

Priesthood - Part 4

by Ron Bailey

God wants us to be priests, a unique people to Him, with a special relationship and responsibility.

Duration: 46:45

Scripture: Exodus 26:31-33, Exodus 29:38, Hebrews 10:19-20, Hebrews 10:22, Hebrews 10:24-25

Topics: "Priesthood"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of finding fulfillment in giving our hearts to God rather than pursuing our own ambitions and career plans. The speaker encourages listeners to present themselves as living sacrifices to God, not conforming to the expectations of the world. The message emphasizes the need to surrender to God's shaping and guidance in our lives, recognizing that this is the way we were designed to live. The sermon also highlights the central theme of God's desire to bring His people to Himself and make them His own unique people, with the ultimate goal of having a personal relationship with Him.

Transcript

I've begun by saying I'm not talking about the kind of priesthood that you may have seen in a Roman Catholic church, or an Anglican church, or a Greek Orthodox church. I'm talking about another kind of priesthood. In many different ways in the Bible, God expresses the kind of relationship that he wanted men and women to have with himself.

Sometimes it's of a friend, sometimes it's of a lover, sometimes it's of a servant, and one of the great pictures that God gave was this picture of a priest. And a priest was someone who was uniquely related to God in the way that he could be a kind of in-between person. Someone who, in picture language, could put his hand in the hand of God, and put the other hand in the hand of a human being, and be a living link, so that God could speak, and people who were not connected to God could hear.

But first and foremost, a priest was someone who was connected with God, and we saw how when God spoke about priests, he talked about people being priests to him, priests to God. Many years ago, this thought just comes to mind, I was with Norman Wheaton in India, and we had split up to go in different directions, and I had been given the job of preaching at the Loretto Convent, which was part of the convent that Mother Teresa had originally been part of, and there was a charismatic group there that I was supposed to be speaking to. And there was a group, I suppose, of about 20 people in a big circle, and there were several nuns, and one or two Roman Catholic priests, and one or two lay people, as they

called them, and it was really quite a fascinating experience for me.

It was one of those times when I sometimes say I quote Hardy, not Thomas Hardy, the other one who used to say, this is another fine mess you've got me into. And I looked at this group, and I thought, Lord, what am I doing here? I mean, I'm not anti-Catholic, I'm not against individuals who are an obstacle to people really knowing God for themselves. I'm anti-Catholic in that sense.

These people love the Lord, and I was just wondering exactly what I should do and what I should share. And a little conversation began in my heart with the Lord, and I said, Lord, what am I doing here? And he said, well, can you love these people? And I said, yes. And he said, do you want to be a blessing to them? And I said, yes.

And he said, that's how I feel. That was the end of the conversation. God wasn't saying, well, I endorse this or I approve of this.

He was just simply saying, this is an opportunity for me to speak to these people. And with that, I kind of began to speak. And I spoke for a fair time, and in my own heart, I had real liberty.

And I suppose after I'd been speaking for about half an hour or so, I suddenly realised, one of those things that you suddenly think, how could I have possibly done that? But I spent about half an hour explaining to these nuns that God wanted them to be priests. And then I suddenly realised what I was doing, and had to sort of explain exactly what I was talking about. But when I'm talking about priests, I'm not talking about the kind of priest that a denomination makes priests.

A human bishop makes a certain kind of priest. I'm not talking any of those. I'm talking about a kind of priest that only God can appoint.

Someone who has a unique relationship with God, unique privileges, unique responsibility. And we've been looking at the Old Testament to get the general shape of things that God wants to speak to us in our relationship with him. And Rob has asked me for the titles of them, and I think for the first night I've decided to call the priesthood the High Priest.

And we talked about Jesus becoming a High Priest for us. One of the things we said was, you can't have priests unless you have a High Priest. Because the priests have to function together with the High Priest.

So first of all, God, in the sacrifice of Jesus, provided himself with a new kind of priest. A new living link between God and man. And that can't ever be repeated.

And you never need to have another one of the same kind. That's why the Bible says there's one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. And then we began to look at the day in the Old Testament when the Old Testament priesthood first began.

The consecration of the priests, when the mediator of the Old Covenant took these men aside and began to prepare them for their unique role in relationship with God. And then this morning we were looking at the way in which when God had brought the people of Israel out of Egypt, he actually gathered them to Mount Sinai and said to them, the reason I have brought you out is because I want priests. Or the way it says it in the Bible, if you will obey my voice and cherish my commandment, my covenant, then you will be a unique people to me.

A kingdom of priests. A holy nation. And I was saying this morning that although we often think about the picture language of God bringing people out of bondage and taking them into the land of promise and lots and lots of wonderful blessings, the real heart of that part of the Old Testament is that God brought them out of Egypt to bring them to himself.

And to make them his own unique people who would have this unique privilege. And I was saying this morning, I'll just say this one thing and then we'll get on to tonight. I was saying that sometime ago I was in Ireland with some friends and we were waiting for dinner and the husband wasn't back from work.

And the wife began to serve the dinner which was a kind of a shepherd's pie. And she took a slice out of this pie, put it on a plate and said to all the children, put it in the oven, that's for your dad when he comes in from work. And I said to her, that is a perfect illustration of what the Bible means by sanctification.

Because sanctification really means that you cut something out of a whole. You can imagine the whole world, all the nations, and then God cut out a section for a specific purpose, put his own name on it and said these are mine. These have a unique responsibility, a unique destiny.

And this is the whole picture of sanctification. It's the whole picture of priesthood. So I want to tell you again that God wants you to be a priest.

Forget or remove from your mind all pictures of fancy clothes and complicated ceremonial ways of doing things. It's much more simple than that. It's simply that God wants to know that he has you for himself.

That he has all your attention, all your affection, all your devotion. That the centre of your life is him. The other things will perhaps find their place and God will put them in their right place.

But this is the first thing. I want to go on now to continue in that same kind of thought and we'll start this time at Exodus chapter 29 in a way that is actually going backwards. Because what I talked last night, I think it was, about the consecration time when they became priests in Leviticus chapter 8. Leviticus chapter 8 is actually the fulfilment of what you get in Exodus chapter 29.

In Exodus 29 the people are still at Mount Sinai. God is speaking to them, directing them as to how they had to build this house and put together the ceremonies that he wanted them to have. And then you get to this part and then later on they actually do it and become priests.

Where shall I read from? Let me read from verse 29 and I hope you'll know enough of the background of this to put it into its context and catch up with us. Verse 29, and let me explain just in case you don't know that Aaron was the high priest. He was the chief priest and his four sons were the other priests of Israel to begin with.

Verse 29, And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons after him, to be anointed therein and to be consecrated in them. This is Exodus 29 and verse 29. Let me just say this before we go any farther, that this word consecration that we have and we see it in our Bible here, in the original Hebrew that the Bible was written in, the word is actually fillings.

What we call the consecration of the priests, God called it the fillings of the priests. This was the day when they came into their full function, the day of their fillings, the day of their anointing, the day of their special equipping to serve God, the day when they were filled. It's all really an amazing picture of something that was to happen later on the day of Pentecost.

When Jesus, our high priest, had ascended to his father's right hand and father had poured upon him the anointing oil and the anointing oil came down upon the body and the whole of that group of people became God's priests. People in unique relationship with him. But part of the picture here is the fillings, they were filled, their hands were filled, they were equipped to serve God.

Okay and then verse 30, and that son that is priest in Aaron's place shall put them on, that's the clothes, seven days when he comes into the tabernacle of the congregation to serve in the holy place. And thou shalt take the ram of consecration and boil his flesh in the holy place and Aaron and his son shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that's in the basket by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made to consecrate and to sanctify them but a stranger shall not eat of it because they are holy. And if anything of the flesh of the consecration and of the bread remains to the morning then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire it shall not be eaten because it is holy.

And thus shalt thou do to Aaron and to his sons according to all things which I have commanded thee seven days shalt thou consecrate them. And we said this morning that seven in the bible is a picture of perfection or completeness and this is a picture of the fact that these people now belong to God completely. 24 hours by seven days every moment of their life God now hath first called upon them they were his and this is the picture over here seven days.

Verse 36 and thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement and thou shalt cleanse the altar when thou hast made atonement for it and thou shalt anoint it to sanctify it. Now let me read a little bit more verse 37. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar and sanctify it and it shall be a whole an altar most holy whatsoever touches the altar shall be holy.

Maybe you remember the Lord Jesus quoted this in Matthew's gospel when he was rebuking the religious people of his day for different oaths and statements that they made different kind of promises they made and one of them was they used to swear by the altar and Jesus said to them they should not do that and it was not the gift that made the altar holy but it was the altar that made the gift holy. The altar sanctifies the gifts. If there was another kind of little picture or title for what I want to do tonight other than really the one I've already given to Rob which is the offerings I would call it this just simply the altar sanctifies the gift.

If you remember that that's what I want to tell you that the altar sanctifies the gift. Let me tell you what the picture is all about. When God began this pattern of life for the people of Israel he gave them this mobile palace which was really like a frame tent and it had a courtyard around the outside of it and in the courtyard there was a large and a big bath a laver full of water and this was the place where the priests washed and various other things happened and before that as you came into the courtyard the first thing you'd have come to was a great bronze altar and where the person was approaching God in the picture language the first thing they came to was this altar.

They couldn't get any closer to God and until sacrifice had been made upon it but one of the things that God made plain to the people of Israel at this point to begin with the bronze altar itself was not clean it wasn't fit for God to use it for complicated ceremonies to make it clean to make it holy to make it absolutely God's so that from that time on sacrifices which were put on the altar were being given and flames consumed them and the smoke went up to heaven the bible calls them sweet the sweet smell of the sacrifice not don't think of the sacrifice in terms of blood and death but just think in terms of the way that these people are bringing animal sacrifices putting them on an altar and that's their method of giving

them to God.

They give them to God and the flame is the messenger the flame is the postman who takes what they have given which is really a picture themselves to God and it ascends up and they're known as ascending offerings or sweet smelling offerings but God said that it could not happen like that until the altar itself had been made holy.

I'm really wanting to talk about the altar of the new testament the altar of the old testament was a bronze altar the altar of the new testament is a wooden one the altar of the new testament is the cross of Jesus Christ this was a hateful symbol of Roman occupation the Roman soldiers were put to death people on crosses crucifixion the only people they put to death on crosses were people that were known as non-persons a Roman who had some proper status could not be crucified that's why if the tradition is right Paul was not crucified he was beheaded Peter was not a Roman if the tradition is right he was crucified Jesus they characterized as a non-person a person of non no significance a person of no reputation no status no importance to make an example of him they crucified and this

hateful symbol of Roman domination and of shame and humiliation became holy this gibbet this hangman's noose this electric chair I know that I won't look to see now if any of the ladies here are wearing crosses um and don't be offended if I say this thing I just simply want to make a point that if you were to wear a little noose around your head people would not think it was very pretty or if you wore on your lapel a little picture of an electric chair or a lethal injection or some method of torture you would not think that that was a very happy symbol to kind of be mocked by that's what the cross was the cross was hateful it was hideous it was it was an evil power that was imposing its will upon them and Jesus transformed it he transformed it he made this thing the altar and because of

what he did upon that cross people who come through that route in that direction through the way that he opened up by his death upon the cross can now come to God and their offerings of themselves can now be accepted to God not because they are good or getting better or are even perfect that isn't the basis of their offering that isn't the basis of their acceptance they're not accepted because they're holy they're accepted because the altar sanctified the gift because those who come in this way are accepted with God because of what Jesus effected on that place we sometimes sing I guess you do as well one of the hymns in our red hymn book and we it's one of the few hymns we alter we try to leave the hymns alone because it gets very complicated if half the people know you've altered it and

the other half don't know you've altered it but the one that we do change is one that begins with the words no more veil no more veil it says God bids us enter by a new and living way and in the ancient times in the times of the old testament here the picture language of someone approaching God there was the altar there was the labor of regeneration then there was a curtain which stopped ordinary people going any further it didn't matter whether you were a prince or a king in Israel you couldn't go any further only the priests could come into the presence of God only the priests could come into the holy place and they came into the holy place and in the first part of the holy place and it wasn't very big on the left hand side there was a seven branch lamp stand with seven lights on it on

the right hand side there's a small gold table with 12 pieces of bread upon it in front of them there was a little golden altar and on it just the ruddy burning coals and incense rising continually and behind that another thick elaborately woven curtain this was the barrier to the most holy place of all where in picture language God lived in the fullness of his presence the bible says in hebrews that part of the reason that

God did it like that was to show that while the old tabernacle the old system the old priesthood was still functioning there was no way into the presence of God not even for the priests only the high priest once very briefly once a year was allowed to go in with blood and then he had to come out as quickly as possible he couldn't linger he couldn't abide he couldn't

remain in the presence of God he went in and he came out very quickly God was saying you cannot come into my presence let me take you way back and see if I can kind of show you how wonderfully the bible tells these stories you remember the story of Adam and Eve and their sin and the result of it which was that God banished them from the garden he sent them out of the garden and the bible says that he placed at the eastern gate of Eden cherubim these are angelic beings these are warrior angels whose special nearness to God makes them the guardians of his holiness Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden through the eastern gate and these warrior angels were placed there with their flaming swords to make sure that men could not get back into the presence of God when they pitched this

frame tent this tabernacle they always pitched it they always orientated it so that the doorway was facing east it was as though the people who had now been banished from God's presence to return to God's presence had to come back through this eastern door but as they came through the outer courtyard and then into the holy part of the palace again they saw this curtain this gateway and embroidered upon it these cherubims with their flaming sword saying to anyone who saw it you cannot come this way there were kings in Israel's history who decided they would do it they would go into this place where only the priests were allowed to go and some of the well some of the priests went too far on one occasion and they were killed on another occasion one of the Hebrew kings went in and he was

struck with leprosy and they had to take him out and he spent the rest of his life in quarantine and his son reigned as regent God was making it very very plain that at that time they could not come into his presence the cherubim the guardians made it quite clear that they couldn't come when Jesus died on the cross the Bible tells us that the veil in the temple was split from the bottom to the top there's uh some old Jewish historians who tell us some things about this veil in the temple it was made of Babylonian weaving it was really by this time like a great tapestry they reckon that it was as thick as the breadth of a man's hand it's probably an exaggeration they reckon that took hundreds of priests with ropes to hoist it up into position it was so heavy it would have been utterly

impossible for anyone to tear right down the center of it in any case it was too high if men had done it it would have been torn from the bottom to the top but it was torn from the bottom from the top to the bottom and it was God's way of saying the way into the holy place of all the way into my presence is now open but you must come not through no veil you must come through torn veil you must come through this tear you must come through this wound it's a picture we can come to God now but we don't just stroll in because of something that's happened in the past we come in through the only way that we can ever get in which is through the cross of Jesus by that I mean through his death that he died for us through his pain that he suffered for us through the penalty that he bore for us

there's no other way you can't get into God's presence because you repent enough or because you're good enough or because you make big enough promises or because you pay enough the only way you can come into God's presence is through what Jesus did upon the cross it's not true that there is no more veil there is a torn veil and you must come through it are you following my picture you can't go around it there's no alternative I am the way the truth and though I said Jesus no one comes to the father but by me he is not the best of many he is the unique the only way through which men and women can now come to

God what happened on the cross was that Jesus opened up this way for us so that if we come through the way that he opened we can come but there's no other way the altar sanctifies the

gift this cross of his not really the wood but the secret things that happen in the darkness we said this morning that I just mentioned briefly Mel Gibson and his film that's caught in quite a stir in the states and I suppose it'll be here soon enough which is called the passion of the Christ which is all about Jesus's suffering and yet it isn't it's actually only about Jesus his physical suffering it's only about what happened to his body that was not the suffering that brought us near to God and Jesus spoke of Jesus on the cross he spoke of Christ's suffering the one who suffered the just for the unjust and then he puts this little phrase in and he says to bring us to God well the suffering of Christ that brings us to God was not the nails and it wasn't the thorny crown and it wasn't

the whips and it wasn't the beating the suffering of the Christ that brought us across that through which we can come to God from the cross is his death in the darkness and I said this morning there were three hours of darkness from midday to three o'clock in the afternoon absolute darkness the sun was darkened and yet we know because of the time of the year it was that it couldn't possibly be an eclipse it was a supernatural veiling of the sun consequently the whole earth would have been in absolute darkness consequently if the sun is veiled there's no moon the whole earth was in absolute darkness for three hours and in the silence of that darkness Jesus suffered there he paid the penalty for our sin not in wounds that were inflicted upon his hands but in this ultimate sacrifice when he

cries my God my God why hast thou forsaken me if it is separation from his father that was his pain it was his separation from his father which sanctified this cross which made it holy and made it a means whereby we can come to God through him and more than that let me show you a little bit more as we read on here exodus chapter 38 now when these people have become priests when they'd spent their seven days of their ceremonies and they were absolutely gods and absolutely for him available to him it says this in verse 38 and this is this is the main sacrifice of israel perhaps i should have asked you that before back in exodus 29 and verse 38 did i say something different on there sir exodus 29 38 if i had said to you um we know that israel had lots of sacrifices in old testament times

please choose the most important of the sacrifices please choose the first one that comes to mind if you're making a list of them which one would be at the top of your list one that is such a list later on in the bible but it may not be the one on the top that you expected because the one that's put on the top of the list is this one here that we read of in verse 38 now this is that which you shall offer upon the altar remember this altar which has now become holy because of the sacrifices that have taken place upon it now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar two lambs of the first year day by day continually the one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning and the other lamb thou shalt offer evening and then it goes on to say some other things twice a day the people of that god

had specially appointed took a single lamb and this lamb first thing in the morning and probably again at about six o'clock in the evening the beginning of their day the beginning of their leisure if they ever had much leisure in those days the beginning of this thing the beginning of each part of their day there was this special ceremony where a lamb was brought and given as a burnt offering to god a burnt offering is not for sin a burnt offering is not concentrating on our sinfulness a burnt offering is one of these sweet scented offerings it's one of these pictures of giving something to god which is given absolutely to him you know if you give something to god by fire there's no going back you can't kind of change your mind and say no i'll have that back this is burning your bridges

behind you this is abandonment with no possibility of taking it back and twice a day the people of israel would bring a lamb and it was this picture of themselves they were god's nation they were the people who god was going to use for his own purpose and twice a day in picture language they brought this lamb and gave themselves to god and they said we're for god we're for god everything in us is his this is this is the this is the jewish equivalent of our little chorus all for jesus and twice a day they did this all for jesus all for god everything that we had the whole of it is consumed utterly in a great flame that takes up the offering to god a sweet smelling savor the reason they could do it was because the altar had been made holy because a sacrifice had taken place at that place it

was now possible to put other sacrifices on it and the altar sanctified the gift and god accepted these wonderful things now come with me to the new testament to romans and you can just have a look at romans chapter 9 and in these next three chapters paul is speaking about the the natural people of israel israel according to the flesh as he calls them here and he says certain things that were their unique privileges that god gave to them because they were intended to be a kingdom of priests and this is what he says chapter 9 and verse 1 i say the truth in christ i lie not my conscience also bearing in witness in the holy spirit that i have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart and i can wish that myself were accursed from christ for my brethren my kinsmen according to the flesh

who are israelites to whom pertains and then there's a list of things here that were originally uniquely israel's privileges and responsibilities and he puts it like this the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and then he says and the service of god now that word maybe your bible tells you actually means the priestly service of god in other words god gave to israel the priesthood he made them for himself so that they could be a kingdom of priests and then it goes on to say and the promises and it goes on to say other things well if there is now a new high priest not the old one not the descendant of aaron now but a new high priest who is our lord jesus there's a verse in hebrews which says that when the high priest is changed there is of necessity a change

in the law the whole pattern of israel's life was really linked through to the person of the high priest and if the high priest was right and the laws were kept then god was present with his people in blessing and protection and fulfillment of their destiny if they lost their relationship if something was wrong then they lost the whole thing and usually they lost their land as well at different periods of time okay if you're a priest what are you going to offer if god has made you a priest if you are part of the family of the new high priest if you are one of his children of whom he says behold i am the children whom god has given me if you are part of god's new order this new covenant priests bring offerings what are you going to bring what you're offering okay go with me to romans

chapter 12 four says i beseech you therefore now we've said this before i think that whenever you find the word therefore in the bible you need to stop and ask what it's there for what what does this mean therefore means what i'm going to say next is based upon what i've just said that's what that therefore means so what has he just said well he's just been talking about israel he's been talking about their unique privileges and responsibilities which have included priesthood so on the basis of all that he said and the first half of romans which is all about jesus being given by god as the propitiation for sin it's all about that and then he comes to this point and he says based on all that i beseech you brethren by the mercies of god that you present is your offering your bodies not your

heart not your spirit not your soul your bodies god knows that if he gets the envelope he gets everything that's in the envelope you present your bodies he says now you may be tempted to say well i'm not fit to

be given to god there's this wrong with me and there's that wrong with me there's this blemish and there's that sin there are all kinds of reasons why i cannot bring myself to jesus as an offering there are all kinds of reasons why i can't give myself to him i want to tell you that the altar sanctifies the gift if you will come and give yourself to jesus on the basis of his cross the altar sanctifies the gift whoever you are whatever you've done no matter how bad no matter how defiled spoiled distorted no matter what a horror you are no matter what has happened to you if you will

come therefore if you will come based on what jesus has done based upon the acceptance that he has gained for us in the father if you will come on that basis this is what it says you present your bodies a living sacrifice holy because they touch the altar i mean can i say something almost as a sideline it's only the altar that sanctifies the gift only there are some parts of england and i guess in scotland too where there are amazing buildings if you go to the cotswolds there are amazing church buildings with fabulous spires and each one of them looks like a little cathedral they're beautiful buildings and they cost immense sums of money to build originally and they were built by wealthy war merchants who thought that if they built this wonderful church and paid for some priests who could

pray for their souls when they were dead they'd get a quick passage through purgatory into heaven i want this this might seem a strange way of saying it but i want to tell you that none of those gifts that were given to god on that basis were acceptable to him if you gave everything you've got to him it's not acceptable you can give all your money all your talents all your energy all your promises all your repentance all your new intentions you can give everything that you've got to god but if you give it on any other basis than what jesus has done for us it's not acceptable it's not holy one of the things that god said to the ancient people of israel was to be accepted it has to be holy to be accepted it has to be perfect but you and i are not perfect in our natural state is there any

way in which anything that we have to give to god thinking about our sisters who sang to us they've obviously got talent and lovely voices and ability and i'm not saying this is any kind of criticism i'm just using it as an illustration the only way that they have anything that can be acceptable to god is if they give it on the basis of jesus giving it himself if they give it on the basis of the cross if the cross touches it if this no to myself and yes to the will of god if this thing that says i will not hold on to my right to myself but i will yield myself absolutely into the hands of another this is what the cross is a picture of i don't think it's an accident that it was the romans who were there at that time and who had that particular means of execution it's not an accident you see

jewish people would have stoned them to death possibly in some circumstances they might have hung them but crucifixion is a very vivid kind of a picture because when someone is crucified their hands can no longer do what they want to do and their feet can no longer go where they want to go and they're utterly given into the will of somebody else they have no rights over themselves they have no way of expressing any intentions or will of their own they're utterly given into the hands of the person that they have who has crucified them when our lord jesus died upon the cross it wasn't into the hands of the romans or the jews that he gave himself it was ultimately into the hands of his father you can hear it in the garden of gethsemane let this cup pass from me yet not my will but thy will

be done and then later in the garden when peter tries to defend him and jesus says put away your sword how else shall i drink this cup that the father has given to me this is not my will but thy will be done this is no to myself no to what oswald chambers used to call my rights to myself there's a a theme that kind of runs right through the human race and it shows itself when we are very little and it goes right the way

through and unless god does something with it it's persistent and without change and it's this thing that says i will not have anybody tell me how to live my life i will be the captain of my own soul i will do my own thing i will do it my way it doesn't matter how it's expressed it's the same thing through and through it's the thing which you find expressed in the bible

like this we will not have this man to reign over us crucify him it's this determination to get our own way and to do our own thing and for anything and for ourselves to be accepted to god it'll have to come through the way of this cross it'll have to come this way so that we're not bringing fabulous talents to him or amazing abilities we're bringing whatever we have that is us to him but we're bringing it to this place of utter surrender to the will of god and the people of israel did it in picture language twice a day how often do you do it how often do i do it why don't you let's do a little experiment together and i'll keep my thought as far as i'm able if you'll keep yours how about for the rest of this week twice a day bringing your birth offering to god how about at the beginning

of the morning as you tumble out of bed just spending a moment to say all for jesus the whole of this day i'm not going to keep any part of it back i'm not going to keep some imagination back i'm not going to keep some secret possibility back that i'm thinking might just possibly happen i'm going to give the whole of my life to him this day it's all for him not because i have anything to offer that's worth anything at all to god but because i bring it on the basis of what jesus has done on the basis of his death and his acceptance with god i come in this route and i give myself and i'll do it first thing in the morning and then when the working day is over and that can sometimes be the most dangerous part of the day when you begin to relax and think to do something else at the beginning

of that part as well do it again just come to him and say lord he's the evening sacrifice now i think it was charles spurgeon who used to say that um in the natural order of our days god has kind of men he used to say have um marker boundaries and he was talking about weeks and days and years and months and birthdays and anniversaries and and he used to say wherever man has put one of these boundaries put an altar he used to say whenever the same thing is special if it's a birthday or a christmas or anniversary take the opportunity of building another altar not really of coming to this altar and of saying this is my opportunity again to give myself to god this is what you were designed for this is where we shall find our fulfillment not in the fulfillment of our ambitions and our career

plans and all the rest of it god will fulfill your heart's desires if you give your heart to him but our primary responsibility is to give ourselves to him and not because we're better today than we were yesterday but on this ancient principle that he has died our praises our offerings are acceptable to god through jesus christ our lord here it says present your bodies a living sacrifice holy acceptable to god which is a reasonable sacrifice or spiritual service as it says in some and be not conformed to the world brothers and sisters i'm speaking to myself and i'm speaking to you as well don't let the world shape you don't let the world's expectations shape you make a decision that at least twice a day for the next week you'll come to god and you'll put your little bit of clay back into

his hands and say lord you shape it all the pressures that the world has put on you your friends at school at work your neighbors your family all kinds of expectations that produce the pressure just come to the lord and put your life again into his hands be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove this is wonderful that you may prove not that god will be able to prove but that you may prove you will discover for yourself it's almost as though in doing this you're putting god to the test i know we're not to test god but you're testing in a sense the principle that if you give yourself to

him if you give all that you are to him you will discover something you will discover that to live like that is good and acceptable and perfect you'll

discover that this is the way we were designed to live this is the way we were designed to live and the only way we discover it is if we put ourselves back into his hands and then we discover it's the that we it's good and acceptable and it's the perfect will of god these are these ancient priests they have a lot to teach us if we'll just let god open our hearts and see them did you understand that when when you responded to him when you first turned to jesus when you prayed the prayer whatever it was did you understand that god's intention was not just to save you from hell and get you to heaven god's intention is to make you a priest here on the earth someone who lives in daily fellowship with him daily union with him daily qualified to bring their lives to him in a pouring out of

something which god will receive and bless and use in whatever way he wants to this is this is what you were designed for let's pray let's pray together

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