

The Sacrificial Life

The Apostle Paul instructs us in Romans 12:1 “Therefore, I urge you brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a **living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.” Then again in 1 Peter 2:5 we are instructed to “**offer up spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” As followers of Jesus Christ, it is clear in Scripture that we are commanded to live sacrificial lives. This Biblical truth is one that many may hear and be aware of, but do we really **understand and know** what it means to live a “sacrificial life?”

A working definition of sacrifice is “to give up something of current value for something of greater future value.” The baseball team readily understands this principle. With a man on third and no “outs,” they will next hit a “sacrifice fly ball” most every time. What this means is that the batter will intentionally hit a fly ball to the outfield to be caught, thus securing an “out” for the opposing team.

This “out” in our illustration represents the “something of current value.” The “out” is sacrificed because it is then known that it will subsequently result in their runner on third scoring after the “out” was secured. The ability for the runner on third to score represents the “greater future value.”

If we are called to live “sacrificial lives” what then does the Christian have to offer that is of present current value? I would suggest to you some of the things we offer as a spiritual sacrifice are our time, energy, mental capacity, emotional capacity, reputation, money, influence, relationships, etc. As Christians, we make sacrifices to God in these and other areas of our lives. We do so because it is an **act of obedience**, but we also do so because of the promise of the greater future or eternal value; the Biblical **promise of eternal reward**.

Never would a person sacrifice something that is of no value to them...this would, in essence, invalidate the very nature of a sacrifice! Sacrifice for the believer always involves the giving up of something of **temporal value** in exchange for something of greater future or **eternal value**.

- “For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” II Corinthians 5:10
- “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6
- “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal, for where your treasure is there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21
- “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to everyman according to what he has done.” Revelation 22:12

This promise of greater future or eternal value is an essential part of sacrifice in both form and function. In form, by simple definition, and by function, in motivating the Christian to proactively live sacrificially. Our Heavenly Father wants us to **believe in the greater future value of eternal rewards so** that we can properly be motivated to sacrifice our lives in exchange for the eternal.

As I take inventory of my life am I living every day sacrificially? Why or why not? Do I believe that “He is a rewarder of those who seek Him,” and that he will render to every man according to what he has done?” Father, please help us in our daily lives to ***steward the temporal in exchange for the eternal.***