

# The Joy of Giving It All (Part 1)

by Paul Washer

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*Paul Washer urges believers to fully dedicate their lives to God as a response to His mercies.*

**Duration:** 45:09

**Scripture:** Psalm 23:1, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:1

**Topics:** "Sacrificial Living", "Radical Obedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Romans chapter 12, verse 1, urging the congregation to present their bodies as living and holy sacrifices to God. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the radical depravity of humanity and the need for salvation. The preacher highlights the multifaceted mercies of God and encourages the congregation to hold onto these mercies as they seek to live a transformed life. He also emphasizes the role of accountability in the church, with the pastor teaching and the congregation holding the preacher accountable. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the radical call to give one's entire life to God and the importance of knowing and obeying the truth.

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## Transcript

Sometimes when you feel like you've really worshipped the Lord, it's even more frightening than normal to preach. Let's open up our Bibles to the Book of Romans, chapter 12. I'm going to finish the study in the evening service on fathers raising up their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

And but this morning I wanted to address the Book of Romans to a key issue. Chapter 12, verse one, let's stand, please. Romans, chapter 12, verse one.

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 spray. Father, father, I'm no match for your word. I pray that you would make it clear to pray more than anything, Lord, that.

That. That I would obey. That this congregation would obey, Lord.

We've got a long history of, at least in my own life, Lord, not obeying failure. To pray that you would grant grace for us to be changed. In Jesus name.

Amen. Have a seat. We have a tremendous foundational passage in front of us this morning.

Foundational, you know, there are some passages of scripture where honestly, folks, I know that the entire Bible is the full counsel of God's word. We need every word of it. But there are some passages I feel like I could just spend my entire life praying about obeying and leave it at that.

Sometimes I look at a passage like like the fruit of the spirit in the book of Galatians and I just sit there and go, well, maybe I should just spend the rest of my life concentrating on this one thing, because when I look at it, I feel so miserably or when I need comfort just looking at the the first verse of Psalms twenty three and thinking, OK, if I could just learn this one verse, I would be OK. Sometimes we try to learn so many things and all the things are important that are found in scripture, but sometimes it's good to concentrate on just a few. Especially those things that are key, and this is one of those passages.

Now, Paul is going to plead with God's people to give their lives to God. As a living sacrifice to him, to give away not just their material goods, not just their comfort, to give away their very being. To God.

And that is what all of us are called to do, whether we're living in a country where to profess faith in Jesus Christ means certain death or to live in a country like this, where it does not, we are all called to give away our lives. To give away our lives and anyone who for a time has given away their life and then taken it back. Like I have.

So many times. To give it to the Lord and then grow cold again and take it back for self, you remember the joy of giving it all to the Lord. And.

And, you know, the misery. Of living for self. That's why this passage is so important, he's going to call us to give our lives now, he says in the first few words, therefore, I urge you, brethren, Paul's not speaking like a prophet here or as an apostle or a missionary.

He's speaking as a pastor. This word urge is such a great word in the Greek text, Parakaleo, and it means literally and I want to look at some of these meanings, first of all, to call to one side. As I'm preaching today.

I'm not preaching as a man standing above you, preaching down at you and telling you, follow me. I'm speaking as a brother, as Paul was here, calling you alongside of me. We all need that.

There are some men in this congregation at times they will need to come to me as they have and call me alongside and encourage or correct. In the same way, that's what I'm doing here because I'm the one standing here this morning. To call you alongside.

And to listen, as I explain the word of God, the word also means to encourage and strengthen. The whole purpose of a pulpit is to encourage and strengthen you. You.

That you might be encouraged. I know that my greatest battle, if you want to know the chink in my armor. The greatest battle that I have in the Christian life is depression and discouragement.

And I know that when I am not discouraged, I can just seem to climb mountains. And I also know when I'm discouraged, it almost leaves me wrapped up in a dark room in a fetal position, unable to move. And I know that one crushing word on your head will be enough.

To cast you into the dust so that you never rise again, that's not what I'm about. Whatever is said is said for your encouragement, your strengthening, that you might be strong, that you would might run farther

and faster than any minister ever stands in this pulpit ever dreamed. And then the word also means to instruct and teach.

You know, we're not. At least I'm not. I don't need to include you in my sin, but I'm not, by and large, the most teachable fellow in the world.

One man said that that's the way you know that you're called to preach. You don't want to listen to anybody anymore. You just want to do all the talking.

But teaching the truth is what we must have if we are going to walk strengthened and encouraged in a wicked, fallen, depraved, twisted world that hates any true Christian. We're going to have to know truth because in the confusion, in the midst of the darkness, when you don't know what to do and everyone's screaming at you and if you turn one way or the other way, everyone's still going to be against you, you have to go back to what does the Bible say and just do it. The word also means to admonish and exhort.

There are a lot of prophets running around today, a lot of men screaming. At God's people. Well, and there's a place for that.

I know some of you, I'd like to scream at some of you, there's a place for screaming, shouting, yelling, offending. But know this, that whenever a true prophet of God speaks in the Old Testament, no matter how harsh his language, he will always end with encouragement and hope. He will always end with turn, turn and be healed.

Turn and live, drink and thirst no more, feed and no longer go hungry. It also means to beg, to beg. I haven't reached this time yet in my life because my little boys are little boys, but I have heard the heart of parents when they've come into my office.

And you can just sense the broken heartedness because they have just been with an older child of theirs and they have literally begged, entreated that child not to go in the wrong way and the child would not listen. And they said, Pastor, I got down on my knees and I begged my son not to do that and he would not hear me. That's the way preaching is sometimes.

Preaching and true biblical counseling, it is literally as Paul the Apostle is here, he is literally begging people that the Holy Spirit has put a special love in his heart for them and he is begging them to do certain things. Why? So that he can gain an advantage from them. Now, that's the way of a false apostle, false prophet.

He's begging them that it might go well with them. He's repeating the words that we see in Deuteronomy 5:29 that says this, oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always that it may be well with them and with their sons forever. That's the desire.

Is that it may be well with you and the Lord, as Paul says, he says, I urge you, brethren. Now, here's a tremendous word. You don't think much about brethren, brothers.

I did force. It's just a common Greek, ordinary term for brother, someone of the same father, the same mother, someone maybe not even a father and mother, but of the same country, a countryman you might call brother. And isn't it significant that the Bible can take such an impotent, unimportant word and transform it into something absolutely amazing to the world? Brother means one of the same father, born of the same father, born of the same race, they're born of the same nation.

But for us, it means born of God. Paul said, I don't want to know anything else about you. I don't care about what job, what status, what neighborhood, what your checkbook's like.

I don't care anything of that. I don't want to know about your past and I don't really care that much about your future. I just want to know one thing.

Jesus Christ crucify. Because that's enough. Now, also, this is very important to understand, I travel all over and my thing is teach theology, I just teach theology, theology is important to me, I study theology hours a day.

But I want to tell you something, there are many theological truths that I hold very, very dear to my heart, but they are not the determining factor of whether or not I have fellowship with certain people. I am basically a dinosaur theologically. You could call me almost a primitive Baptist, you could call me a Puritan, but I know so many people who aren't like me.

They don't worship that much like me. They say a lot more hallelujahs than I do. Doctrinally, we would disagree on some issues, even issues that I think are very important that I've given my life to teaching.

But I want to know one thing among those people, Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected from the dead. Brothers, I want to read something to you that you know that when I'm preaching, I understand what I'm doing. It's in Matthew twenty three and it says this, but do not be called rabbi for one is your teacher and you are all brothers.

Do not call anyone on earth your father for one is your father. He is in heaven. Do not be called leaders for one is your leader.

That is Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servants. So I'm preaching here not as a rabbi, not as a great teacher.

I am preaching as a brother in Christ to other brothers and sisters of equal status with me. Someone said to me one time, oh, brother Paul, you're God's anointed. I said only to the degree that you're God's anointed.

I'm a brand new believer. Make any difference. The term means that you have the Holy Spirit and every true believer has the Holy Spirit.

And better yet, the Holy Spirit has them. It's a fearful thing to talk to you because teachers will undergo greater condemnation. Listen to this passage again.

Do not call anyone a rabbi for one is your teacher. Your teacher is my teacher, Jesus Christ. You say, well, that's a wonderful thing.

It also means you have just as much responsibility as I do to seek out the truth. You see, with great privilege comes great responsibility. You cannot rely on one man to dig out diamonds for you and present them on a plate.

So we're all priests. Yes, we are. Then all of you minister to let it call anyone rabbi for one is your teacher and you are all brothers.

If Dr. John Piper were here today and he were going to preach on this pulpit, I would say this to him or I would say this to you. I am now going to present to you a man in whom we found a measure of grace. Brother Piper, will you please come forward? I would call him brother and not doctor, even though he has a tremendous Ph.D., I would call him brother and not doctor because brother is a higher term.

It is a greater term for one is your teacher and you are all brothers. Do not call anyone on earth your father for one is your father. Boy, are there some religious groups that have this messed up? There is only one father and he is not a man.

You said Jesus was a man. Yes, and he's not the father. He is God who became a man.

But there is a father who is unseen. You have one and he's not here in a physical body. He's here in the presence of the Holy Spirit, but no man is your father.

You're the one who gave you spiritual birth. I'll hear people say sometimes, well, you know, I was given spiritual birth through that man. You most certainly were not.

If you were born again, you were born again by the father's seed. God may have used a pathetic, pitiful man like me. But that's all.

If you're born into this kingdom, you're born by the father's power, not by the will of men. Stop exalting men. He goes on and he says, do not be called leaders for one is your leader.

That is Christ. I've been teaching about elders. There are elders, there are they are called to lead.

There will be others who will need to come forward and be leaders and elders and deacons and such. So what is he saying? Because in one place he says, don't be called a leader in another place. He says you must lead.

He's talking about an attitude. The leader wears a towel. With which he wipes the feet of God's people.

The prophet does not carry a scepter, but a whole calluses on his hands, calluses on his knees and a heart broken in as many pieces as people he has to care for. Leader. Leader, I believe it was Corrie Ten Boone who out of fear of pride taking hold on her because of her renowned every church she went to.

The first thing she would do is go into the bathrooms and clean the toilets so that she would never forget. So that she would never forget. Servant.

Servant. Servant. Servant.

Servant. Why am I saying these things? Because a man will have to stand in this pulpit one day. This is the type of man he should be.

He will have great respect. Why? Because he greatly respects you. He'll be greatly loved.

Why? Because he greatly loves you and has poured out his life as a drink offering on your behalf. It's a type of man who will urge. And also, I want us to just think about this for a moment, even though I know that the one who stands in his pulpit is just a brother at the same time, he is a watchman and he has a great responsibility over the flock, a great responsibility to tell the truth.

It says in Ezekiel 33, but if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned and a sword comes and takes a person from them. He is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from the watchman's hand. There are going to be times from this pulpit.

You see, when there's just general preaching, general theology, high theology, whatever out of this pulpit, it will bless you and offend thee not. But sometimes it's going to have to get specific in this pulpit. It's going to have to deal with specific sins of mind and heart and body, specific sins.

Of family, specific sins of attitude, specific sins of action, of doing things that are wrong and not doing things that are right, and sometimes it will make you angry. The very things that have made me angry most are the very things that have saved my life. You who are parents know this to be true.

The very things that your children sometimes most reacted against. That wounded them the most were the very things, the only things that could save their life. Now, in Acts 20, 18, 20 and 26, says Paul told the church in Ephesus, you yourselves know from the first day I set foot in Asia how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable and teaching you publicly and from house to house.

Therefore, I testify to you this day, I am innocent of the blood of all men. You see, this is not just an old covenant thing. This is a new covenant thing also.

But now let me go back for a moment and just try to teach you something. You are as much responsible for discovering the truth on your own as the man who stands in this pulpit, because if you do not and I preach to you that which is not true, how will you discern? How will you know you must study God's word and when you have disagreements with the pulpit, you must go to the one behind it. In love and in respect, but knowing God's word, studying God's word even says in the New Testament, what that one prophet will preach and the other prophets in the congregation will sit, hear him and examine his words to see if they're true.

You cannot just simply sit back and be fed, doesn't matter who stands in this pulpit in the future, you cannot simply just open your mouth, you must discern the truth and you can't do that unless you know the truth. And not only that, it's like John Wesley, when he returned from the United States the first time, his missionary journey, he went over to to save the Indians, he said on his way back, he said, I went to save the Indians, but who will save me? The preacher needed a teacher, the man who's in this pulpit, who will be his teacher, who will hold him accountable? The pastor teaches and with the truth holds the congregation accountable and the congregation, knowing the truth, holds the preacher accountable. These are things you must know.

You must know these things. I don't know how long I'm going to be here and you must know these things now. He says, therefore, I urge you, brethren.

Now, what's he urging them to do? He's urging them to do the most radical thing possible for a human being with volition, will and mind. He is asking a group of human beings to literally give their entire life away. He said, well, what's so bad and what's so big about that? You're you've got so much Christian terminology in you with no meaning that you can't understand how radical the thing is.

You think he's just speaking in metaphor, you think he is just saying, well, you know, it's nice poetry. No, my dear friend, he is literally asking every person in that congregation in Rome to consider giving their entire life away within the context of God's will for each individual life, for them to set themselves as slaves

to God. You can't get more radical than that.

The problem is when we hear something like that over and over and over, it begins to lose its meaning, doesn't it? Does it mean anything? Oh, my dear friend, this is so drastic, radical, some would even say insane. What can be the motivating factor for doing something like that? What could motivate rightly motivate a human being to literally give their life away? Well, Paul tells us, he says, therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God. What's the motivation for this? God's mercy revealed toward you.

And I say, well, what are those mercies? First of all, it's good that you noticed it was plural mercies, the multifaceted mercies of God. You hold up the mercies of God. You hold up Monet's water lilies.

Well, you don't hold it up. It's rather large. You stand in front of it, Monet's water lilies, and just look at the beauty of it.

It's still one dimension. You take a diamond and hold it up. Doesn't matter how you turn it, you're going to see something different, a different sparkle, a different image, a different this, a different that.

And you almost literally drive yourself insane because even if you take a piece of rope and some chalk and go around that diamond and mark off every place you've seen, when you turn it back around and look at the same place, it's going to look different again. That's the mercies of God. They are so inexhaustible.

Someone said to me one time, they said, well, I don't know much of God's goodness or his mercy. I said, you're alive and not in hell. God's mercy has been inexhaustible with you.

But what does he mean in this specific context? The mercies of God will notice the first word in this verse, therefore, what is going on here is the same thing that happens in the book of Ephesians, chapter four. In the book of Ephesians, the first three chapters, Paul, if you want to know what the deepest theology in the Bible, where it's found, it is not found in the book of Revelation. I can assure you.

Deepest theology in all the Bible is found in the first three chapters of Ephesians. And after Paul gets through laying down all the grace of God lavished upon us in the person of Jesus Christ in three chapters, he then gets to chapter four, verse one. And he says, therefore, live this way.

That's the same thing he's doing here when he says, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that word, therefore, therefore, I urge you, he is connecting this 12th chapter and the rest of the book with the first 11 chapters of Romans. And what he's doing is he's saying this based upon everything that God has done for you, as I have laid it out in the first 11 chapters of this letter, even though it didn't have chapters and everything that precedes what I am saying now. Based upon that, give your life away, go to the first three chapters of the book of Romans.

What do you find? The radical depravity, almost unspeakable wickedness of you. And me. That's what you find in Romans.

Many people cannot understand the book of Romans because they won't rightly address the first three chapters. Because they take their humanism with them. My dear friend, Paul labors with every bit of his might in those first three chapters to do one thing, condemn every every one of the human race.

And that's the only way you can understand the book of Romans. It's the only way you can understand salvation if, first of all, you come to the idea that man is radically, radically depraved, unable, unwilling to

save himself. Someone always says to me, well, if man's unable to save himself, then how can God judge him? Let me just throw this at you.

Joseph's brothers, the Bible says they could not speak a good word to him. They could not. They were unable to speak a kind word to him because they hated him.

We are unable to please God and unable to obey God because every man is born hating God. And that is us. And then what happens? We get to the end of chapter three after condemning all of the human race.

And here comes Christ. Here comes a righteousness not established upon the works of men, but a rightness, a righteousness of God established through the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf. And then we've got Romans four and five speaking about how this wicked, radically depraved humanity can be saved through faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

And then we get to chapter six and seven dealing with this ongoing battle of sin. And he tells us how we can overcome. And by the time we get to Romans eight, we're ready to overcome.

Then he gets to nine, 10 and 11. He talks about the covenantal faithfulness of God, the sovereignty of God throughout all of history. And after all of this glorious stuff done for us by God and his son, Jesus Christ, he comes to us in chapter 12 and he says, Now live this way.

Now live this way. Why should I give my life away? Because Christ died for me. Why should I not lie? Christ died for me.

Why should I love my wife? Christ died for me. Why should I be faithful to the brethren? Christ died for me. Everything in your life comes down to one unshakable, unmovable, immovable truth.

Christ died for me. Therefore, all things change. All things change.

There are a lot of teachers going around today teaching all sorts of principles and things such as that. And they're all good if they're biblical. There are a lot of principles.

But all the principles in the world will not serve you in the same way that Solomon's wisdom did not serve him. Unless you say with this wisdom, I will lay down my life for Christ and live in obedience to him because Christ died for me. It all comes down to Christ, every bit of it.

If the motivating factor in your life is anything other than Jesus Christ died for me, you're in trouble. You're in trouble. Everything holds together.

In the believer's life, when the believer says, how then shall I live? I shall live in the way that most pleases and conforms to the will of God. And what shall be thy motivation, Christian? Christ has shed his own blood for my soul. I want to tell you something, young people.

Everything in this world is a disgusting, dumb heap compared to the glories of Jesus Christ. Everything this world can offer you, all its finery, its reputation, its title, its clothes, its drink, its celebrity, all of it is dumb and worse than dumb. The only thing that matters is Christ, Christ, Christ, do not work for that which cannot feed you.

Do not give your life for that which cannot quench your thirst, but live your life based on this. He shed his own blood for my soul. He shed his own blood for my soul.

My life has been a perfect. A perfect proof of what I've just told you, you say, oh, you're boasting now, no, just wait. When I have in any measure given my life for Christ.

I have known the greatest of joy, joy unspeakable. And the times that I have withheld my life for me. I have felt the greatest misery and I have been on both sides of that coin by the mercies of God, by the mercies of God.

There are some people here today, if you died right now and you stood before the judgment throne of God, you'd be condemned. You'd go to hell, it's true. Now, out of that group, there would be two types of people, those who basically would know the moment that they stood before him.

Even at the moment of their death, they would be afraid because they would know that it is not right with them and they would fear judgment. But there'd be another group. This is the group I most fear.

Of people who have fallen in to an American Christianity that is no Christianity. They don't believe in Christianity at all. They think that because they have prayed a prayer, because they attend church, because they're somewhat moral, because they follow in with everyone else and do Jesus things, that they know him.

Let me ask you a question. How much of a relationship with Jesus Christ do you have alone by yourself? Without props, without music, without preaching, without people around you talking about Jesus, how much of a relationship do you have with Jesus Christ alone? How much do you think of him all by yourself? There's no such thing as an invisible Lord or an impotent God. So many people walking around today who who know all the right things to say about Christianity and they just fit right in any church.

Because most churches aren't asking the right questions to the people who come, do you know him? Does he know you? Do you have a personal, intimate, growing relationship with Jesus Christ? Is that relationship evident in your obedience? And is it evidence evident in your disobedience? Is he a God from whom you cannot escape? Even if you tried, and there are others of you here today, you're Christian, but you have yet to come to that critical moment, that crisis point in your life when Jesus Christ. The reality. Of his lordship.

Becomes mature now, listen to what I'm saying, there are people out there that talk about you can be saved without accepting the lordship of Jesus Christ, and that is a lie. But at the same time, I want you to realize something. As you grow in Christ, the reality of that lordship becomes more and more evident to the point where you really begin to see yourself.

As a slave of Jesus Christ, and what a wonderful place that is. You begin to really live out the Lord's prayer, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done. That's what I'm about.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. Are you there? Are you growing there? Are you moving there? Does the lordship of Jesus Christ and growing into that lordship and submitting to that lordship in a greater and greater degree, does that have any meaning to you becoming a servant? You say, well, I'm a servant of God. I'm rich.

Or you say, I'm a servant of God. I'm poor. Riches nor poverty indicate the degree of your devotion to Christ.

Neither one. I know men who are very poor that will split hell wide open. And I know many rich who will do the same.

But I know many poor men who, for the sake of the gospel, have become poor. And they show forth their salvation with their deeds. And I know men in the providence of God.

Life has gone totally different for them. They submit to lordship and yet they abound. I am to be content with the Lord's providence in my life if I am poor.

And another is to be content with the Lord's providence in their life if they are wealthy. But let them both know with everything they have, they are to serve the Lord. I don't want to lull anybody into a false sense of, yes, I must be serving the Lord because I've gone through this.

What you go through is not necessarily an indication that you're serving the Lord. Has your heart been given to him? Are you doing his will? Are you seeking his will? Every aspect of your life, down to the socks you buy at Target, are you asking, is this your will? Oh, God, it's a tremendous question. And I don't know about for you, but for me, it's a frightening question.

Sometimes I would just rather go ahead and go on with my own program and hide my head from God's will. But that is a dangerous thing to do. If you're here today and you don't know Christ.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll be saved. Believe with your heart, confess with your mouth. You say, well, brother Paul, it's an easy thing to do.

No, to believe requires a supernatural work of God and the confessing with your mouth thing. He said that to the church in Rome. OK, is everybody with me in the church in Rome, they were having some difficulty with a thing called Caesar, you were supposed to go up to an idol, take a little incense, drop it in the fire and say, Caesar is Lord.

And if you didn't, you got your head cut off, you say confessing with your mouth is easy. No, he's talking to a group of people who had to go up, stand at that altar and say Caesar is not Lord. Jesus Christ is Lord and lose their head.

You see why it's always important to interpret the Bible in its context, if you believe in your heart and the evidence that you have believed in your heart is that you are willing to profess him to be Lord, even though it means they're going to lop off your head. It's a little bit different than American Christianity, isn't it? If you want to know him, he will allow himself to be found by you. If you'll seek him with all your heart, he will let you find him.

And if you need counseling about how do you become a Christian, I want you to come grab me today or one of the elders or someone here and we'll talk to you. We'll show you in the Bible what it means to be a Christian. How do you become one? And if you're a Christian here today, don't come forward.

Don't come forward. Unless you need counseling, please don't come forward and I'll tell you why. I don't want you to pray here on these magical steps for about a minute and leave the burden behind and walk out the door and forget about everything.

I want you to carry that burden until Jesus Christ takes it from you. I want you to carry that burden until you can't bear it anymore and you throw your all upon Christ. I don't want any psychological things going on

here.

I want a true work of the Holy Spirit of God. So I'm going to dismiss. You can't fire me because I don't work here.

I'm going to dismiss and I'm going to leave you with God. If you need to get right with God. Well.

Go to your room today and get right with God. If you need counseling, get a hold of us. We'll help you.

If you need to be saved, then just get saved. Call on the name of the Lord and he'll save you. And if you don't understand that, then come on down.

I'll talk to you all day.

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