

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 37 “A Living Sacrifice”

I. Introduction and Review - We are continuing our series on **Romans** today. We have been focusing on reformation and how Paul sought to reform the church in Rome.

A. The specific issue Paul was dealing with was strife between the Jewish and Gentile home churches. The Jews kept trying to get the Gentile to keep the the law, while the Gentiles had an attitude of superiority because the Jews were the ones who crucified Jesus. They sort of thought God was done with Israel. All of this created a ton of strife and kept them from impacting the culture in Rome the way they should have.

B. After spending 3 chapters explaining God’s redemptive plan which included both the Jews and Gentiles, Paul makes a shift in **Romans 12** about how these people should live in the light of everything God had done for them. Today we are going to study **Romans 12:1** and talk about being “A Living Sacrifice.”

II. A Living Sacrifice - In **Romans 12:2** Paul talks about the renewed mind. As much as I want to talk with you about that today, I really felt like I was supposed to take time and talk with you about **Romans 12:1** and being a living sacrifice.

A. Why?

1. We are transformed by the renewing of our mind. God’s word is seed so when we plant it in the soil of our heart, it brings transformation.
2. When we plant good seed in an unsundered heart, it will bring forth weird fruit. It’s not that it won’t bring forth any fruit, the fruit just won’t come to maturity and be misshapen. We’ll also see unnecessary bad fruit growing along side the good fruit and things will just look weird.

B. **Romans 12:1**

1. Beseach - **parakalēō**, to call near, i.e. invite, invoke—beseech, call for, (be of good) comfort, desire, (give) exhort(-ation), intreat, pray. **Parakalēō** is the verb for of the adjective **paráklētos**, which Jesus uses to describe the Holy Spirit in **John 14:16**. This tells me a surrendered life is a work of the Holy Spirit, not a work of the flesh. That should take all the stress out of this for everyone.
2. Paul calls them brethren (identities with them) and tells them to be a living sacrifice out of the mercy of God (not the wrath of God). The key to doing this is remembering everything God did for them from **Romans 11**.
3. You present your bodies - You are not your body. He’s talking to the spirit man inside of you, not the tent it resides in. This is all done by the spirit of God.

4. Living sacrifice - the idea is we are alive every part of our life is yielded. "God whatever you say goes." This is why it must be a work of the spirit as it's a living sacrifice not a dead one.
5. This is reasonable/logical service (basic Christianity not super Christianity).

### III. Example of Abram

A. **Acts 7:2-4** God appeared to Abram and told him to leave his country (lived in Ur in Mesopotamia) and his family and go to a land He would show Him.

B. Abram didn't fully obey. **Genesis 11:31** He took his Dad and Lot with him and dwelt in Haran for 30-40 years.

1. Why did God want Abraham to leave Ur? Ur was a wealthy, but pagan place where many people worshipped false gods.
2. God wanted to start something new, which is why He needed Abram to leave his past behind.

### C. **Genesis 12:1-5**

1. Had said – past tense. Had said this in Ur (Mesopotamia)
2. Took Lot and his wife and kids with him (maybe to mentor him? We don't the reasoning, but Abram didn't fully obey.
3. This hindered Abram and caused him a lot heart-ache.
  - a. Strife between the herdsmen **Genesis 13:7**. Abraham then met with Lot and showed him all of the land and said take whatever part you want. Lot decides to take the fertile land and ends up in Sodom (this doesn't happen if Abram didn't bring lot along).
  - b. Abram has to rescue when he is captured when war breaks out in **Genesis 14**.
  - c. Lot and his family almost destroyed when Sodom and Gomorrah is destroyed. Wife turns into a pillar of salt and Lot's daughters got him drunk and committed incest with him. Their children produced the Moabites and Ammonites – Israel's enemies. Was any of this God's will? **Is all of this weird fruit?**
  - d. We don't know what would have happened to Lot and his family if they would have stayed in Ur, but it's hard to imagine things would have ended up worse. The application to us is often we need to surrender our human reasoning and be a living sacrifice.

D. **Genesis 13:14-18** After fully obeying, Abram gets further gets further instruction from the Lord.

1. A lot of times when we can't hear God in a certain area, it's because we haven't obeyed the last thing he has told us to do. You pray and it's crickets!
2. Often God won't give us step 2 until the previous step because He's trying to protect us. He doesn't want our life to be full of weird fruit and heartache.

IV. Conclusion - When we try to carry things from our past or present that God is calling us to separate from (beliefs, attitudes, pet sins, relationships) it will hinder us from stepping into our future.

A. Thank God for the lessons we can learn from Abram, but thank God even more for the lesson we can learn from Jesus.

1. What did Jesus do when He didn't want to go the cross? He prayed three times in order to get His will surrendered to the Father's will.
2. This was a work of the spirit. **Matthew 26:41.**
3. **None of us can be a living sacrifice in our strength. It takes a work of the spirit!**

B. Pray for a fresh touch of the spirit.

C. Call Up Prayer Team