



Sacrificial Service in Leadership

'Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.' (Romans 12:1)

The Apostle Paul spends the first half of Romans explaining the salvation story in great detail—that Jesus died for us while we were sinners and helpless to save ourselves. He goes on to explain that God did not reject His chosen people Israel, but that they rejected Him. I imagine the Christians in Rome asking Paul, 'How can we know if we are chosen by God? Is it possible that God will un-choose us?' The answer in Romans is, 'Look at all God has done to choose you and save you. Look at how faithful He is. Now, are you willing to choose Him?'

Paul spends 11 chapters carefully laying out God's faithfulness, and then he says, 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship' (Romans 12:1).

Our proper response to God's incredible goodness is to offer Him our whole lives. To be 'living sacrifices.'

*The question for us is: **What does it mean to live and lead as a 'living sacrifice'?***

Three Qualities of Leading as 'Living Sacrifices'

As we read Romans 12, three qualities of being a living sacrifice stand out:

- **A renewed mind** (v2). The first thing that changes is our thought life. We see ourselves and others differently. We do not think in the same ways as our culture around us does. We allow God to transform how and what we think about.
- **Humility** (v3-8). Leading as a living sacrifice means humbling ourselves to learn and grow from the wisdom, experience, and skills that God has placed in others.
- **Love** (v9-18). It is easy to get so focused on tasks and projects that we forget the need to love, care, and listen to the needs of those we lead. Leading as a living sacrifice means taking the time to love others sincerely.

Let's continue our study of sacrificial service in leadership through the devotion attached.

Devotions

JUNE

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Read Romans 12:1-18

Renew your mind (v 2)

- According to this verse, what is the opposite of having a renewed mind?

- Looking at the leaders in your country and culture, what would you say is 'the pattern of this world' for leadership?

- According to this verse, what will we be able to do when we have a renewed mind?

- Read Philippians 4:4-8. What does a renewed mind think about? How is it transformed? What are the traits of someone with a renewed mind?

- In what ways does your leadership style reflect a renewed mind? In what areas do you want to see God continue to renew your mind?

- Do you think that renewing your mind is a one-time event or a long-term process? Why do you think this?

- What actions can you take to see God renew your mind as a leader? (2 Timothy 3:16, Philippians 3:17, Philippians 4:6).

SHARE: In your devotion group, share one or two things you would like to commit to do toward renewing your mind. Pause to pray for each other.

Be humble (v3-8)

- According to verse 3, how should we think about ourselves? What do you think this means?

- Verses 4-5 say we are members of one body and belong to (or need) one another. Make a list of all the people you work with: those who you lead, who you interact with, and who you report to.
 - For each person, ask God, 'What is their gifting and purpose? Why does this person need me? Why do I need them?'

- List the various gifts named in verses 6-8.
 - Which of these describe you? Which do you see in those you lead?

 - This list is just a sample, not everything God can gift us with. What other gifts has God given to you or those you work with? For example 'good with numbers and details'...

- How do you think considering the gifts of others leads to humility?

Love (v9-18)

- What actions and attitudes make up real love according to these verses? (Paul mentions at least 10 things!)

- Which of these come naturally to you? Which do you want to see God grow in you more?

- What things could you do to model love for those you lead?

SHARE: Choose one or two loving actions you want to focus on, share them with your group during devotion time, and pray for one another.

Read Romans 12:1 one more time, focusing on the last phrase. What is the ultimate purpose of offering ourselves as living sacrifices?

May everything we do as leaders be an act of sincere worship that is pleasing to God!