

LESSON 24: ROMANS 12:1-2
FEBRUARY 3, 2021

OVERVIEW

- . Living sacrifice: "Offer your bodies" – Romans 12:1
- . Developing a Christian mind: "Be transformed" – Romans 12:2

LIVING SACRIFICE: "OFFER YOUR BODIES" – ROMANS 12:1

- . Chapter 12 begins to practical section of Paul's letter
 - . The first section of the letter deals with the right belief
 - . The second section deals with the right behavior
 - . "Therefore" alerts the reader that Paul is about to take everything he has laid out in the previous chapters, concerning belief, and put them into a practical application regarding the right behavior
 - . Bottom line - Christians should live differently than they did before
- . Few things move us more than a person's sacrifice of his or her life for another
 - . It's the ultimate proof of true love
 - . Paul says we are to present ourselves as a living sacrifice
 - . A living vs. dead sacrifice was a novel idea in Paul's day
 - . Under the old Jewish system of worship offering up a dead sacrifice was the key for atonement
 - . At the heart of this sacrament was the concept that something had to die
 - . A living sacrifice is a willingness to surrender the essence of *self* over to God so that we can be born anew, in to a spirit that puts something greater than self, God, at the center of our being
 - . In our new condition we no longer live for ourselves but for Him who died for us and was raised again
- 2 . We are called to surrender our physical bodies
 - . "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires – do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness"
 - . "Offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness – sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace"
 - . Offering our entire physical selves includes our eyes, ears, hands, feet and our mouths – all to be used in His service
- 1 . The right place to start is with our minds
 - . How we choose to train our mind will ultimately manifest itself through our bodies

- . Proper nourishment for our minds will lead to a more Christ like way of thinking
 - . Nourishment will come through God's Word, study, prayer, meditation, fellowship
- . The third word Paul uses here to describe the type of sacrifice is "holy"
 - . A perfect sacrifice, by biblical standards, was without blemish
 - . The sacrifice Paul is talking about here is one that is offered up with a true heartfelt desire
 - . God doesn't want us to go through the motions
 - . God doesn't want us to offer up a sacrifice with a long list of conditions
 - . God doesn't want us to offer up ourselves, all the while longing for what we are letting go of
 - . God wants us to surrender our desires with complete faith that God will provide
 - . God is looking for a circumcision of the heart
 - . "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" – I Samuel 16:7
- . The fourth word Paul uses is "pleasing"
 - . What is astonishing is that the All powerful, all knowing, all present God is actually pleased by our personal behavior and actions
- . What is it that motivates Christians to offer their bodies as living sacrifices to God
 - . God's mercy
 - . He has been good to us in so many ways
 - . He saved us when we didn't deserve to be saved
 - . What He continues to do
 - . We are motivated because of the holy nature of His love for us
 - . God's love is good, pleasing and perfect
 - . We are motivated because of His eternal nature
 - . It is our desire to be with Him through all eternity

DEVELOPING A CHRISTIAN MIND: "BE TRANSFORMED" – ROMANS 12:2

- . We are not to let the age in which we live force us into its scheme of thinking and behaving
 - . True "worldliness" is conforming to the thoughts and the ways of the world
 - . In order to understand what we are to avoid, we need to understand the prevailing thoughts and attitudes of the world
 - . Secularism
 - . A broad term that forms all thought around the here and now
 - . Comes from the Latin word *saeculum* which means age
 - . A philosophy that does not look beyond the present age and

- the present cosmos
 - . It is bound by the limits of the material universe
 - . It disregards to eternal and thinks of just now
 - . It is at odds with faith that orients itself around a being that is not of the here and now
- . Humanism
 - . Humanism says that everything revolves around man and exists for man's glory
 - , Not to be confused with humanitarian
- . Relativism
 - . There are no absolutes in any area of life and values are meaningless
 - . In the absence of absolutes all meaning is determined by the current popular beliefs, trends and public thinking
 - . Societal norms are not determined by absolutes or higher morals and values but by what the trendy authorities think is worth aspiring for
- . Materialism
 - . If there is nothing beyond what we can see, feel or touch, than that becomes our sole desire
- . Mind renewal
 - . The doctrine of God
 - . If there is a God, then there is a supernatural which means over and above, in addition to the natural world
 - . Not only is there a God but He stands behind the cosmos
 - . God created the cosmos – the cosmos did not create God
 - . If God stands above the cosmos then everything ultimately comes from God
 - . This in turn impacts every thought and value we have
 - . Our thoughts and values are either going to align with God or be opposed to God
 - . The doctrine of God is the Christian answer to secularism
 - . The doctrine of revelation
 - . Not only is there a God but He has revealed Himself to us
 - . The doctrine of revelation is the Christian answer to relativism
 - . If God has spoken then what He has said is truthful
 - . If God declares what is right and what is wrong, then that defines our value system and morality
 - . With Gods revelation comes absolutes that provides order to an otherwise chaotic universe
 - . With certain absolutes come certain truths that can not be dictated by popular culture or the current status quo
 - . The doctrine of man
 - . A Christian holds their fellow man in higher regard than a humanist
 - . A humanist's life revolves around himself

- . Other humans hold value as long as they serve the purposes of the humanist
 - . If they don't they are expendable
- . A Christian values all life
- . The second thing we learn about the doctrine of man through scripture is that we all suffer from the same fallen condition
- . This places sin at the heart of our condition and creates a major barrier between us and God
- . Although we were created in God's image, because of our fallen condition, we are no longer the image God intended for us to be
- . We were created for the purposes of glorifying God
 - . If we are no longer a representative of God's image than it's impossible for us to be in sync with God's will, while in this condition
- . The doctrine of redemption
 - . At the heart of the doctrine of redemption is the Gospel
 - . Learning to embrace the Gospel, belief it, trust it and commit oneself to live it everyday, pleases God and makes us right by Him
 - . Learning to live for God, putting Him front and center, will bring out the best in ourselves and will help to create a society so much better than anything that a secularist could hope to achieve
 - . Most important it will be pleasing to God

NEXT LESSON - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2021 - ROMANS 12:3-8