

11/9/2025 – Message

Sacrifice – What does that word mean to you?

What sacrifices are you unwilling to make?

Romans 12:1 (ESV) states: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." This verse emphasizes the importance of offering one's body as a living sacrifice for God, reflecting a spiritual worship that is pleasing to Him.

Or your bible may say:

Romans 12:1 (KJV): "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

So, whether your bible states "I beseech you", "I appeal to you" or "I urge you", what Paul is stating here is that he isn't just suggesting; he's passionately inviting us to respond positively to God's mercy. This makes Romans 12:1 not just a suggestion, but a heartfelt call to action.

Before Romans 12, Paul spends eleven chapters explaining the depths of God's grace — how we are saved, redeemed, and made new through Jesus Christ. And then he says, "Therefore..." Because of everything God has done for you — His mercy, His forgiveness, His grace — now offer yourself back to Him.

This is not a demand based on guilt; it's a response based on gratitude.

Point 1: What Does It Mean to Be a Living Sacrifice?

In the Old Testament, worship often meant bringing an animal sacrifice — something dead — to place on the altar. But Paul flips that image upside down. He says God doesn't want something dead; He wants something alive.

He wants you — your heart, your hands, your mind, your daily life.

To be a living sacrifice means to continually offer yourself to God — not once, but every day.

It's saying, "Lord, my life is Yours. Use me how You will."

It's a living, breathing, ongoing act of worship — not confined to Sunday morning, but carried out in our work, our homes, our decisions, and our relationships.

Point 2: Holy and Pleasing to God

Paul adds, “holy and pleasing to God.”

Holiness means being set apart for God’s use. It doesn’t mean perfection. It means direction — moving toward God’s purposes for your life.

When our lives are surrendered, when we strive to reflect His character in our words, actions, and attitudes, that becomes pleasing to Him.

Romans 6:13 (ESV) states: "Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness."

God isn’t looking for flawless people — He’s looking for surrendered people. He delights in a heart that says, “Here I am, Lord — use me.”

Point 3: Living Out Romans 12:1 in Daily Life

So how do we live as a living sacrifice? Paul answers in the next verse — “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Let’s look at a few practical ways:

1. Daily Devotion and Prayer

Start every day by giving yourself to God in prayer.

Before you check your phone, before you rush into work, say:

“Lord, I belong to You. Use me today.”

That daily act of surrender keeps your heart aligned with God’s will.

2. Serve Others

One of the clearest ways we offer ourselves to God is by serving others.

Jesus said, “Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for Me.”

When your family serves another family in need, volunteer in church, or show kindness to a stranger, that’s worship.

3. Renew Your Mind To renew your mind means to replace the world’s thinking with God’s truth. Spend time in Scripture. Let the Word reshape your values, your choices, your perspective. Transformation starts not from the outside in, but from the inside out.

Point 4: The Power of Community

Paul wrote this letter to a church, not just individuals.

We grow best in community. When we walk with other believers — in small groups, prayer meetings, Bible studies — we remind one another to stay on the altar, to keep living for God.

We were never meant to do this alone. Together, we strengthen one another to keep living as living sacrifices.

Conclusion: A Lifelong Journey

Romans 12:1 is not just a verse — it's a way of life.

It's a daily invitation to live fully surrendered, fully alive, and fully devoted to God.

When you truly grasp what God has done for you — the mercy that saved you, the grace that sustains you — your natural response is worship. And that worship is not just a song; it's a life.

So today, I want to challenge you:

Will you place your life on the altar?

Will you offer yourself to God — your time, your talents, your plans, your heart?

Because when you do, you'll discover what Paul says next in Romans 12:2 —

“Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing, and perfect will.”

So, I ask you again, what sacrifices are you unwilling to make?