

# What Does a Living Sacrifice Involve?

Romans 12:1-2

Intro:

1. Being a Christian means consecration. Carrying the cross means commitment to it (**Matt 16:24**).
2. God demanded animal sacrifices in the Old Testament, where an animal was killed & presented to God.
3. It was a dead sacrifice!
4. God wants sacrifice today - but not animal sacrifice. He wants living sacrifices!
5. SO - what is a living sacrifice?

## I. What is Sacrificed?

A. It's not an Old Testament animal blood sacrifice - but your own bodies.

1. An example of blood sacrifice - The Day of Atonement (Yom Kipper) found in **Lev 16:2-34**.
  - a. In **Lev 16:6** - the people fasted & prayed while the high priest atoned for his own sins.
  - b. In **Lev 16:15ff** - the high priest atoned for the people & then the scapegoat was released.
2. An example of God's unlimited love - The Day of Passover. Lord Jesus went to the cross to become your perfect . . .
  - a. **High Priest** (**Heb 5:5-6**).
  - b. **Sacrifice** (**Col 1:20-22**).
  - c. **Scapegoat** (**Jn 11: 49-50**).
3. The day of your personal decision. When you surrender your heart to the Lord - you become . . .
  - a. **A priest**. **I Pet 2:5** - You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
  - b. **A living sacrifice**. **I Cor 6:13** - The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

B. What does this sacrifice involve?

1. It's to be **living** - not dead! **I Cor 6:19-20** - Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.
2. It's to be **holy** (sacred) - not ritualistic.
3. It's to be **well pleasing** to God - not just blind obedience to rules (i. e., the Law of Moses).

## II. Why Make the Sacrifice?

A. Because God gave you this opportunity to show your gratitude.

1. **v1 - Mercy** (οἰκτιρισμός) = compassion.
2. This mercy was expressed on the cross.
3. Where would you be if Lord Jesus had decided not to go to the cross to make this mercy possible?

B. Because it is your spiritual act of worship.

1. **Spiritual act of worship** (τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν) = reasonable, lit., "logical service".
2. This response makes sense!
3. God gave His Only Son to you - it's only logical that you give yourself back to God.
  - a. The world is dying in sin & God's plan is to use you to introduce it to His saving way.
  - b. **Eph 5:8, 10** - For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light . . . and find out what pleases the Lord.

C. **v2** - Because your life of obedience can be approved.

1. How can your life be approved if it isn't seen in action? (**Jam 2:14-18**)
2. How can it be seen in action if it isn't being used?

### III. How Can I Make This Sacrifice?

I Pet 1:14-16 - As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

A. v2 - It can't be done by changing yourself outwardly - conforming to the world!

1. **Conform** (συσχηματίζω) = become a copy of.
2. Some want to identify with the world on the pretense of being a witness to it.
  - a. But I Jn 2:15-16 says, **Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.**
  - b. The world is silently crying out for help.
  - c. They want to see something better than what they have, not something that identifies with it!

B. v2 - It must be done by allowing the gospel to transform your mind!

1. **Transform** (μεταμορφόω) = to transfigure, change into another form, lit., “metamorphosis”.
2. **ILL: The Transformation of a Butterfly or Moth.**
3. This word is used 4 times in the New Testament:
  - a. Here in **Rom 12:2.**
  - b. In **Matt 17:2 & Mk 9:2 - ILL: The Lord's Transfiguration.**
  - c. In **II Cor 3:18** when referring to Moses' veiled face when he came down from Mt. Sinai in **And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.**
4. These changes begin to take place in you when you renew your mind!
  - a. To renew your mind means to change your purposes in life to conform to God's purposes for you.
  - b. **Eph 1:18 - I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints . . .**

God has called you to “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice”. He wants you to take up your cross & follow Him”. It's a life of challenge. It's a life of commitment. When you do - you find the victorious life - the life God planned for you to have!