

## Victorious – Our Highest Act of Worship

11/9/25

Romans 12:1-2

Sunday AM

Good AM. When You came in the WC today you should've received a ping pong ball. Did you get one?

For nine weeks, we've been walking thru Romans discussing what is required to live a victorious life. Until today, we've been looking at the doctrinal basis of God's plan and its relevance to our lives and Paul has shared that we've all been infected w/ a disease called sin, we're all w/out excuse, the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life thru Jesus.

In ch. 10, Paul shared that to receive this grace, we each must make a volitional decision to receive God's gift when He convicts and offers it us by confessing w/ our mouths and believing in our hearts that Jesus is the only way, truth, and life to the Father.

As a result, when we arrive in Romans 12, Paul writes, **therefore** – b/c he's transitioning from the basis of God's plan to the practice of faith as an act of worship.

*Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve God's will – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

**In a nutshell**, this text is about our surrender to God b/c of what He sacrificed for us on the cross. Paul says, that b/c Jesus laid down His life for us, we should wave the white flag of our surrender to Him by offering our bodies as a living sacrifice as an act of worship.

**IOW** – worship is a total and continual surrendering of all that we are, have, and ever hope to be to God.

My favorite definition even that I've heard for worship is that *worship is surrendering your mind's attention, heart's affection, and will's ambition fully to the Lord.*

**Meaning worship is an all-in action.** It's continually giving God the first/best of who you are and never giving Him the least/leftovers.

The concept here is **surrender**. To surrender is the glad, whole-life yielding of one's self to God – b/c of His mercies – so that He owns our will, uses our body, renews our mind, and directs our steps.

In **Romans 12:1-2** – Paul outlines (4) things that are relevant to living surrendered in worship to God.

I The **MOTIVATION** of Surrender

*I urge you by the mercies of God...*

**Simple** – b/c Jesus laid down His life for us, we should surrender our lives to honoring Him.

This means God's mercy is the basis of our surrender – never a bribe. In receiving God's grace, we should desire to give to God what already belongs to Him.

*Consecration isn't giving God something, it's taking your hands off what already belongs to Him. Knight*

**IOW** – *what belongs to Him is you!* At the cross, Jesus purchased you by His blood – *you’ve been bought w/ a price, therefore glorify God w/ your mortal bodies.*

Think about Isaiah when he had his close encounter w/ God in **Isaiah 6**. After seeing the Lord high and lifted up, Isaiah wilted in God’s holy presence – exclaiming:

*“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.” Then one of the seraphim flew to me w/ a live coal in his hand, which he had taken w/ tongs from the altar. W/ it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.” Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” I said, “Here am I. Send me!”*

Isaiah, in response to experiencing God’s mercy couldn’t help but to fully surrender his life to God – saying, *“Here I am Lord... Send me!”* And like Isaiah, we too should be inspired to surrender to God too.

## II The **MECHANISM** of Surrender

The mechanism of surrender is our chosen willingness to offer or lay aside our lives to honor/glorify Him.

*offer your bodies as a living sacrifice...*

**offer** (*paristemi*) to place one’s self at God’s disposal. It refers to a decisive act – not once-for-all never to be revisited – yet a definite, intentional consecration.

Worship isn’t singing songs, listening to a sermon, or attending a religious event – worship is a deliberate disposition of the heart surrendered to God disposal.

Notice we’re to offer ourselves as ***living sacrifices*** – that is, not slain but animated – which is a paradox. B/c of Jesus’ mercy, we’re to decisively lay down our right to run our own lives, dying to sin’s rule, so that His Spirit can make us truly alive, turning our lives into worship. This begins w/ a clear, unreserved “Yes, Lord – I’m Yours.”

*There’s only one thing you can dedicate to God, and that’s your right to yourself. Give Him that, and He will make a holy experiment out of you. O. Chambers*

**But there’s a problem** – while God wants to sculpt us into His image, the world, w/ the help of the demonic and the flesh, is seeking to stuff us into its mold.

The key is our proximity to God. Call it getting on the correct frequency – but it’s putting Him front/center.

Yet I want you to notice the juxtaposition b/w v. 1 and v. 2 b/c the **margin** for error is dramatic – *offer your bodies* vs *don’t be conformed to the ways of the world*.

## III The **MARGIN** of Surrender

*Don’t be conformed to this world but transformed by the renewing of your mind...*

**offer** is an active verb – it’s what you have to do as the subject, while **conformed** and **transformed** are passive verbs – meaning either you’re leaning into God or you’re pursuing the world to get your fix.

**conformed** (*suschematizesthe*) squeezed into a mold.

Paul is saying, don't allow yourself to be squeezed into the self-centered, morally bankrupt, godless system of this world. **The idea is while you live in it – you don't have to become like or become a victim to it.**

**transformed** *metamorphosis* – what's on the outside matches what has occurred on the inside.

Paul is saying, instead of cozying up to the world, draw near to God thru the Word and the H.S., and God will transform your life from the inside out into something that's pleasing and honoring to Him.

**CATCH** – whichever you draw closest to wins.

So, when you came in the door, you were handed a ping pong ball. I'm sure you're wondering why? It's b/c I want you to help me w/ an illustration. On the count of (3), I want you all to throw your ping pong ball w/ every intent to get it into my cup sitting on my table here. If anyone succeeds I have a prize for you.

**Ping Pong Balls** – how is it that I could get the ping pong into the cup? Is it b/c I'm a better shot? NO! it's b/c I'm closer to the cup. (**Rule of PROXIMITY**).

The closer one is to the target, the more likely they are to hit it. In the same way, the closer we are to a person or object, the more likely we are to know them.

The closer we are in proximity to God on a daily basis, the more we're going to know/follow Him – to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice. This is worship. It's choosing to make God, instead of the world/self, the sole object of our affection, ambition, appetite, action.

**There's NO margin for error** – this is critical b/c at all times we're either moving towards God away from the world or towards the world away from God – and in a fallen world w/ flesh yet to be redeemed – we have to constantly work/fight to remain in close proximity w/ God. There are no spiritual vacations, days off, or time outs – for the moment you let up pursuing Jesus, the world, flesh, and enemy are ready to pounce.

IV The **MISSION** of Surrender

*that you may prove God's pleasing/perfect will...*

We surrender to God as an act of worship so that His will might be accomplished in/thru our lives.

We've discussed God's will over the years in a number of teachings and from a number of viewpoints. The bottomline is God has a will for all of us/each of us.

Ultimately though, God's will boils down to (3) things – He wills that we <sup>1</sup>**belong** to Jesus; <sup>2</sup>**become** like Jesus; so that we may <sup>3</sup>**bear** witness of Jesus to others.

I call this the **mission of surrender**. God has willed in Scripture that once a person receives Jesus as Savior, it's His will that we all live for His G.C. as this is an act of worship right where we live, work, and play.

**Come here** – this means giving/going are a defining trait of someone who's living in close proximity w/ God. So, if you have a giving/going problem as a believer, it's most likely b/c you are living closer to the world than you are to Jesus.

This is why we're so engaged in sending people out in missional service here in PTC, across our nation, and around the world. It's b/c this is an activity of worship to help you to stay in close proximity w/ God.

As I close my time this AM – I want to invite Lynn and Connie Burton up for a brief interview regarding what it means to be a living sacrifice giving one's life as an act of worship.

Many people in our church know you were career missionaries in Africa – why did you give your life to missions and how has that impacted your lives?

In your estimation, where is a good starting point for people to begin engaging in service to the Lord as an act of worship?

Recently you led a team from our church to Kenya to serve alongside our brothers/sister at Glory Baptist Church – what kinds of things did you do in your time there and how were you all used as a living sacrifice?

Looking ahead to 2026, what does our church need to know about our partnership in Kenya?

What encouragement would you have for our church regarding making the decision to become a living sacrifice abandoning their lives in worship to God?