

A LIVING SACRIFICE

PASTOR JERRY LEWIS
SUNDAY MESSAGE [August 30, 2026]

Sermon Summary: Drawing from Romans 12:1 and Hebrews 12:1, this message calls believers to move beyond casual, Sunday-only Christianity and fully surrender their lives to God as living sacrifices. Pastor Jerry challenges the congregation to examine why they believe what they believe, whether their faith is rooted in personal revelation or merely inherited opinion. The message emphasizes that being a living sacrifice means actively engaging in spiritual warfare, controlling the tongue, casting down mental strongholds, and walking consistently with God in every area of life. The call is not simply to attend church but to be the church, functioning as the hands, feet, and voice of Christ in the world. We are urged as believers to stop living in inconsistency, to reject false philosophies, and to activate their faith with bold, purposeful action, trusting that God has already secured the victory.

Scripture Reference:

- Romans 12:1, where Paul urges believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, describing this as their reasonable service
- Hebrews 12:1, which calls believers to lay aside every weight and sin and run with endurance the race set before them
- Ephesians 5:15-16, which instructs believers to walk carefully and wisely, making the most of every opportunity because the days are evil
- 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, which declares that the weapons of spiritual warfare are not carnal but mighty through God for pulling down strongholds and casting down imaginations
- 1 Timothy 1:18, where Paul charges Timothy to war a good warfare, making every action count for the kingdom
- Joel 3:9, which calls believers to prepare for war, wake up the mighty men, and let the weak declare that they are strong
- James 1:26, which warns that those who do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves and render their religion worthless
- 1 Corinthians 4:2, which declares that stewards are required above all to be found faithful
- Philippians 4:13, which affirms that a believer can do all things through Christ who gives strength

Key Points:

- Being a living sacrifice means presenting oneself to God completely, without limitation or reservation, holding nothing back in body, soul, and spirit
- A living sacrifice requires total surrender, allowing God to have full control rather than attempting to manage life independently
- Believers are called to be the church in everyday life, not merely attend it, functioning as God's hands, feet, and voice wherever they go
- Spiritual inconsistency is one of the greatest threats to fulfilling God's purpose, and the only consistency some believers demonstrate is their inconsistency
- Every voice and every thought solicits real estate in the mind, making it critical that believers guard what they allow to take root mentally and spiritually
- Strongholds are identified as mental fortresses built from lies and pride, spiritual bondage rooted in habits and addictions, and human reasoning that elevates itself above God's truth
- Believers must cast down imaginations and bring every thought into captivity, forcing each thought to align with the obedience of Christ
- Why a person believes what they believe is one of the most important questions a Christian can answer, as faith must be rooted in personal revelation from God rather than inherited opinion or another person's interpretation
- There is a danger in following a ministry or a man as the foundation of one's spiritual life rather than pursuing God directly and personally
- God has already fixed the outcome of every spiritual battle, and the believer's responsibility is simply to show up, suit up, and engage
- Seasons and spiritual moments come and go quickly, and failing to act in those moments results in forfeited opportunities
- The church must move from being a monument to what once was and become a movement advancing the kingdom of God in the present

QUOTES:

A living sacrifice refers to a person who actively applies, invests, and commits to a sold-out walk with the Lord Jesus.

When God says, I want you to be a living sacrifice, it doesn't mean just go to church. It means be the church.

Whatever controls and dominates your mind controls you and your destiny.

If the only consistency that we possess as believers is our inconsistency, then we are willfully forfeiting our purpose and we will never achieve his purpose or hit our mark for the kingdom.

Don't allow your opinion to cancel out his truth and his word.

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Theme: A Living Sacrifice

Day 1: Presenting Yourself Fully to God

Reading: Romans 12:1 -- Paul urges believers to offer their entire selves to God as a living and holy sacrifice, describing this act of surrender as the most reasonable response to God's mercy.

Devotional:

God does not ask for a portion of your life. He asks for all of it. A living sacrifice is not a one-time act performed in an emotional moment. It is a daily, deliberate decision to place everything -- your time, your body, your will, your choices -- on the altar before God. Many believers are comfortable giving God what is convenient. But Paul calls us to give what is complete. Ask yourself honestly: what areas of your life have you withheld from God? What parts of your daily routine, your relationships, or your private thoughts remain unconsecrated? Surrender is not weakness. It is the most courageous act a believer can perform. Today, present yourself fully and hold nothing back.

Reflection Question: What is one specific area of your life you have not yet fully surrendered to God, and what is holding you back?

Practical Application: Write down one habit, attitude, or area of your life you have been reluctant to yield to God. Pray over it specifically and commit to releasing it today.

Day 2: Running the Race Without Quitting

Reading: Hebrews 12:1 -- The writer encourages believers to shed every burden and entangling sin, and to run with endurance the particular race God has marked out for them, mindful of the great company of faithful witnesses who have gone before.

Devotional:

Every believer has been assigned a race. Not someone else's race -- yours. The course has been designed specifically for you, with its particular hills, turns, and stretches of open road. The enemy's primary strategy is not always to destroy you outright. Often, he simply tries to convince you to stop running. He uses exhaustion, disappointment, delayed answers, and the weight of past failures to slow your pace. But the writer of Hebrews reminds us that the weight must be laid aside. Not carried differently -- laid aside. You cannot run at full strength while dragging

what God has already told you to release. Rest when you must, but do not quit. The finish line is real, and God's faithfulness is the guarantee that you will reach it.

Reflection Question: What weight or sin has slowed your spiritual momentum, and what would it look like to truly lay it aside today?

Practical Application: Identify one thing -- a grudge, a fear, a sinful pattern -- that is functioning as dead weight in your walk. Take a concrete step today to address it, whether through repentance, accountability, or prayer.

Day 3: Guarding Your Mind and Your Words

Reading: 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 -- Paul declares that the weapons available to believers are not natural but are spiritually powerful, capable of tearing down mental and spiritual strongholds and forcing every rebellious thought into submission under the authority of Christ.

Devotional:

The battlefield is your mind. Every stronghold that limits your life, every pattern of defeat that repeats itself, every lie that has taken root and grown into a wall between you and God's purpose -- all of it begins in thought. Paul does not suggest that wrong thinking is harmless. He treats it as a military problem requiring a military solution. Strongholds are not dismantled by wishful thinking or passive resistance. They are pulled down through deliberate spiritual warfare -- prayer, the spoken Word of God, and the active rejection of every thought that contradicts what God has declared over your life. What you allow to occupy your mind will ultimately determine the direction of your life. Guard the gate.

Reflection Question: What recurring thought pattern in your mind most consistently works against your faith and your sense of God's purpose for you?

Practical Application: Select one Scripture that directly counters a lie you frequently believe about yourself or your circumstances. Memorize it this week and speak it aloud each morning.

Day 4: Walking Wisely and Seizing the Moment

Reading: Ephesians 5:15-16 -- Paul instructs believers to move through life with great care and spiritual precision, making the most of every opportunity God provides, recognizing that the times are spiritually dangerous and that moments, once passed, cannot be recovered.

Devotional:

God moves in moments. A prompting to pray, an impulse to speak a word of encouragement, a nudge to step forward in faith -- these are not accidents. They are divine appointments. The danger is that we treat them as optional. We wait for a more convenient time, a more comfortable

circumstance, a more certain feeling. But Ephesians 5 warns us that the days are evil, meaning opportunities are not guaranteed to return. Seasons come to fruition in specific moments, and those moments require a response. Spiritual precision means you are alert enough to recognize what God is doing and obedient enough to move when He signals. Do not let pride, fear, or passivity cause you to forfeit what God has placed directly in front of you.

Reflection Question: Can you recall a recent moment when you sensed God prompting you to act and you hesitated? What kept you from responding?

Practical Application: For the next five days, begin each morning by asking God to make you alert to the divine moments He places in your path and to give you the courage to respond without delay.

Day 5: Faithfulness, Stewardship, and What You Are Teaching Others

Reading: 1 Corinthians 4:2 -- Paul establishes that the fundamental requirement of anyone entrusted with the things of God is that they prove themselves to be genuinely and consistently faithful.

Devotional:

Faithfulness is not glamorous. It does not trend. It does not draw crowds or generate applause. But it is the single quality God requires of every steward of His grace. You are a steward -- of your gifts, your influence, your family, your testimony, and your time. The question is not whether you have been given much or little. The question is whether you have been faithful with what is in your hands right now. And faithfulness carries a generational weight. What you model in your walk with God becomes the inheritance of those watching you -- your children, your grandchildren, the younger believers in your sphere of influence. The consistency of your life is either building their faith or quietly eroding it. Live faithfully. The generation behind you is learning from the one in front of them.

Reflection Question: Who is watching your walk with God right now, and what are they learning from what they see?

Practical Application: Make a specific commitment this week to demonstrate faithfulness in one area where you have been inconsistent -- whether in prayer, church attendance, Scripture reading, or service -- and invite someone you trust to hold you accountable to it.