

Romans 12

by Zac Poonen

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God, part by part, and use our bodies to glorify Him.

Duration: 1:06:36

Scripture: Matthew 20:1, Acts 17:30, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Surrender To God", "Selfless Service"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering our bodies, minds, and spirits to God without expecting rewards or recognition from others. It highlights serving God out of love and gratitude for what He has done for us, focusing on the eternal impact of our service rather than earthly rewards. The message encourages a mindset of humility, selflessness, and devotion to God, reflecting the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Transcript

We want to turn today to Romans and chapter 12. Everything in the Old Testament was a picture of something fulfilled in the New Testament. The most well-known examples are the blood of the Lamb put outside the door of the Israelites in Egypt.

So the angel of death never entered that house. A picture of how the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, protects us from God's judgment. That's a well-known one.

Not so well-known is that the Egyptians, the Israelites going through the Red Sea is a picture of water baptism. And the Bible says in Romans 6 that baptism is a picture of our old man crucified with Christ. We didn't kill the old man.

God killed it on the cross. And the Egyptians buried in the Red Sea is a picture of our old man crucified. Because the Egyptians are the ones who made the Israeli slaves for 430 years.

And the old man is what made us slaves to sin all our life. So when we threw the waters of baptism, the Egyptians being buried totally is a picture of the end of our old man. And it's not the Israelites who killed the Egyptians.

It's not we who killed the old man. It's God who killed the Egyptians. And it's God who's crucified our old man.

The picture in the Old Testament is so exact. And then the cloud coming down from heaven is a picture, it's called in 1 Corinthians 10, a baptism in the cloud. A picture of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, cloud and fire, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire.

And many people have not understood the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. You can learn it from the Old Testament. Is there something beyond Pentecost? Yes, there is.

What is the purpose of that pillar of cloud and fire? Only one thing, well, more than one, but primarily, to lead them to the promised land, where the giants will be defeated, and they would possess the land for God. So what is the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit? How many Pentecostals have understood that? To lead us into a life of victory, day by day by day, right into the land of Canaan. And what is the land of Canaan a picture of? The land of Canaan is a picture of our human body that has been ruled by many giants for many years.

And yet God gave Canaan to Abraham and his seed. And what the Lord said was to the Israelites, you got to possess that land for me because it belongs to me. The Canaanites are not supposed to rule there.

And that's what the Lord says about our body. That giant of anger is not supposed to rule in your body. That giant of jealousy is not supposed to rule in your body.

That giant of gossip is not supposed to rule in your body. This land, this body belongs to me, God says. The giant of sexual sin is not supposed to rule in your body.

The giant of the pursuit and the love of money is not supposed to rule in your body. And we can go through all the list of sins, the giants that have ruled this body for years, just like the giants ruled the land of Canaan for years. And the pillar of cloud was to lead them into that land to help them to kill the giants.

So when it came to the giants, the giants are a picture of the lusts of the flesh, which is different from the old man. Most Christians don't understand the difference between the old man and the flesh. The old man was killed by Jesus, by God on the cross, along with Christ.

The lusts of the flesh have to be crucified by us. That's pictured in the Old Testament by the Egyptians are killed by God under the Red Sea. But the giants of Canaan had to be killed by the Israelites.

The picture is so exact. God is very exact. There's no confusion there.

Just like we studied the tabernacle, the spirit, soul and body. Very exact. If you study the Bible, you find this, there's things we can learn from the Old Testament.

And many other things like that, we know, for example, conscious sin and unconscious sin. The giants you can see are the only ones you can kill. That's conscious sin.

And the giants in the northern part of Canaan, whom you haven't yet seen, that's unconscious sin. God doesn't hold you responsible for not killing the giants up there whom you have not seen. And God doesn't hold you responsible for these unconscious sins in your body, as cleansed in the blood of Christ.

And you cannot conquer those giants till you conquer the ones you can see. So the picture is so exact in everything. But they didn't kill the giants in their own ability.

You know, they when they looked at those giants, exactly like we say, when we look at some massive sins in our life, the spies said, we feel like we're like grasshoppers before these giants. How can we ever conquer them? And that's exactly how many Christians say there's, I've been a slave to some of these terrible sins in my life. How can I ever conquer them? And you know, God was so angry with those spies who said that.

I don't know whether you realize, and God is angry when you when you say that some sin in your life is such a massive giant that even Almighty God cannot conquer it. That's what those 10 spies said. But God said there in Numbers 11, Numbers 13 and 14, but my servant Caleb and Joshua, they had another spirit.

They said, what are these giants? You know what they said? They're like bread that we can eat up if God is on our side. And that's the spirit of Joshua and Caleb that we need to have in our midst as we go forth against the giants of the land. And I could go through the whole Old Testament like that.

Jesus once took a two, three hour Bible study for the disciples on the way to Emmaus after his resurrection. And it says, he took the entire scripture and showed them himself in all the scriptures. It's a wonderful thing to study the scriptures to see this little book of mine.

Well, it's not a little book through the Bible, this commentary. This is what I've sought to present in all those Old Testament things. You know, a lot of people think the Old Testament is a boring book.

It's not. And that's why I want to encourage you to study it so that you see that every book in the Bible in the Old Testament is interesting. I remember a brother who listened to my series on Leviticus, and he said, I never read Leviticus in my life.

I thought it was a boring book. Then I heard what you had to say in it. And I found this so much life in that so much that the Holy Spirit had to speak to me.

So the Sabbath, for example, that is a very important commandment in the Old Testament. In fact, if a man didn't keep the Sabbath, he was cut off from God's people. There was a man who went picking sticks on the Sabbath day we read in the wilderness and God said, kill him.

That's how serious keeping the Sabbath was. That is also a picture of the rest God gives us. You read about it in Hebrews chapter four, there remains a Sabbath rest for God's people.

That is the Sabbath with Jesus spoke about saying, Come unto me, all you who are labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I will lead you into the Sabbath. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me.

For I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest unto your souls. You'll find a Sabbath in your soul. Do you know that it is God's will that in our life there must be an eternal Sabbath, a continuous Sabbath in my heart where I'm never in unrest in any situation.

That is God's will. Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden. I paraphrase it like this.

Come unto me all you who are sick and tired of your defeated life. Come to me, I will lead you into the Sabbath. So the Sabbath means that it's a life of rest, because the enemy has been defeated.

A life of inward peace, which God wants us always to have. That's the Sabbath and there's a lot more we could say on that. And another thing in the Old Testament is circumcision.

Anyone who is not circumcised was cut off from God's people. What does that mean? In Philippians 3.3 we read that we are the true circumcision who have no confidence in the flesh. Our confidence is only in the Holy Spirit of God.

See, circumcision was a cutting off of the flesh and casting it off, a physical cutting off, surgically of the flesh and throwing it off. And Philippians 3.3 the Holy Spirit interprets that as not depending on the flesh in our life. That is a circumcision.

And a person who depends on the flesh is like an uncircumcised person, cut off from God's people. We're not supposed to depend on ourselves, but depend on the Holy Spirit. In Jeremiah 17 it says, Cursed is the man who leans upon the arm of flesh.

He'll be like a barren tree. Many Christians are like barren trees because they depend on themselves. But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, who depends upon the Holy Spirit.

And now I want to come to something which is preached. Now people don't preach the Sabbath today. People don't preach about Canaan and all that.

That's all finished. But there's one thing in the Old Testament. They don't, I mean, no church preaches keeping the Sabbath.

True Christian churches don't preach keeping the Sabbath or circumcision. But there's one thing in the Old Testament which many Christian churches are still preaching. They've abolished the entire Old Testament except one thing.

You know what that is? Tithing. Tithing is as much Old Testament as putting the blood outside the door. If you believe and practice tithing, you might as well put some blood, kill a lamb and put the blood of the lamb outside the door of your house as well.

That's also part of the Old Testament. And you better keep the feasts, the different feasts there are. And you better get circumcised.

And you better keep Saturday as a Sabbath. Yeah, I mean, how can you pick out one thing and say this one thing in the Old Covenant is for us? This is a teaching that has come from covetous pastors and preachers as a good way of swindling. I call it swindling.

People of the money. It's the same, exactly the same as the money changers in the temple. Not a single word is taught in the New Testament about tithing.

Ah, but people say, it says in Hebrews 7, that Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek. He gave 10% of what? Do you know that Melchizedek came to him with food? You must read the scriptures to understand. Otherwise, all these pastors will fool you.

You read in Genesis 14, Abraham had 318 servants and they fought a battle. They were exhausted. They were tired.

They were hungry. And Melchizedek came with food for 320 people. What do you do if somebody comes and brings food for you for 320 people? Any decent person will pay him for bringing all that food.

And that's all that Abraham did. It happened to be 10% of all the, it wasn't his money, by the way, which he gave also. If you read carefully, he had defeated the enemy.

And in those days, the rule was, if you did defeat the enemy, all the spoils of the enemy are yours. You can take all that money. And Abraham took part of that money and gave it to Melchizedek.

It was a payment for all that food he brought. It happened to be 10% of what it was there. That's what he did.

And they say Jacob paid a tithe. Well, Jacob said, Lord, if you take care of me, I'll give you 10%. He could have said, I'll give you 20%.

Some people say I give 90% to God. All these things, if you look, there is, there was never a law, no law. Nobody gave a law to Abraham to pay a tithe.

Nobody gave a law to Jacob to pay a tithe. How have people taken these things and fooled believers today? There must be, just like I said, the blood of the lamb, the baptism, the going through the Red Sea, the pillar of cloud, the Canaanites, the Sabbath, the circumcision, all had a meaning. Tithing also has got an equivalent in the New Testament.

That's what I want to share with you this evening. What do we offer to God? In those days, they offered the 10% of what they had earned in their fields. It was never money, by the way.

It was always grain or flock from their flock, 10% of their flock and 10% of the grain. It was exactly equivalent to what we call today income tax. Israel was a government governed by God.

They had government servants. They were called the Levites. Do you know where your income tax goes? Why do you pay income tax to the government? Because the government has got so many officers doing different jobs, running different departments which keeps the country going.

Where do they get their money from? They get their money from your income tax and you got to give them income tax because they are serving you. They're keeping this country going the electricity the roads the water supply. Somebody has to pay them for all that and you pay income tax to take care of them. In the same way in the Old Testament the government servants were the Levites. They had to be supported by income tax, which is called tithing. They had to pay 10% just like your income tax is a percentage. There's a percentage that God told the Israelites to give and they gave it to the Levites and the one law that God gave to the Levites was you must never own property. You cannot till the land you cannot keep shepherds, I mean you cannot keep sheep or a flock. The people in Israel will support you. So whenever a pastor says we are the Levites of today. You just go to ask him. Do you own any property by the way? Well, then you're not a Levite. Because Christians don't know the scriptures. They've been deceived.

So what then is what God is asking us to give today? I'll tell you Romans 12 and verse 1. I urge you brethren. In view of the tremendous mercies of God in the Old Testament it was dear Israelites. In view of God's tremendous blessing upon your fields upon your cattle that is multiplied and prospered give 10% of that to God. Here God is saying the Holy Spirit in view of the tremendous mercies of God present your body. This is the equivalent of the Old Testament type. And don't let anyone ever deceive you anymore for the rest of your life. Now I'm not saying you don't have to give 10% of God you can give 20% to God, but don't call it a type. Don't call it income tax. We are not in a relationship with God as a master. God today is my father. How many of you pay income tax to your father? anybody. The government is a master.

We pay income tax in the Old Testament. God was like a ruler of the Israelites He was not their father. Nobody could call him father But today God is our father.

I don't pay income tax to my father. No, I May give him a gift out of gratitude Sure, many of you give gifts to your parents out of gratitude for all that they do for you. That's okay But that's not income tax.

And so we give to God cheerfully, but not as a rule There's no rule that says you must give your father so much no such thing So we if you want to come into this new covenant and Not just bring part of that old covenant into your new covenant life Understand what the new covenant is present your body a living sacrifice Acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship. I said the other day how People have misunderstood what worship is. I could paraphrase this.

This is your worship in the spirit What the Lord told the woman of Samaria? The true worshippers will worship God in the spirit So he says here in Romans 12 one. This is your real worship in the spirit How do you worship God in your spirit? Just like Abraham laid Isaac on the altar and He called that worship by the way That's the first time the word worship comes in the Bible in Genesis 22 the very first time The word worship comes is when Abraham offers Isaac on the altar. That was his worship He was offering that was which was most precious.

He wasn't paying a tithe He was offering that which is most precious when people talk about Abraham paying a tithe I say hang on he gave Isaac that which is most precious to him Which is worth to him more than all his property and money The equivalent of that today when we worship God according to this verse is I give my body Another picture of it in the Old Testament is in Leviticus chapter 1 It's called the burnt offering a man would bring a bullock as a burnt offering not a sin offering The sin offering was different you read that in Leviticus chapter 5 and 6 but in Leviticus 1 It's a burnt offering which is an offering of gratitude to God For all that he's done for me in view of the mercies of God like it says here I offer a burnt offering to God sin offering is separate And if I brought a bullock as an Old Testament Israelite, I could not put the bullock on that altar. I had to cut it into pieces and And small part by part by part Now you wonder why God did that? Because in any case that bullock is going to be finally burnt as a sacrifice to God Why in the world take the trouble of cutting it up? Because everything in the Old Testament had a meaning and it was symbolic of what was fulfilled in the New Testament That when I give my this offering of my body to God is the equivalent of that Old Testament burnt offering Jesus offered his body to the father is a burnt offering throughout his life His body was on the altar for the father and later on he gave his body as a sin offering And it was not as an full bullock as I said had to be part by part teaching us that when we give our body to God it must be part by part Then only it becomes meaningful it's very easy to say God I give you my body Hang on Let's go part by part cut it up Lord I give you my eyes My eyes have looked at many things that have dishonored you My eyes have lusted My eyes have greedily Looked at other people's property and wished I had it My eyes have greedily looked at a car somebody else has and said wish I had a car like that or a house like that My eyes have made me sin for years My eyes have read things. I should never have read My eyes have looked at pictures and billboards and magazine pictures.

I should never have looked at Lord today I'm taking those eyes and putting them on the altar This is my offering in view of the mercies of God Okay, let's go to some other part of our body Lord I give you my hands God only you and I and the devil know The number of sins I've committed with my hand you Me and the devil knows the number of sins. I've committed with my hands But no more Lord. I keep my hands on the altar I'm not giving you 10% of my money.

I'm giving you something more valuable than that my hands in view of your mercies Let these hands never Be ever do anything that will dishonor you Let me never commit a sin again with my hands that will dishonor you There are Christians who slap their wives with these hands I'm amazed that people do such things Lord and many other sins sexual sins and Letters that are written to hurt people Lord I've done all that with these hands, but no more. I offer my hands to you And then Lord my tongue oh What a lot of sins I've committed with my tongue I've acted as if my tongue is my own But in view of the mercies of God today, I'm laying it on the altar I give my tongue to you by the mercies of God present your bodies a living sacrifice Sacrifice means there's something painful about it. There's something I have to deny There are many things I like to talk with my tongue Lord But I'm gonna have control it a little more now by the power of the Holy Spirit The Bible says no man can tame the tongue the Bible says in James chapter 3 that Men have tamed lions and snakes and all types of wild animals that nobody can tame the tongue, but the Holy Spirit can So Lord I give you my tongue.

I don't never want to say words that will hurt others from now on And not just negatively, but I want to use my tongue for the glory of God from now on Here's my tongue Lord and here are my years. Oh then The eagerness these years have had to listen to gossip To listen to juicy stories evil stories about other people How I have delighted in hearing them No more Lord these years are on the altar. I Don't want to use these years anymore for sinful things.

I Want to keep them for you and when somebody does come and say something bad I want to be like a deaf person that I don't even hear it and that it goes out of my mind immediately my years and Lord there are passions in my body. I Love food My stomach has been my God for many years Now Lord, I lay that stomach on the altar. I'm not going to worship food anymore.

I'm not going to worship my stomach. I Lay my stomach on the altar for the glory of God. I want to eat to live not live to eat.

I Want to give my other passions in my body to you. I lay them on the altar It's all yours Lord. This body is for you If I had to just say Lord take my body, I would fool myself that I've given it to you But when I go part by part, that's why God said the bullet must be cut part by part It was a picture of how we are supposed to give our body part by part to God Then we know we don't fool ourselves.

Then we know whether we have really given our body to God or not And that's why God asked us to do it like that So that every part of our body which is supposed to be the temple of the Holy Spirit is given to God And that's why we should not have Habits that ruin this body in any way That's why we shouldn't be smoking cigarettes that destroy our lungs and we die early That's why we shouldn't be drinking alcohol that destroys our liver and that can kill you early I mean even if you die six months earlier than you're supposed to die because you drank alcohol You'd say well, I lived 75 years and I died six months earlier. Does it matter? Sure it matters Because God may have had a plan for you to do in those last six months of your life Which got nullified because you killed your liver with alcohol And I don't want to do that. I don't want to have a habit that destroys me in 1 Corinthians in chapter 9 Paul said 1 Corinthians chapter 9 He says I buffet my body verse 27 and make it my slave Otherwise I can preach to others and be disqualified myself Paul recognized he had to give his body to God and The Living Bible paraphrase of that is beautiful 1 Corinthians 9 27 listen I Make my body Do what it should do and Not what it wants to do got it.

That's a paraphrase and it's an actual meaning of that verse. I Buffet my body means I make my body do What it should do Not what it wants to do. My body wants to do a lot of things You're like your children

want to do a lot of things.

Do you allow your little children to do whatever they want? No, you say I make my children do what they should do not what they want to do well, it says this thing we got to do with the same deal with our body in exactly the same way and This is our goal. If you can say with Paul I make my body by the power of the Holy Spirit to do what it should do Not what it wants to do my eyes my ears my tongue my hands my bodily passions my Desire for food everything. I make it do what it should do Desire for sleep we all need sleep but If I'm lazy and sleep much longer Then I should be sleeping.

I could miss God's will I've said to people, you know, we have four Bible studies on our website They're all free for downloading and listening to One is called basic Christian teachings 72 studies of about 12 minutes each on the basic principles of the early part of the Christian life And then we have another study which we call 70 hours through the Bible which it gives you an overview of the whole Bible which is in this book and the other is all that Jesus taught 80 studies of about 25 to 27 minutes each And then we have another study which is about three or four hundred hours of verse by verse through the New Testament from Genesis 1 to the last verse of Revelation And I've said if you can spend a half an hour every day, that's all just 30 minutes If you think it's worth spending 30 minutes to study the Bible I Said in three years, you can complete all of this and you'll know more of the Bible than people who go to Bible College and Bible schools Is it worth Getting up half an hour earlier Or going to bed a half an hour later It doesn't matter if you miss one or two days or a few days here and there you can still complete it in three years Are you willing to make your body do? What it should do and not what it wants to do Think of how effective Your life can be for God in three years from now if you do it Especially you young people when you're single this is the time to do it Your life can be of such tremendous usefulness to God or it can be wasted Just because you wanted that extra half an hour of sleep every day You're not going to die if you wake up 30 minutes earlier You're not going to die if you sleep 30 minutes later Think of how useful you could be to God Present your body a Living sacrifice. This is the New Testament equivalent of tithing Why is it people prefer to tithe? Well, I'll tell you Supposing I were to give you a choice Putting God were to give you a choice. Okay, here are two options one Give me your eyes never to read never to look at never to lust after anything which is contrary to God's will give me your Tongue that you'll never speak one word that will dishonor God or that'll hurt anybody or one angry word or any such thing Give me your ears that you'll never listen to gossip and never Listen to things that hurt other people.

Give me your Desire for food that it'll keep it under control. Give me your desire for sleep that you'll keep it under control either all that or alternatively Give me 10% of your income Say Lord, here's 10% of my income. Don't trouble me with all these other things Isn't it much easier to give 10% of your income? Much easier The devil says give 10% We choose the easy route And pastors know that That's not what God's asking for He's asking for your body In view of the mercies of God present you.

This is your worship in the spirit and Jesus said to the devil He quoted the scripture when he said thou shalt worship and then thou shalt serve If you serve without worshiping your service is worthless The reason why many many people their service for God is not anointed is because they haven't worshiped first They sing praise and thanksgiving praise and thanksgiving is good. I Saw so much appreciate what we had today now praise and thanksgiving I'm really excited when I when before I speak the Singing of praise and thanksgiving is so inspired by the Holy Spirit That it lifts me up it's to me like it's the first stage of the rocket You know when the rockets go to the moon it goes through two stages The first stage is where it goes through The hundred and fifty miles of where gravity pulls it down and it shoots past that or whatever number of miles it is Because there it has to struggle Against gravity while it's going up that

rocket But once it goes out of the pull of gravity, it just shoots off towards the moon or Mars or anywhere and a wonderful spirit of praise and thanksgiving before The speaker has to speak if it is really in spite of the Holy Spirit for me anyway, it's like being thrown out of the pull of gravity and can take off full speed and This evening it was like that and I've been sometimes in praise and thanksgiving meetings like that I've also been in some dead praise and thanksgiving meetings where it's like they dig a hole in the ground It gets deeper and deeper and I had to work my way all the way up from there When I start preaching I'd be I'd be dead Seeing times like that as well. I struggle through to come to ground level leave alone take off beyond the pull of gravity So I believe in a spirit of praise and thanksgiving that should liberate us I'm all for that.

But worship is something different present your body as a living sacrifice to God that is your Worship in the spirit and when you worship in the spirit you can serve thou shalt worship and thou shalt serve You shall not serve without worshiping and worshiping is to present our whole body and everything to God saying Lord I have no right on this body. I have no right to do anything. This body has been purchased by Jesus Christ on the cross very many people Ask for healing Good God wants to heal us.

I'm not saying that we'll be healed of all sicknesses like and be forgiven of all sins There's no promise. There are many many promises about forgiveness of sins But there is no promise saying that all your sicknesses can be healed I wish there were but in God's great wisdom, it is not there in the New Testament Even in the old covenants, Elisha was sick. The greatest prophet Elisha was sick of a sickness with which he died You read in 2nd Kings 13 So even some of those godly men died of sicknesses So even in the though in the Old Testament, the Lord said I am the Lord your healer So we shouldn't be mechanical in our understanding of healing But when you present your body to the Lord It's amazing how the Lord will keep you.

You know, there's something better than healing It's called health Prevention is better than cure. Health is better than healing and if God can keep you in health, that's a wonderful thing. I don't pray for healing.

I pray for health And God's great goodness. He's kept me giving me health for 76 years I never had to go to hospital for sickness. Don't I have to be thankful for that? That's God's goodness It's not anything I can take credit in Because I say Lord I want my body to be fit to serve you.

I don't want my body to make money I'm not here to live to make money or to get honor or any such thing. My body is for God Give your body to God Completely. There are many many advantages and blessings that come from that and which means also and as a I would add to this that if you give your body to God, you've got to control your appetite Because the Bible speaks about certain people who whose God is their stomach Turn with me to Philippians in chapter 3 Here it's speaking about pressing on to God's highest purpose.

There's some wonderful passages in Philippians 3 You know Paul says follow my example we saw that What what is his example I make my body do what it should do and not what it wants to do He says follow my example in Philippians 3 17 He also says I have not yet attained verse 12 or become perfect, but I press toward the mark There's one thing I do in my life Philippians 3 and verse 13 and 14. I press toward the mark for the upward call of God in Christ Jesus I want to become like Christ completely now follow my example verse 17 Philippians 3 17 and look at other people who are also Walking like me Follow their example because I want to tell you there are some other people who are enemies who walk in a different way They are enemies of the cross of Christ and what is one mark of these enemies of the cross of Christ

you would think they are Blaspheming against Christ. They are the enemies of the cross of Christ.

No. No. No, it's not something as terrible as that One mark that they are enemies of the cross of Christ is their God is their stomach That's what it says there in verse 19 their God is their appetite They have no control over what they eat They don't Eat to live They live to eat Their God is their appetite their God is their stomach What are they called in verse 18 enemies of the cross of Christ, you know that the cross of Christ deals with our appetite also That's why a true Christian will fast at least sometimes Do you ever fast have you ever fasted in your life I Remember in my younger days.

It was a regular habit with me Every week at least fast for one day And I would encourage all of you young people It accomplished two things in my life. I Did it for years? and it Accomplished two things one It delivered me from the love of food It gave me control over Eating so I didn't become a slave To food that I had to get this type of food or that type of food it helped me tremendously when I started serving the Lord and I go to All types of strange places and eat all types of strange food that I've never seen or tasted before If I was a slave to my appetite, I'd never be able to serve the Lord because I'd say no Hey, I can't Serve here if I have to eat this type of food or I don't get this type of food Which I like or that type of food out which I need So many people can't serve God because their God is their appetite. They can't live without certain type of food Forget about serving God then go and serve yourself They're enemies of the cross of Christ And the other thing that fasting accomplished was first It delivered me from the grip of food over my body and I tell you food has got a tremendous power over you You're a slave to it unless you've been freed from it Just like money has a power over everyone if you're not being free from it You're a slave to it and it'll destroy you The other thing it did for me was it gave me an understanding of what it feels like to be hungry For example, if I fasted for three days Boy, I'd really know what hunger was then I could look at people who were starving In the world and sympathize with them.

I read a newspaper. So many are starving It's just a statistic to me if you haven't faced starvation yourself It brought greater sympathy for me Towards those people who Didn't have food because of poverty So it accomplished something. I believe fasting has a real value and if you've never John Wesley used to say That we have never fasted in your life.

You're not even a true Christian Because Jesus spoke about fasting Not as a ritual But to break the power of my stomach over my life So that I don't become an enemy of the cross of Christ and the best time to start is when you're young Whose God is their appetite? you know, I Remember reading a beautiful book on discipline many years ago And one of the things it said that about discipline of the body is this If you for example, your life was shortened on earth Because you went preaching the gospel and you were killed for preaching the gospel. You were a martyr and Instead of living for 70 years you died many years earlier You can stand with joy before God Because you can say Lord my life was shortened because I preached the gospel But supposing your life was shortened because you ate all this junk food and all the rubbish That your stomach wants to eat and you stand before God like my life was shortened Lord because I ate junk food What are you going to say to the Lord in that day? I'll never forget that sentence. I read I said Lord.

I don't want that to be true in my life I'm not saying that You can't eat an ice cream or don't misunderstand me. Don't misquote me, but I say there must be some discipline in your life In this area of eating if you want to be a true Servant of Jesus Christ if you want to be an effective member in the body of Christ and not an enemy of the cross of Christ Make sure your God is not your stomach If you want to worship in spirit Make sure your body is presented to God and this our stomach is a major part of it sleep is a major

part of it And when we present our body to God like that we have a right to ask God for many things for our body Turn with me to 1 Corinthians in chapter 6 In 1 Corinthians in chapter 6 We read a number of things about the body which has been a great help for me the other day I spoke about the spirit and the soul and If you are living in the spirit and controlled by the Holy Spirit Here are some things that we can learn for our body 1 Corinthians 6 in verse 12 everything is lawful for me Is there a sin in eating junk food? There's no sin there But you can be mastered by it Paul says all things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable To be a glutton to eat and eat and eat and eat and eat and just keep on putting on weight and Shorten your life It's not profitable you may say it's lawful. There's nothing wrong in this food.

I'm eating. It's not I'm not taking drugs Okay, but it may not be profitable for you It may not and he says all things are lawful, but I will not be mastered by anything I will not allow some earthly thing to master this body, which is to be the temple of the Holy Spirit And then he talks about food food is for the stomach and The stomach is food for food, but God is going to destroy both of them one day remember that But the body is not for immorality talks about two things food and sex And that those are the two great desires we have in our body Placed by God food and sex to test us to see whether we will keep them within limits It can be a very big attraction to sin sexually with our body To make our stomach our God, but we have to restrain ourselves The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord now listen to this wonderful statement Grasp it and never forget it. It's been a tremendous blessing for me.

That's why I share with you The last part of verse 13 the body is for the Lord and When your body is for the Lord the Lord will be for your body. It's there If you do this The Lord says I'll do this And I've taken that verse so many times I said particularly you know And I'm tempted not tempted when I'm sick, and I have to go for some ministry And I still like Lord. I can't afford to be sick.

I Can't afford to lose my voice. I can't afford to be down with the fever here are so many people waiting for me to come for a conference My body is for you Lord. You've got to be for my body according to 1 Corinthians 6 13 And I just praise the Lord how the Lord's helped me, and I share this with you as a testimony for your encouragement It's nothing for me to boast about it was it's what God's done for me it means little things like Going much earlier to an airport so that I don't miss the flight I Can't afford to miss a flight some of you may be able to afford a miss to miss a flight because you can take the next flight if I miss a flight There may be a place where 500 people are waiting to listen to me at a meeting And I'm not at the meeting because I was too lazy to start a little early for the airport So I go much earlier than anybody else to the airport because I don't want those 500 people Waiting there for a preacher who never turned up So I go early.

I have to get up early for that. I have to discipline my body, but when my body's for the Lord And what is the result I've been traveling for 50 years by bullock cart train bus Plane and by the grace of God I have never missed a single meeting in 50 years either due to sickness or Due to missing a flight or a bus or any such thing just because I discipline my body And I say I've got to go there early and catch it catch it on time if you have a sense of Responsibility towards God a lot of business people do that I mean if you had a meeting with the president of the United States would you miss that plane or would you go on time? I'm serving somebody more important than the president of the United States. I hope you recognize that too You if you're a child of God you're a servant of Almighty God Your body is not your own Your body is for the Lord and you can have the Lord for your body I'll tell you that it's written here.

The body is for the Lord and the Lord is for the body what a wonderful promise and It goes on to say your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit verse 19 And that's what I often say Lord. Please take care of your

temple The church is not this building this body. That's the real church the house of God and Just like we would not destroy a house.

We wouldn't destroy even the house of God is your body and if you have a habit whether it's smoking or Drinking alcohol or gluttony It's the same as you know, you're coming at night and breaking one of these windows or demolishing that breaking that door down Would you do that? That's exactly what you do when you drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes and when you're on a glutton you're breaking down the house of God You'd never do that to a building, but this is not the house of God. This is an empty building The real house of God is your body It's the temple of the Holy Spirit therefore verse 20 glorify God in your body What a verse I've just quoted a number of verses in the New Testament which speaks of the equivalent of the Old Testament type Present your body as a living sacrifice to God It's a wonderful thing. This is how Jesus lived I also want to share a few things that you know when we give ourselves to God We don't give ourselves to God in order to get a reward If we serve God to get a reward That would be wrong if I say all right Lord, I'll give you my body, but please heal me no I Give my body to the Lord because he loved me and gave himself for me on the cross Even if he never never heals me, that's fine Paul had a thorn in the flesh from which he was never healed Even though his body was completely the Lord's But the Lord it was pleased the Lord not to heal him because the Lord said my grace is sufficient for you You've got to keep that sickness Paul, and it was a pretty debilitating sickness that he had But he realized that he needed it to keep him humble And so I found great comfort in that verse sometimes when I'm sick I Say Lord, I don't know what's better for me in this situation healing or grace Is it is this sickness or infirmity in my body something that I need As a thorn in the flesh to keep me humble because you're blessing me or using me then I'm willing to accept it But then you must give me grace But I will not leave you Lord unless you give me one of the two I'm not demanding healing no I will never demand healing But I will demand healing or grace Definitely I have a right to that If you don't give me grace then heal me if you don't heal me give me grace.

I've always said that to the Lord And you can say that if your body is for the Lord. I'm not saying you'll be healed from every sickness or infirmity But if you don't get healed you'll get grace to overcome so that you will not be hindered in your body from Accomplishing all the will of God in your life before you leave this earth That's all I want But before I leave this earth I must accomplish every single thing That God created my little body in my mother's womb and brought me out one day into the world to accomplish I believe with all my heart what it says in Psalm 139 That there were there was a plan made for my life before I was born That I should fulfill it. I want to be able to say at the end of my life like Paul said I finished my course I didn't just run around wasting my time doing this and that I finished the course that God's given to me now many of us Have messed up many years of my life.

I also wasted many years of my life, but from the time I got understanding I said Lord from now on I can't do anything about the past But from now on I really want to take serious them seriously the matter of finishing the course You have appointed for me on the earth, and I want to invite everyone here Before you go away after this conference that you will say Lord I can't do anything about the years that are gone by the mess. I've made in many areas of my life, and God There's a beautiful verse Acts 17 30 if you want some encouragement go to Acts 17 verse 30 Your times of ignorance God overlooks You were ignorant God overlooks it, but from now onwards he says repent Now he tells us to repent that means okay. He says to you.

I'll ignore all the years you were ignorant but now I want you to turn around 180 degrees and Say you want to present your body as a living sacrifice, and you want to live for him Can you imagine what will happen in

your life from today onwards? You'll be amazed to see what God does with your body and with your time your energy the number of people Whom God can bless through you through one life I've often been challenged by that That think if you remove just one man From the Bible one man The Apostle Paul just one man there are billions of people who lived in the world Billions of Christians, but if you remove one man Paul Can you think what a tremendous loss that would have been to Christianity? one man Do you know that you can be a man like that and a woman like that? Think if Timothy's mother is removed from The scripture and Timothy had a godless mother or a mother who didn't care to bring up Timothy in a godless in a godly way Think of the loss that it would have brought to the church one man one woman Not present not doing what God wants him to do or her to do So much loss in the church And you can be one of those people who can bring loss to the church because you're not given your body to God So I want to encourage you to go to act 1730 and say Lord, I thank you that the times of ignorance you overlook But now you're going to I want to repent and do what I want you want me to do and I'm not doing it for reward Turn with me to Matthew chapter 20 In Matthew chapter 20 there was a rich young ruler The sorry nine It's 19 Matthew 19 a rich young ruler who came to Jesus and Jesus told him to go and sell everything he had and give it to the poor verse 21 Matthew 19 21 and come and follow me The young man heard the statement Matthew 19 22 and he went away aggrieved because he had a lot of property He owned a lot of real estate and he couldn't sell all that and give it away to follow Jesus And Jesus said how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God verse 23 and As soon as that man left, you know what Peter said verse 27 Let me paraphrase Lord. We are not like that rich young ruler We are different, aren't we? We gave up everything Everything to follow you What are you going to give us What's the reward we have For serving you And the Lord said, okay. Yes, you'll have a reward You'll have eternal life, but I want to tell you something verse 30 Many who are first will be lost Peter.

You think you're first right? Just make sure you don't end up lost And some of the last people will be first and then he says I want to explain what I mean Ignore chapter divisions when you read the Bible ignore chapter divisions Because chapters divisions are made by man It's a continuous statement. The first shall be lost the last to be first and the Lord says I'll explain what I mean In a parable there was a man who went about looking for laborers for his veneer and at six o'clock in the morning He found some people and he made an agreement with them remember Paul Peter's question. What will we get? Because we gave up everything to serve you.

This is an answer to that question. What will I get? Okay, here is a group of laborers who agreed. Okay.

What do you give us one denarius a day? Okay, come in my work in my vineyard, but you got to work for 12 hours 6 o'clock in the morning Till 6 o'clock in the evening. They said fine Verse 3 at 9 o'clock third hour of the day. He went others and In the marketplace, they also said what are we going to get and he said you go I will give you something Whatever is right.

They also agreed for a certain amount. We don't know how much and then at the 12 12 o'clock noon He went again and he found some people and did the same thing. That means for them also he made an agreement You serve me I'll give you this and Then at the 11th hour 5 o'clock in the evening He went and he found some people standing around He said why have you been standing here all day? Nobody hired us He said go and work in my vineyard.

They didn't ask how much will you give us? Only one hour at least we get some exercise doesn't matter if we don't get any payment for it's perfectly, okay They went without a contract without any promise of payments And when the time came for payment just one hour later, he called these last people first He

those hired at the 11th hour verse 9 he said those who came last call them first and they got a denarius which is one day's wages 12 hours wages for one hour's work and When the people who were hired first came they thought boy if these guys got one denarius for one hour, what should we get? 12 denarii, right? They also got one denarius And they grumbled these last men work for one hour verse 12 and you made them equal to us And master said I'm not doing anything wrong. Didn't you agree with me for one denarius? Take what is yours and go your way If it's my wish to give to the last man is the same as to you, what is the point? What is the difference the people who came at 6 o'clock 9 o'clock and 12 o'clock all came on an agreement? They worked for reward or payment The people who came at 5 o'clock in the evening Did not work for reward. They said we don't care if we don't get anything.

We're happy to serve And those are the people in the kingdom of God who are going to get the greatest reward Those who serve the Lord expecting nothing Who don't go to God and expect I'm going to serve you because you're going to give me a crown or you're going to give me a reward That's the point of this parable So don't give up your body to God expecting that now God's going to use you mightily or reward you in some way I'll tell you why you need to give your body to God Because he gave you his body for you on the cross period. That's it No reward, no reward Do you expect God to give you something? I've looked at it like this If somebody gave you a billion rupees, sorry a billion dollars as a gift Just a plain gift, I love you so much and here's a billion dollars I put into your account And one day you did a little work for him one day Some did some work. Maybe you went and did some work in his house or in his office or in his factory Will you go and ask him for payment? Tell me honestly Will you say hey, I work for you.

What are you gonna pay me? You should be ashamed of yourself If you expect a reward and a payment from someone who gave you a free gift of a billion dollars That's exactly how I feel When I serve the Lord I say Lord what you did for me on the cross How should I evaluate that? Is it a billion dollars? Is it 500 crowns on my head? Is it 25 mansions in heaven? What Jesus did for me on the cross? Shame on those who say like Peter, what will we get? Because we gave up everything for you That is what the Lord was trying to say to them the mind of Christ He didn't come to earth to say to the father what am I going to get when I die on the cross I Tell you what he got He got you and me And that's all he wanted Imagine he came to the earth to die on the cross and the only thing he wanted was you and me I've often thought about that Lord you came and gave yourself completely Not for anything a reward from God all you wanted was me I want to serve you like that That I can pour out my life And I don't want a single crown in heaven. I don't want a mansion What do I do with a 14 bedroom mansion in heaven? You can have it brother. I don't want it I just want to spend my time walking with Jesus all the time.

You can go and sleep in my mansion if there is one I Don't want it You know there's a song which says I'll be satisfied with the little cottage below because there's a mansion over the hilltop for me And so I'm not waiting for any match This figurative language that Jesus used because mansions and crowns are what people value on earth And if you're looking for a mansion, I want to tell you right now. You're going to be disappointed. There are no mansions in heaven There are no bedrooms for you.

Sorry It's not a place where we sleep There are no crowns if you have a crown you'll throw it at the Lord's feet You're not going to glory with ten crowns on your head and look down on the other guy who got no crown No, I often picture myself. You know When I get up to heaven And I picture myself along with other believers from my own church And other churches whom I've served and I will be nowhere No, there'll be no special place for me here on earth. There's a special place for me in the pulpit and people honor me and Everywhere I go, but there I often picture myself in this huge crowd of Millions of people singing worthy is the lamb and I see myself in my imagination one dot in That crowd of a million dots and they're

completely insignificant Singing one song worthy is the lamb There's not gonna be anybody special there Serve the Lord because he died for you No other reason because he gave himself so completely for you Don't seek a reward for it on earth or in heaven Don't seek payment of any sort I'm amazed how all these preachers Want payment for their services and they write books and they want royalties.

I see Lord Did Paul get any royalties for writing Ephesians and Philippians they've sold more millions of copies than any other books What royalty did he get? They served out of love they wrote out of love Everything we do Has value if you do it out of love if you do it for some reward or you expect, you know You serve in a church And you can say well people should at least come and thank me. Why? Why should they thank you I remember how the Lord gave me light on this once there was a young man who come to came to our church in the early days and very often he would sleep in our home at night because he did the meetings would be late and he Make some coffee himself in the morning he was complete he had complete freedom to use our house and make a cup of coffee and go to back to college next morning and We helped him in so many ways and then he got a good job and went to some other part of India And I never heard from him And I began to think What an ungrateful guy After all the years that we served him here He doesn't even write a thank-you note or tell us what's going on with him And the Lord said the to me the problem is with you. I Thought the problem is with him You know how we can always think the problem with somebody else when the problem is with you So I said if it is with me show me what's wrong with me and the Lord said In as much as you did it to the least of these my brothers You did it unto me You did not serve me you served him And that's why you're expecting thanks from him In serving him you should have served me You should have done your service to him as unto me Then who would you expect your thanks from? You'd have complained to the Lord.

Hey Lord, you didn't thank me for serving that guy. Are you gonna say that to the Lord? I Got some light on that That's blessed me years ago. This was That taught me that I must never in my life Expect gratitude from a human being for any service that I do for them physical spiritual ministry Zero, it's done unto the Lord.

Even if it's done to the least of God's people is done unto him That's how Jesus lived He didn't go around expecting gratitude from people. Well a lot they should have been grateful to him for But he didn't go around expecting it. This is the mind of Christ There's a lot more we can say about that Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the mind of Christ We've just sort of you know Begun to hear a little bit in these days of the mind of Christ the Holy Spirit can open up that whole book to you We've only gotten to an introduction here Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the glory of Jesus in the pages of Scripture To make you like him to make your mind like his like it says in Romans 12 1 Present your body and that let God the next verse.

It says let God renew your mind First present your body and then let the Holy Spirit renew your mind So that you can begin to think like him that is God's goal That's how we become like him. Let's pray Heavenly Father as we bow before you We Want to thank you for all that you have done for us in past years And we want to express our gratitude to you in a lifetime of service devotion Presenting to you our spirit our mind and our body And our time and our money and everything and even when we give it all it'll only be a fraction an Infinitism Lee small Fraction of what you did for us on the cross So accept this little offering Lord is just like the two mites that the widow put in it's very little Compared to what you gave, but you know you accept it Thank you father bless everyone here Then they will never forget this weekend when they go away that it'll bread eternal fruit in everyone's life I pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen

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