

**CHRISTIAN DUTY**  
**PART 2B–THE DUTY TO SACRIFICE**  
**LUKE 17:7-10; ROMANS 12:1-2**

**Introduction**

Last time we began looking at our duty to sacrifice and saw the Biblical principles of sacrifice.

Once we hear God’s call for us to be saved and we accept Him as our own personal Lord and Saviour, we must constantly press forward in our Christian walk! (As the song we sing says, “*I have decided to follow Jesus. . .no turning back!*”)

Paul said in *Philippians 3:14*– “*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*”

All of us who know the Lord should be “*pressing toward the mark.*” We must guard against becoming lackadaisical in our Christian life. What God wants is for us to become totally dedicated and committed to Him.

It is easy for us who are saved to get self-satisfied **when we compare our “running” of the race with that of other Christians.** When we make those comparisons, they are usually made with those who are not making much progress. We can look pretty good when we use them as the standard. But they aren’t the standard we should use. Jesus Christ is the Standard!

Had Paul compared himself with others, he would have been tempted to be proud and may have been tempted to let up a bit. But Paul did not compare himself with others; he compared himself with Jesus Christ!

The Apostle Paul understood what it meant to be totally committed to Christ. After his conversion to Christ, Paul proclaimed the Gospel with the same intensity and zeal as with which he had previously persecuted the Church.

He was determined and committed to the call of Christ on his life!

He had decided that he would serve Christ, no matter what, whether he lived or died. That is what God wanted not only from Paul, but it is what He wants from us as well!

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Those that are saved should pour themselves into the Christian life and give it their all! The thing that mattered most to Paul was that Christ be exalted in his life and that, accordingly, the Gospel be proclaimed.

He was totally committed to Christ! Not only was Paul totally committed to Christ, but he also wanted others to be totally committed to Christ.

And in that I am like Paul in my desire for this Church. My desire is for each of us to be totally committed to Christ.

Paul spent his life, not only taking the Gospel to unbelievers, but also in writing and urging other believers to be strong in their commitment and walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul told the Church at Ephesus to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. I urge you this evening to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might! Storms may come in our lives and the winds may try to blow us off our spiritual feet so to speak, but hold on to God’s unchanging hand!

In this passage of Scripture before us, Paul is writing to the believers in Rome and he urges them to totally commit themselves to Christ.

He calls them “*brethren,*” which means that they had already made a decision to follow Christ. They had believed and professed Christ to be their Lord and Saviour.

Paul here doesn’t question their salvation. But there is something that they desperately needed. They needed to move on to total commitment in their lives.

Now if Paul were writing this today, he might say what is needed in the church today is 24/7/365 Christians–24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year!

There are some people today with 24/7/365 jobs. That does not mean that they are at the job 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year.

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But it does mean that their job requires them to be so committed that they could be called to work any time of the day or night, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year. They could receive a phone call at any hour of the day or night, saying they are needed.

Well, Paul is saying we need folks in the Church who are Christians 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year—available and ready for God’s service all the time and any time.

Now when I use this terminology 24 hours a day seven days a week Christianity, I don’t mean to imply that your salvation can be put on and taken off whenever you might like.

I’m not saying that you can lose it, then regain it, lose it again, or even give it up. But I am talking about 24/7/365 Christians in commitment.

So this evening, I want to preach about what it means to be totally committed—i.e. to sacrifice.

Total commitment means being 100% sold out to the Lord. Paul talks in *verse I* about presenting our bodies a living and holy sacrifice to the Lord.

Paul says “*I beseech you.*” I think it is important to see that Paul is urging these people to commitment. Tonight, I want to urge you to become totally committed to the cause of Christ.

Total commitment is something that you must choose to do. You can either do it or not do it, the choice is up to you. No one is going to make you or force you to be totally committed to anything.

I am very aware that I cannot make anyone in this Church do anything. I can’t make any of you serve Christ or this Church in any capacity. Everything that will be done in this Church will be done because someone volunteers to do it.

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The only thing I can do is preach and teach the Word of God. I am going to preach to you the truth, but it is up to you to walk in the Light!

**I. WHY SHOULD WE GIVE OURSELVES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE, (i.e. BE TOTALLY COMMITTED TO CHRIST)?**  
Paul tells us to present our bodies. Isn’t it interesting to know that God is interested in our body. But what he is talking about here is the sum total of everything we are. Our emotions, our mind, our likes, our dislikes, our will, our spirit, every part of us.

So Paul urges us to present all of us! God is interested in all of you! **There are three things that God really wants us to present Him.**

**A. God Wants Us To Surrender Our Bodies. (Vs 1)**  
Before we trusted Christ, we used our body for sinful pleasures and purposes. We did everything we wanted to do with these bodies.

But now that we belong to God, He wants to use our body for His glory. The Christian’s body is God’s temple because the Holy Spirit of God dwells within him.

- 1. A living sacrifice means a constant, continuous sacrifice, not just an occasional dedication of one's body.** A person does not sacrifice his body to God today, and then take his body back into his own hands and do his own thing tomorrow. A living sacrifice means that a person dedicates his body to live for God and to keep on living for God.
- 2. A living sacrifice means a sacrifice of a person's body wherever the body is.** A particular place is not needed. The sacrifice of the body is a living sacrifice; it can be made while the body is living right where it is. And the offering of a living sacrifice is to be made right now while the body is living.

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**3. A living sacrifice means that the body sacrifices its own desires and lives for God.**

The body lives a holy, righteous, pure, clean, and moral life for God.

The body does not intentionally pollute, dirty, or contaminate itself with the sins and corruptions of the world: neither the lust of the flesh, nor the lust of the eyes, nor the pride of life.

The believer's body is sacrificed for God and dedicated to live as He commands.

**4. A living sacrifice means that the body lives for God by serving God.**

It means that the body sacrifices and gives up its own ambitions and desires, and it serves God while upon this earth.

The body gives itself to the work of proclaiming the love of God and of ministering to a world reeling in desperate need of reconciliation with God.

The body sacrifices itself to serve God and Him alone. The body is dedicated to God as a living sacrifice.

So, the believer is to dedicate his body to God as a living sacrifice in the home, church, school, work, marketplace, etc.

No matter where the believer's body is, his body is to be sacrificed for God. Sacrificing to God is **not** something that is just transacted in a Church. Sacrificing to God is transacted in every act of the human body.

The whole universe, is the sanctuary of God; and the believer's body is the temple of God.

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Therefore, every act of the believer's body is to be an act of service to God. It should be our privilege to glorify Christ in our body!

*God Wants Us To Surrender Our Body...*

**B. God Wants Us To Surrender Our Mind. (Vs 2)**

The world wants to control our mind, but God wants to **transform** our mind.

**If the world controls our thinking, we are conformed to it; but if God controls our thinking, then we are transformed.**

*Philippians 2:5—“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”*

We surrender our mind through feeding on the Word of God!

**C. God Wants Us To Surrender Our Will! (vs 2b)**

Our mind controls our body, and our will controls our mind.

Many people think they can control their will by “willpower,” but it usually doesn’t work. It is only when we yield our will to God that His power can take over and give us the willpower.

Not only does He give us the willpower, but He also gives us the “won’t power” if you will.

When we surrender our will to His will:

We won’t want to backbite.

We won’t want to gossip.

We won’t want to lie, cuss and steal.

We won’t want to cover the fact that we’re born again.

God will give us all the power that we need to be victorious in Christ.

**We surrender our wills to God through disciplined prayer!**

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As we spend time in prayer, we surrender our will to God and pray, with the Lord Jesus Christ, “*Not my will, but Thy will be done.*”

We must pray about everything, and let God have His way in everything.

**The word “*present*” means to voluntarily offer up.**  
We ought to voluntarily offer up ourselves to the Lord.

We ought to say I’m yours, Lord—everything I have and everything I am belongs to you. When we do that it means that we are dedicating ourselves completely and wholly to God.

And the reason we should do this, Paul says, is because of the mercies of God— because of the greatness of God and all that He has done for us.

The mercies of God are overflowing; they are beyond anything any of us could ever imagine that a holy God would do for us.

Just think about what God has done for us. .

- He has met our desperate need to get right with Him.
- He has provided the power to be set free from the terrible bondage of sin and to live with Him eternally.
- He given us the most glorious purpose in life: that of proclaiming the news of God’s Son, of how to be set free from sin and death and to live eternally.

We were all on the road to hell, but God picked us up and turned us around.

Some of us had gotten to the end of our rope and we didn’t know which way to turn, but God made a way where there was no way.

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Paul said, because of what God has done for us, we ought to be totally committed to Him!

If it had not been for the Lord, where would we be?

I’m glad for His mercies. His grace and mercy brought me to where I am today!

I’m living this moment because of Him. Thank God for His loving mercy and grace!

**II. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TOTAL COMMITMENT?**  
**The Main Thing Is That It Is Pleasing And Acceptable Unto God!**  
Paul said the dedication of the body to God is “acceptable” to God.

The word “*acceptable*” means well-pleasing, approving and extremely satisfying to God. God accepts and joys and rejoices over a body that is dedicated and living for Him.

This is the very thing for which believers should seek is to be acceptable and well-pleasing to God. We should seek to cause Him to joy and to rejoice in our bodies. Our bodies should be so dedicated—so pure and holy and clean, and so committed and involved in His service—that God’s heart is just flooded with joy and rejoicing.

That should be our ultimate goal—to please God. Are we pleasing God? I can think of no more important question in life than that one thing. God wants us to please Him. God wants our best, whatever that may be. God is concerned with excellence.

And excellence in God’s sight is not about being the best, it means being **your** best by God’s grace!

For this Church it doesn’t mean being like some other Church, it means being the best we can be.

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God desires our first fruits, not our left overs. He is worthy. And when we give Him our best, it will give us peace of mind. It will give us joy divine.

*2 Corinthians 5:9–"Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."*

**The Second Thing Is That It Is Our Reasonable Service.**

The dedication of the body to God is the believer's reasonable service.

1. The word "**reasonable**" means rational, intelligent, logical.  
It is an act of the mind thinking and figuring out what and how to do something.
  
2. The word "**service**" means worship, ministry.

The idea is that the believer is to use his mind in dedicating his body to the service of God. He is to study the Scriptures, and intelligently think about how to best serve God as he walks through life day by day.

**Conclusion**

So, as I close, I want to say that the Lord has already done great things in the lives of all of us who are believers. And we ought to give Him some personal praise to that end, but more than that, we should give ourselves a living sacrifice to him—our bodies, our minds, and our wills!

Could I tell you that anything less than total devotion is short of God's glory: it is sin. Therefore, in light of the mercies of God, of all this that God has done for us, let's devote ourselves to God! Let's dedicate and commit ourselves to Him!