

# The Footsteps of Faith Series

## Lesson # 19 “Living Sacrifices”

Romans 12:1-2

**Scripture:** Romans 1:16-17

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”*”

### **Introduction:**

How many people like cartoons? Do you get up and watch them with your kids? You know they have taken all the good one away. I can’t find the good ones like Pop Eye, Batman, Road Runner, Fog Horn Leg Horn or the Super Friends.

These days I just can’t understand somebody making a cartoon about a character named Sponge Bob Square Pants. Do some of you kiddo’s like that one?

When I was little....a couple of years ago, Saturday morning were the greatest thing in the world. I would get up and turn on the television and watch the Super Friends in the Hall of Justice. Any of you used to watch that? You might remember Super man, Batman, Aqua man, Wonder Woman and her invisible jet.

Do you remember the Wonder Twins? Their special power was that they could change themselves into anything like a bridge or a bucket of water. They would have to touch each others hands and say the phrase wonder twin powers activate...Form up a .....

Yes me and my sisters used to play the wonder twins and go around saying wonder twin powers active form up a .....you fill in the blank.

The interesting thing about the wonder twins was that they could always turn back into themselves. Their change was not permanent.

### **Transitional Statement:**

Church there is a change that is permanent that God calls us to. He calls us to this change for His glory and unto His purposes.

## I. True Worship

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.”*

- A. Paul begins with a simple word “*Therefore*”. I believe this doesn’t just connect us with chapter 11, but this word is meant to lead us, in a great and very profound manner, to the very alter of God’s righteous expectation in our lives.
- B. Now, when we began our study of Romans, several months ago, we mentioned that it has been said “*if you get Romans Gods got you.*”
  - 1. Today, our text will stand as a great and wonderful invitation to simply allow God get us.
  - 2. I am concerned that there have been and will be many people who will walk right past the deep well of spiritual water offered by our God and walk right out into the desert of life and die of thirst.
  - 3. Romans chapter 12, really, brings us to the point of a conscience decision concerning righteousness.
  - 4. So “*therefore*” carries a lot of weight here.
- C. I would like for you to consider something. What is the ultimate purpose of righteousness. Some might reason it to be the salvation of our souls. But maybe with more careful thought we might conclude that the ultimate purpose of righteousness is the worship of God.
  - 1. So in a summation of the entire book of Romans, Paul brings up the very thing that all of our minds should be focused on .... Worship !
- D. Here Paul urges the Roman Church by the “*mercies of God*”....
  - 1. Mercy comes from the word pity NT3627
  - 2. So i.e. From God’s pity Paul is urging them
  - 3. To think about what worship is.
- E. What a relevant thing for us to think about today.
  - 1. In a world full of religious entertainment.
  - 2. In a world full of religious politics
  - 3. In a world full of “social Christianity”
  - 4. In a world full of selfish desires.

F. But Paul, spells out that true worship should be focused on sacrifice.

1. So does sacrifice mean?
2. Sometimes our definition of sacrifice can come up short. Sacrifice to us sometimes can be about:
  - a. Giving our extra worn out stuff to Good Will.
  - b. Or throwing a little extra money at some little problem.
  - b. Or going to the burger place instead of the steak house.
3. But real sacrifice is when we give up something that is precious to us. It is something that we have to do without so others might have.

G. Here God calls us to think of ourselves as a sacrifice of worship upon His alter.

NOTE: Here the Greek actually says to present our bodies as a sacrifice with three adjectives, which describe the sacrifice.

1. Living

- Not a dead animal sacrifice like the Old Testament
- Not a once a week deal....but a continual daily thing

2. Holy

- Set apart
- Sacred and pure

3. Acceptable.

- Pleasing to God and not some form of entertainment that we have fashioned to suit our own fancy.
- Denying self

H. So upon God's alter, as the fires of devotion burns in our hearts a sweet aroma rises to living God...a savory smell of righteous worship.

I. I wonder how many Christians have bought into the idea that worship is reserved for church assemblies only.

1. Failing to remember that Monday mornings and Saturday nights should be lived as a worship to God also.
2. Is it possible that our sacrifices instead of a sweet aroma may from time to time be a stench in God's nostrils?

- J. I think it no mistake that Paul first brings up worship because our entire lives are suppose to be understood through the lens of worship.
- K. Do we understand that every single circumstance in our lives is an opportunity to worship God. Whether we are talking about work, or play, hanging out with friends every minute of every day we are making choices regarding the worship of God.
  - 1. Just like right now you are actively making for your heart to be fully engaged in thinking about God....or something else !
- L. Colossians 3:1-3 *“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”*

## **II. Transformed by the renewing of your mind**

Romans 12:2

*“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

A. *“And do not be conformed to this world”*

- 1. That is don't let the world be your pattern
  - a. Don't let the world shape you.
  - b. Don't let the world give you direction
  - c. Don't let the world mold you after its image.
- 2. Jesus' prayer for His disciples in John 17 includes the idea that we be in the world but not of it.

B. *“Be transformed”*.... *“Metamorfo”* in the Greek

- 1. Where we get our word Metamorphosis...meaning completely changed
  - a. Like a chunk of coal under great pressure with time becomes a diamond.
  - b. Like a caterpillar turning into a butter fly
- 2. Initially changed at baptism
  - a. Romans 6 ....not to sin any longer
  - b. Then daily transformation that we make each morning with our daily commitment.

3. But the idea here is that we are Forever changed !
  - a. A diamond can't change back to a lump of coal and a butterfly can't change back into a caterpillar.
  - b. Here I can't help but to think of Paul's transformation on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). I think of what he was, and when Ananias opened his eyes what he had become.
  - c. I also think about the Jews and what they were and if they opened their eyes what they would become.

C. So how exactly does this transformation happen?

1. Here it says "*by the renewing of your minds*".
  - a. "Renewing" in the Greek, means renovation
  - b. When you renovate something, first you determine what it should be like, then you tear down all the stuff that isn't suppose to be there and then you add all the stuff that is suppose to be there.
2. Sometimes Christians expect God to just take them as they are without doing any renovation.
  - a. To which God says.....I don't think so !
3. Or maybe the temptation for us today is to settle for a partial renovation of our minds.
  - a. I'm just going to do my best and work on things as I can
  - b. Instead of an all out....I surrender !
  - c. Instead of "I'll do anything to please you" we hold back.

D. You see, it is only the transformed heart and mind that can understand what God's will is. Here the text says to be transformed "*so that you may prove what the will of God is....*"

1. Sometimes we get caught up on trying to figure out what God wants us to do about certain things in our lives:
  - a. What boyfriend or girlfriend to have.
  - b. Where to live
  - c. What job to have.
  - d. Etc.
2. Have you ever wondered how you could really know God's will about something?

3. For the Christian transformed by the power of God, He makes His will quite clear.
  4. Here it is, if you didn't get the memo about what God wants in your life.....Plainly stated God's will is for all men to repent and come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:4)
    - a. God's primary concern is focused on the reconciliation of mankind unto Himself.
  5. So if you want to know which boyfriend or girlfriend to have you might ask which one can help you reach the lost.
    - a. Or if you need to know where to live, you might ask where can I live and reach the most people for God.
    - b. Or what job can help me connect with more lost people.
    - c. Or what color of socks might spark a conversation with the right person to lead them to Christ.
  6. Church, I have to wonder how many times Satan has tempted us to concern ourselves with things that do not have eternal results.
- F. Church if you have been transformed by the saving blood of Jesus the Christ.
1. God has given you the ability to understand His will through His word
- G. And it is only through the will of God that true worship can happen.

**Conclusion:**

If God were asked would He say that you are a living sacrifice unto Him?

Have you tried to live with a partial renovation of your mind instead of full surrender to God?

Today God is calling you, the question is will you respond.