

The Law of Sacrifice

[Philippians 2:17-18 HCSB](#) But even if I am poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. (18) In the same way you also should rejoice and share your joy with me.

I. The Christian faith is a sacrificial faith.

All Christians need to realize that the Christian faith is a sacrificial faith. Christianity as we know it has its roots in the Old Covenant - a book full of laws and commands that deal with sacrifices. In the New Covenant we see the fulfillment of those sacrifices, and the call of the people of God to make sacrifices not of animals but of themselves.

Let us look at today's passage;

- [Philippians 2:17-18 HCSB](#) But even if I am poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. (18) In the same way you also should rejoice and share your joy with me.

Here Paul mentions his willingness to be "poured out as drink offering" on the sacrifice of the Philippian people. Paul is referring to his willingness to be martyred for the cause of Christ. He is willing to sacrifice his life along with the sacrifice of these people. Here was man willing to give up his very freedom and even his very life for the true freedom of preaching the gospel. We live in society of where we have great freedom in preaching the gospel of Christ, yet we rarely exercise that freedom.

Paul here is looking to the Old Testament sacrifices. Looking at a couple passages in Numbers chapter 15 we can see what Paul is alluding to;

- [Numbers 15:5-7 HCSB](#) Prepare a quart of wine as a drink offering with the burnt offering or sacrifice of each lamb. (6) "If you prepare a grain offering with a ram, it must be four quarts of fine flour mixed with a third of a gallon of oil. (7) Also present a third of a gallon of wine for a drink offering as a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

In the Old Covenant we see that at times a drink offering was to be made along with the offering of a lamb, ram, or bull. So what Paul is saying is that he is willing to be that drink offering to go along with the sacrifice of service of faith, which the Philippian people were offering up.

That sacrifice of the Philippian people is mentioned in the previous verses. Their sacrifice

- of working out their own salvation
- of allowing God to work in them
- sacrificing self-control lives for a spirit controlled life
- their sacrifice of shining as stars into a dark world
- their sacrifice of holding fast to the word of life.

And they are all prepared with joy and rejoicing. And herein is the definition of the law of sacrifice. Sacrifices need to and should produce joy and rejoicing. Giving something to the Lord should cause our hearts to be filled with joy to the point that we rejoice in our sacrifices. That is Paul's very point - sacrifice equals joy.

II. Our sacrifices are to be specific.

In order to gain the joy in sacrifice we must first understand what type of sacrifice we ought to be giving. Sacrificing something just for the sake of giving it up, or sacrificing something so others can see how holy we are will not produce the joy which Paul speaks of here.

A. Living Sacrifices

We need to realize that we ourselves are to be that sacrifice. Let us look at Romans chapter 12 verse 1 as we look at what type of Sacrifice we ought to be. Let's look at the fist verse in that passage;

- [Romans 12:1 HCSB](#) Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship.

There are three things mentioned here that tells us what kind of sacrifices we need to be.

1. Living sacrifice as demonstrated by Isaac.

The first thing mentioned is that fact that we are to be "living sacrifices".

Within the Scripture we see two examples of "living Sacrifices" The first is found in Genesis chapter 22 in the story of Isaac. Isaac willing put himself on the altar and would have been willing to die as a sacrifice to the Lord. He was willing to be obedient to God's will. But we can see in the story that God sent a ram to take his place. But Isaac did die in the sense that he died to his own will. He yielded himself to the will of God. When Isaac stepped down from that altar he was a "living sacrifice".

2. Living sacrifice as demonstrated by Christ.

The second example of a "living sacrifice" is the Lord Jesus Christ who is the perfect example of a "living Sacrifice". He died as a Sacrifice for our sins, in obedience to His Father's will, but He rose again. And today as Jesus reigns in heaven He reigns as a "living sacrifice."

So from these two examples we can see what it is to be a "living sacrifice". That is we need to put to death the desire to do our own will and do the will of the Father. We must put to death the flesh nature that dwells in each of us.

- [Romans 8:13 HCSB](#) for if you live according to the flesh, you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

So let us put to death the deeds of the body, that deeds of our flesh nature, let us cease doing those things that are contrary to the will of God, that we may indeed become living sacrifices.

B. Holy Sacrifices

The second thing mentioned in Romans 12:1 which tells what kind of sacrifice we ought to be is that we ought to be Holy Sacrifices. The word here means "sacred, pure or blameless". What does it mean to be blameless, to be sacred? God has high standards, and to be sacred is to be set apart. God wants us to present ourselves without spot or fault. Now we cannot hope to do this apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit which occurs through our faith in Jesus Christ.

We are to consecrate ourselves or set ourselves apart for the work of God. We are to be instruments of God. In the Scripture God is said to "HOLY HOLY HOLY" which is to say He is set apart for all creation, He is the essence of that which is sacred, that which pure and blameless. Because He is holy He calls us, who are His children, to be Holy.

- [1 Peter 1:15-16 HCSB](#) but, as the One who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; (16) for it is written, **Be holy, because I am holy.**

So a Holy sacrifice is one that is blameless, and set apart to do the will of God.

C. Acceptable Sacrifices

Now that third thing which Romans 12:1 mentions as what kind of Sacrifice we need be is that we are to be an acceptable sacrifice. The word denotes that which is "well pleasing" the best. In other words God does not want our leftovers He wants our best. God does not want second place in our lives, He wants, in fact He demands that He be first. We, as living sacrifices to the Lord, need to give God our best in all areas of our life. Our sacrifices need to be just that - sacrifices. To offer God something that cost us nothing is not an acceptable sacrifice, that is not the best we have to offer.

1. Acceptable sacrifice demonstrated by the widow.

I can think of two illustrations from scripture that speak of acceptable sacrifices. One is:

- [Luke 21:1-4 HCSB](#) He looked up and saw the rich dropping their offerings into the temple treasury. (2) He also saw a poor widow dropping in two tiny coins. (3) "I tell you the truth," He said. "This poor widow has put in more than all of them. (4) For all these people have put in gifts out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

Though the widow's sacrifice was small it was acceptable. The size of or sacrifice, is not what is important, it is what it cost us, is it our best.

1. Acceptable sacrifice demonstrated by David.

Another example I can think of is that found in the book 2 Samuel. In this story David had sinned against the Lord and he is told to go to the threshing floor of a man by the name of Araunah, and built an offering there and sacrifice there. Araunah tells David just to take whatever he needs free of cost, listen to David's answer,

- [2 Samuel 24:24 HCSB](#) The king answered Araunah, "No, I insist on buying it from you for a price, for I will not offer to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 ounces of silver.

David wanted his sacrifice to be acceptable to the Lord. And he knew that if cost him nothing, that it would not be acceptable. If it cost him nothing it would not be sacrifice.

Many times we make sacrifices that cost us nothing. Sometimes in the form of money, we say well I guess I can give a little extra to the church this week, I have some left over. Sometimes in the way of service, well I've got nothing better to do, I guess I can stop by the church and do whatever. Our sacrifices must cost us something to be acceptable. Our sacrifices need to be just that sacrifices.

So we see what type of sacrifices we are to be. This is the type of sacrifices that the Philippian people were. Because they were this type of sacrifice, living, Holy, and acceptable that Law of Sacrifice was fulfilled, in that it brought Joy, and it will bring joy to us as well when we become this type of sacrifice to the Lord.

III. Sacrifices are faith driven.

Now another thing which our passage in Philippians alludes to is the sacrifice is derived from our faith. It comes in proportion to it. The greater our faith the more we sacrifice to God, and the more we sacrifice to God, the greater our faith becomes. Paul speaks of the "sacrifice" of the Philippians faith.

Understand that without faith, sacrifice is meaningless. We need to have faith in the one that we are making our sacrifices to.

So what is this faith which brings about sacrifice. We need to understand some things about faith so that it will produce a desire to be living, holy, and acceptable sacrifices.

A. Our faith should be placed correctly.

First we need to have faith in the right thing, which is Jesus Christ. There is no salvation other than the salvation which is found in Jesus Christ;

- [Acts 4:12 HCSB](#) There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."

So to have faith in anything other than Christ leaves one with no hope of being a living, holy acceptable sacrifice to God. We will by nature make sacrifices to that which we have placed our trust and faith. We see this in pagan religions who have make rocks and trees their gods. They offer sacrifices to those gods.

So when we place our trust in Jesus Christ we by nature should desire to make sacrifice for Him.

B. Our faith should not waiver.

Now faith which brings about sacrifice is faith which removes doubt. Many Christians are doubters. The doubt God will bless them for their service and sacrifice. They doubt God will remain true to His promises. But faith is optimistic.

- [Hebrews 11:1 HCSB](#) Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.
- [James 1:6-7 HCSB](#) But let him ask in faith without doubting. For the doubter is like the surging sea, driven and tossed by the wind. (7) That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

Faith takes God as His word. Faith assures us that there will be joy with sacrifice. That will bless those who give their best to Him.

C. Our faith should be fearless.

Faith will also dispel fear. To repeat the words of Jesus:

- **Mark 5:36 HCSB** But when Jesus overheard what was said, He told the synagogue leader, **"Don't be afraid. Only believe."**

Jesus is telling us the same thing. Don't be afraid at having to give up something you really like. Don't fear giving your time or talents. I think many of us are not the living sacrifices we should be because of fear. Fear of failing, fear of embarrassment, fear that God will not bless us, fear that we may have to go without something we really want. But if our faith is what it should be those fears will be dispelled.

Conclusion

So let us now take this information and see what we have learned from this passage. First we have learned of the law of sacrifice. That is that true sacrifice will produce joy in us. Joy which comes for the Father above. Giving back to God from what He has given us, be it our lives, our time, our talent, our money, our service, giving of all these things in a sacrificial manner will produce joy.

We saw that we ourselves are to be sacrifices. Living Sacrifices, putting to death our own will and living the will of God. We are to be holy sacrifices, set aside for the work of the Heavenly Father. We are to be acceptable sacrifices, giving to God our best, placing Him and His will first in our lives.

And realize that our sacrifice is derived from our faith. As one increases so will the other. Proper faith will remove doubt and fear and allow us to be the sacrifices and make the sacrifice which the Lord desires from us. That faith must begin in Jesus Christ.

Now perhaps all this sacrifice stuff is foreign to you. Perhaps you are thinking that all sacrifice means is giving more money, and that is what I am talking about. Well that is certainly not the truth. Perhaps the reason you are thinking that is because you do not have the proper faith which I have talked about today, faith in Jesus Christ. For any of this sermon to make sense you must have a proper relationship with Jesus.

Now when I say faith in Jesus I do not mean that you believe that He lived so many years ago and that He came and taught many wonderful things, what I mean is that you need to trust in Him as your personal Lord and Savior.

You see we each need to realize that we are sinners and in need of savior. There is not one person in this room or for that matter in this world who can make it to heaven on their own. We all need Jesus. Jesus alone can give us eternal life, He alone can forgive sin, for He alone died for our sin. As I stated earlier He is the greatest example of a living sacrifice. And as a living Sacrifice He paid the price for our sin.

So I ask each person here today to examine yourself. Have you placed your trust and faith in Jesus. Are you counting on Him and Him alone for eternal life. If you do not know the Lord Jesus as your personal savior, if you do not have a personal relationship with I would love the opportunity to show you from the Bible how this is possible, and what you need to do to be saved. Please speak with me after the service, or give me a call so we can arrange a time were we can get together so that I show how you can enter into the Kingdom of God, and begin to be the living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice you need to be.