our home, that's true, that's terrifying, you're the one getting called on the carpet.

You are the one on the day of judgment who will give an account. You are the one that will be the influence in your wife and your children, you are the one. So I urge you present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.

Now, here's something that I really love, especially in this age of of emotionalism and romanticism. He doesn't say if this was written today by by most people, even who consider themselves to be part of the church, it would sound something like this. To present your heart a living and holy sacrifice sounds so much better than body, doesn't it? We always talk about the heart.

Oh, in my heart, I love Jesus. In my heart of hearts, I love Jesus. Don't you judge me, don't you judge me because you can't see what's in my heart.

Yes, I can. I can see what's in your heart, not because I'm omniscient, not because I read minds, I just have to listen to what comes out of your mouth and watch what you do with your body. Paul says enough of this heart talk, I want your body, you see, there's no escape here, is there? You can't hide behind a heart.

You can't say, well, you just don't you can't read my heart, you can't do that, that's not what Paul saying. Paul saying, yeah, I can't read your heart, but I can sure see what your hands are doing. I can see the feet and the direction they're going.

I can see what you're doing with your eyes, your mouth, your ears and everything else. So I pretty much know what's in your heart because Jesus said out of the heart comes forth all these things. So if all these things are in your body, all these things are in your heart.

You see that. This is so important. Here's another thing that I want you to see when someone says, well, I love Jesus in my heart, regardless of what I do now, once you think about this, what is the heart? I mean, what is it? Now, is the Bible when it uses heart, is it talking about a blood pumping muscle? What is a heart? The heart.

In the scriptures is the scent control center, the very control center of your being. It is the control center of your intellect. The control center of your will, the control center of your emotions, the control center of everything.

So are you going to tell me Jesus has the control center of your emotions, your will, your intellect, everything, and yet it doesn't affect any of those things? He's king of the control center, but controls nothing. Absolutely not, my friend. That's why when the Bible is speaking about the heart, when it's speaking about the mind, it means everything.

It means everything. It's the control center. Let me give you an example.

We have a superficial idea of the mind or superficial idea with regard to changing the mind, don't we? I always hear people say, well, I understood it in my mind, but I didn't understand it in my heart or I had it in my mind, but it wasn't in that kind of language. Just it doesn't function. It's not really biblical language.

Do you know what repentance means in the Greek? To change your mind, that's all it means, that's what the word means to change your mind and you say, well, then repentance is just. Thinking differently, that sounds a little superficial to me, that's because we have a superficial understanding of thinking. And a superficial understanding of the mind, let me give you an example, let's use Paul, the apostle for a moment as an example, Paul, the apostle is well, as Saul of Tarsus, he's on the road to Damascus.

OK, now what what does he think? This is what he thinks, he thinks Jesus is a false prophet and a blasphemer, that's what he thinks in his mind. And he thinks that the Christians ought to either be thrown in prison or killed, that's what he thinks, and because he thinks that way, what is he doing? He's blaspheming Jesus, he's cursing Jesus and he's arresting and killing Christians. So you see, he thought.

That Jesus was a false prophet, therefore, he blasphemed his name and he thought that Christians were evil and therefore he threw them in jail and he killed them because he fought that way. Now, on the road to Damascus, what happens? He meets the resurrected Christ, he's knocked off his horse when he gets up. He has changed his mind.

How has he changed his mind, he now believes he no longer believes that Jesus is a blasphemer, he now believes Jesus is the Messiah and the son of the living God, he's changed his mind, he no longer believes that Christians ought to die and be imprisoned. He now thinks what that they're the children of God he has been killing and what happens? Well, the world's never been the same, has it? Just over one man who changed his mind. You need to you know what your greatest need is here today, it's mine, you need to change your mind, but in order to change your mind, it gets back to the first thing we were teaching.

You need to know what's true. You need to know what's true. And because of little study and extremely poor preaching.

Most Christians, even Christians, are filled with so many wrong thoughts, it's unbelievable. Unbelievable. Unbelievable.

Let me just give you an example and maybe we'll be able to touch on it. Just now get ready, OK? What makes you think youth groups are biblical? Who told you that? What makes you think that children ought to be with children? That's exactly what you believe. You believe children when they go to church ought to be with children, don't you? You believe children ought to play together, they ought to be grouped together, all these sorts of things.

That's what you believe. All of you probably believe that. Well, you know, children need to be with children.

Do you know that's a direct contradiction of scripture? Find it for me in scripture where it says children ought to be with children. I'll give you a million dollars, find it for me. Who told you that? I'll tell you who told you that the hippies in the 60s.

Generation gap that never even existed prior to that. That. Evolutionary thought that tells you that children, basically their development kind of parallels the development of species.

And that they need to be grouped together. Do you know what the Bible teaches? It teaches just the opposite. That the one who runs with fools will be destroyed, a companion of fools will be destroyed, but he who walks with wise men will be wise.

Now, I'm not saying you can't teach children together and I'm not saying that you can't have young people get together, but what I'm telling you is your children are raised by other children, the most important people, oftentimes in your children's life is not their mom and their dad or their brothers and sisters, it's their friends at school. And that's all they want to do is get out of the house to get to those friends. And you have effectively destroyed your family with wrong thinking.

You see, my point is not to talk about family at this moment. My point is to say you can have all kinds of wrong thinking. I was teaching at the Martin Lloyd-Jones Fellowship a few years ago in England, and they asked me to teach on children, so I started teaching on children and this guy raised his hand and he says, well, how are your children going to be socialized if they're just around you and other grownups? And I said last night I was really hungry and I was looking for fish and chips, so I went to High Street.

And I saw countless teenagers out there, some of them not even teenagers, 11, 12, 13. Matter of fact, I heard some girls who couldn't have been more than 12 years old talking about things. Out loud on the street and doing things with their body that I never saw in my worst days as a drunk in any bar.

So just how do you want my children to be socialized by them? See, he had been taught wrong thinking, his children needed to be socialized or they couldn't. Be accepted in this world. I didn't know they were supposed to be accepted.

By 12 year olds who speak worse than a drunken sailor. You see all these things that we're often told and they're just lies and evangelicalism is filled with them. And so we can't change our mind as we ought to because we don't know what's true and we don't know what's a lie because the scriptures are so neglected.

And that is why it is our task primarily to be men and women of the word. So that we can reject the lie, change our mind and be in line with what God would have us do with the life that God would have us to live, present your bodies. To God, your bodies, that means everything.

Whatever these eyes do, find out, according to the scriptures, what does God want my eyes doing? What does God want my ears hearing? What does he not want my ears to hear? What does God say about my hands, my feet, the direction of my life? And then you start. Because Christ died for you. Seeking to conform your life no longer to the standard of this age, but according to the will of God now and how long am I supposed to go? OK, is am I supposed to end this at what time at 12? OK, nice is to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.

Now, here's something that I want you to see. We've got the word living here and we'll probably just be able to get to this part and then I'll pick it up later on. Living, living.

This is opposed to a dead sacrifice. And what we have here are two different trains of thought with this with this word, it could go either way and maybe both thoughts are included. First of all, is that our service for Christ is to be zealous, it's to be living, it's not to be haphazard, it's not to be nonchalant, it is to be filled with zeal.

Now, where does that zeal come from? Again, it is it comes from knowing who God is and what he's done for us. It is to be a zealous type of life for Christ. A young man one time came up to me and he had misunderstood the use of the term passion, passion to him, he used it more in a negative sense, a modern sense in which when he heard the word passion, he thought it was something wrong, something negative.

And he said to me, he goes, yeah, this world's being destroyed because men are too passionate. I said, oh, no, no, no, no, no, young man, the world is the way it is and the church is the way it is because men are not passionate. We are to be passionate, but we are to be passionate about the right things, we are to have a fire in our chest, we are to be passionate gradually in Europe, Canada, the United States.

Do you know what you're seeing? They're taming us, don't you say they've got us all convinced now that we couldn't even do anything if we wanted to. Same thing happened under communism. Men become more passive and more passive and more passive and more passive until.

Their enemies no longer fear them, they've been trained well, or you can do another thing instead of just taking the fire out of a man's heart, here's what you can do, entertain him, get him, get him chasing all kinds of things that don't matter. Get him after all sorts of things that dangle and sparkle. Get him looking for leisure and hobbies and all sorts of things, and when you've got him distracted, you can come right through the door and kill his family.

You can take away the next generation from him, it is amazing, you take a frog and you throw him in a boiling hot pot of water and he will jump out immediately. You put him in lukewarm water and gradually turn up the flame and he will stay there and boil and never know that he's being killed. I just gave a parable.

About you and about me, that's what's happening. Every way possible, the noose is being drawn. And we no longer even fight against it.

Now, how do we fight against it with truth? By living right and speaking right and being men who are bold, so we must be a sacrifice that is living, that is vibrant. But now here's the other thing about this. It is a living sacrifice, and here's what we must understand.

We the reason why the so-called church seems so dead and so ungodly is most of what is called the church today is not the church. But unconverted carnal people who go to church and it becomes easier and easier for them to come to church because the preaching is so watered down, because there's so little pursuit of godliness and righteousness and because church discipline is no longer practiced, what do you have? You have a vanity fair, as in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, for every carnal bird in the world to come rest. That's what we have.

So the first thing to recognize is that most people in the church are not in the church. They're in a church building and they're unconverted. And many church buildings are not churches, because years ago, Ichabod was written over the door because the glory of the Lord had departed.

If you're in a church where rampant wickedness can go on and Christ does nothing, it's because Christ is not there, because when he comes into his temple, he will come in as a as a fuller soap and a refiners fire. That's why Ananias and Sapphira died. When Christ is really there, it gets very dangerous.

So most people call themselves Christians are not Christians, most churches are not churches, and why the lack of the regenerating work of the spirit of God? Some very famous evangelists have done great

damage, great damage to the kingdom of heaven, because they equate making your decision with being born again. And you got all these people who made some sort of decision, prayed a prayer at a big evangelistic meeting, held up their hand, and they were told they were born again. They were told to believe they were born again by faith, even though there was no evidence of being born again.

My dear friend, if the spirit of God has regenerated your heart, there will be evidence, and if there's no evidence, you were not born again. The spirit comes from where you do not know and he goes to where you do not know. But I want to tell you, his path is discernible in the lives he touches.

And so this living sacrifice can only be a living sacrifice if this person has been regenerated by the spirit of the living God. I was in a conference last week as a bunch of young people and they're preaching and then afterwards just dismissing the crowd. No invitation, nothing except the invitation in the service itself, dismissing the crowd.

Why? I did not want emotionalism to take over on those children like all those silly little evangelists do. They get the kids all psyched up about nothing, get them to come down the aisle. They're not converted, but the evangelist goes off and brags about 200 people that were converted who never show up in church the next Sunday.

So I said, now, young people go. If you have trouble with your soul, I'll stay up with you all night. Young people would come to me and I bring them to the point of, do you understand repentance? Yes, I do.

Do you understand faith? Yes, I do. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, I just don't know, Brother Paul, I don't know.

I said, then here's what you need to do. They're getting ready to go play volleyball. Go play volleyball.

If you can go play volleyball, if you cannot, then go out in that field. Then cry out to God until the spirit of God tells you you're saved. That's the difference between the old preaching and the modern day preaching.

We cannot be zealous for the things of God unless God himself makes us alive. Do you say he must make us alive? And then as believers, even though the moment we believe in Christ, we are regenerated by the spirit of God. We are indwelt with the spirit of God.

You need to know something, believer, along with studying the scripture, your greatest need and my greatest need is to cry out for greater and greater and greater fillings and empowerings of the Holy Spirit. That is our great need. It is, I want you just to hold your place here, go over to Ephesians, I was reading there this morning and come across a text that always just.

And we'll end here, but it always just it bothers me, it's like it just gets me, but in a good way, Ephesians chapter one, verse 18, Paul says, I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you will know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. My dear friend, Paul said that he had a heavenly vision and he wasn't disobedient to it. Paul said that he went up to the third heaven, whether he went there or it was a vision he did not know, but he saw things there of which he could not speak.

Do you ever wonder what drove that man? I'll tell you what drove that man, he had a vision of the resurrected Christ and he had a vision of the very thing he's praying about here in verse 18. He said, if

only you could see what my eyes have seen. If only you could, you should be crying out in the word and crying out, God, give me a greater vision of who you are, who Christ is, what you've done for me, the hope of my calling, the glory of my inheritance.

I mean, let's think about it. If someone told you, walk across Alberta and I'll pay you a nickel. You would not have the strength to walk across Alberta, but they said, walk across Alberta and I will give you Alberta.

All of Canada, all the world, a thousand worlds. You'd run like a marathon runner across there if only you and I could catch a glimpse of a heavenly vision. And then in verse 19, look at this and what look is the surpassing greatness of his power toward us who believe these are in accordance with the working of the strength of his might.

And he's going to go on and tell us the very might that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is indwelling you. Now, here's what you can do. Here's what you can do about that.

Here's what you can do. These evangelists and they have these these tracks that say, did you ask Jesus to come in? Yes. Were you sincere? I think so.

Well, then you're saved. If you were sincere, you're saved. That's it.

No evidence, nothing, no change, no experience, no ongoing sanctification, nothing. You're in because you did it. They've got the same track for the Holy Spirit.

Did you know that the exact same track I've read it, it's repulsive and this is the way it goes. God wants you to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It's his will.

OK, number two, anything that's his will, he'll do it for you. OK, number three, the only thing that keeps God from doing his will in your life is sin. OK, and number four, if you'll confess your sin and then ask him to fill you, he will fill you.

And even though nothing happens and you feel nothing and there's no change, you need to walk by faith that you're filled with the Holy Spirit. That's disgusting. Nowhere in the New Testament, in the Old Testament is anything like that found.

What you need to do, brothers and sisters, have you ever heard the old saints talking about grabbing ahold of the horns of the altar? Have you ever talked or even read about the old men and women who would sit there and say, God, this promise is for me. It's for me. Make it a reality in my life.

I'll not give you peace, God, until you accomplish this in me. You look at that text and you say, surpassing greatness of his power. Can I sense the surpassing greatness of the power of God in my life, the very power that raised Christ from the dead, if you look at yourself and you say, no, I'm wanting, I'm wanting, then stand up on this in holy boldness and prayer, go to God.

Go to God. I love Charles Spurgeon, it's my favorite, all time favorite preacher, and he would say this. Apparently, some people had come into his church, some teachers or something that were in London, and they were saying, well, when you were saved, you were given the Holy Spirit.

You shouldn't ask for more of the Holy Spirit. And Spurgeon goes, when I was saved, I had faith. But are we not constantly asking for more faith? When I was saved, I had grace, but aren't we constantly asking for more grace when you were saved, you were in dwelt with the Holy Spirit as a person, not a power is

not partialled out.

In a sense, there is no grounds for saying you need more of the Holy Spirit as though he could be divided out and part of it given to you and part of him not. But we can say this, you and I should be constantly crying out for greater and greater manifestations of his power in our life, and we should constantly be looking for areas where we are offending the spirit so that he does not empower us. So we ought to be, my dear friends.

A living sacrifice. Some of you, I would imagine living in this area, were touched by a revival that happened here. Long time ago in Canada, brothers, it was the result of a sovereign God.

But it was also. God raising up men and women to pray for an outpouring of the spirit of God, but they weren't men and women who just said. God.

I'm really not going to study the word, I'm not going to try to bring my mind into conformity to Christ, I'm just going to pray for the spirit to fall down upon us all and fix our mess. It's not it's not going to happen. Those men and women who sought for revival, they sought for revival, but they also studied God's word.

And said, Lord, what is it in me? Is there anything? I need to know you better so that I speak rightly of you and I think rightly of you. I need to know what Christ has done. I need to know who I was before I met you and what I am now.

I need to know the full counsel of God. So with both both things, brothers and sisters. Seeking God in his word, seeking to know him.

And seeking God in prayer for an outpouring of his spirit, both personally, individually in our lives and corporately. As a people, let's pray, Father, I pray that you would use this, that you would use it, Lord. To awaken, to encourage, to enliven, to bring about your work in me, Lord, I need this word.

And in everyone else here, my brothers and sisters, in Jesus name, amen.

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