



Devotional: A Living Sacrifice

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:1–2 (NASB)

INTRODUCTION: A CALL TO THE ALTAR

Men, when Paul writes these words, he is not giving soft advice. He is issuing a *summons*.

Like a commander calling troops to attention, Paul says, “*I urge you... present your bodies.*”

In the Old Testament, a sacrifice was killed and placed on the altar. But Paul says we are to be **living sacrifices**—meaning the sacrifice stays alive, keeps walking, keeps choosing. That means every day we choose again to place ourselves before God.

This passage gives us a blueprint for a powerful Christian life. It has four major themes:

1. **Self-denial and self-control as worship**
2. **Refusing the world’s mold**
3. **Transformation through the renewing of the mind**
4. **Discovering and walking in the will of God**

Let’s walk through each one.

1. TRUE WORSHIP LOOKS LIKE SELF-DENIAL AND SELF-CONTROL

Paul says, “*present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice... which is your spiritual service of worship.*”

Worship is not just singing songs. Worship is not something we do only at church. Worship is a **lifestyle of surrender**.

Every time you say no to sin, that's worship.

Every time you choose self-control over impulse, that's worship.

Every time you deny yourself something that your flesh wants but God does not want—that is worship.

In a world that celebrates indulgence, Jesus calls us to self-denial.

In Matthew 16:24 Jesus said, *"If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."*

Men, we are not called to comfort. We are called to courage.

We are not called to blend in. We are called to stand out.

We are not called to indulge the flesh. We are called to crucify it.

Not to earn salvation, but because **we belong to God**.

Paul says, *"by the mercies of God."*

Meaning—because God has been so merciful to you... because He saved you... because He redeemed you...*give Him everything*.

Self-control is not about willpower. It's about worship.

Living Sacrifice & Worship

Discussion Questions & Potential Answers

- What does it mean to present your body as a living sacrifice?
→ Living daily in obedience, surrendering desires, honoring God through actions and habits.
- Where is God calling you to greater self-control?
→ Areas such as speech, anger, purity, finances, discipline.
- How does discipline become worship?
→ When motivated by love for God and expressed through obedience rather than legalism.

2. DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD

Paul says, *"Do not be conformed to this world."*

The Greek word here (logos) literally means "don't be pressed into a mold."

The world has a mold for men. And that mold celebrates:

- Pride
- Lust
- Anger
- Materialism
- Ego
- Selfishness
- Independence from God
- Pleasure at any cost

But God has a different mold.

He is forming Christ in us.

The world says, “Follow your heart.”

God says, “The heart is deceitful—follow My Word.” Jeremiah 17:9

The world says, “Do whatever feels good.”

God says, “Do whatever honors Me.” Proverbs 3:9-10

The world says, “Look out for yourself.”

God says, “Deny yourself.” Matthew 16:24

Every day, the world tries to shape us. And every day, the Holy Spirit invites us to resist that pressure.

Men of God do not blend in.

They **stand apart**.

Not Conforming to This World

Discussion Questions & Potential Answers

- Where do men feel pressure to conform?
→ Success, image, sexual temptation, financial status, independence.
- How do we know when the world shapes us?
→ When decisions are driven by culture, fear, or comfort instead of Scripture.
- What worldly influence must you resist this week?
→ Media, pride, comparison, unhealthy friendships, anger, lust.

3. BE TRANSFORMED — BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND

Transformation doesn't come from trying harder—it comes from thinking differently.

The word *transformed* (metamorphoo) here is the same root as “metamorphosis.”

It's the image of a caterpillar being transformed into a butterfly.

That's what God wants to do in you.

He wants to change you *from the inside out*.

But it only happens one way:

“by the renewing of your mind.”

Your mind is renewed through:

- The Word of God
- Prayer
- Worship
- Fellowship with godly men
- Daily obedience
- Rejecting thoughts that contradict Scripture

You cannot be transformed if your Bible stays closed.

You cannot be transformed if your mind feeds only on social media, news, and entertainment culture.

The question is not:

“Are you being shaped?”

You are.

The real question is:

“Who is shaping you?”

The world... or the Word?

Renew your mind, and God will renew your life.

Transformation & Renewing the Mind

Discussion Questions & Potential Answers

- What habits feed or drain your mind?
→ Feeding: Scripture, prayer, worship, fellowship.
Draining: social media, stress, negative content.
- What changes help you stay in Scripture?
→ Set reading time, accountability, remove distractions.
- How has the Spirit transformed you before?
→ Patience, purity, forgiveness, courage, renewed thinking.

4. THEN YOU WILL KNOW THE WILL OF GOD

Paul says something powerful:

"... so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Many people say,

"I want to know God's will for my life."

Paul says:

Live surrendered.

Live separate.

Live transformed.

Then God's will becomes clear.

The will of God is not discovered by accident.

It is revealed to men whose lives are on the altar.

When you lay your life down...

When you refuse the world's mold...

When you let God renew your mind...

Then suddenly:

→ God's path becomes clearer.

→ Decisions become easier.

→ Temptation becomes weaker.

→ Purpose becomes stronger.

Because a renewed mind can hear God's voice.

And a surrendered life can walk in God's will.

God's will is:

- Good — it blesses you
- Acceptable — it aligns with His character
- Perfect — it lacks nothing

You never lose by surrendering to God.

You only lose by holding back.

Knowing the Will of God

Discussion Questions & Potential Answers

- Why does surrender create clarity?
→ When we give up control, we hear God more clearly.
- Where do you need God's direction?
→ Family leadership, career, finances, habits, ministry.
- What step of obedience can you take this week?
→ Reconciliation, confession, new habit, following conviction.

CLOSING CHALLENGE FOR MEN

Men, God is calling us—not to casual Christianity—but to committed Christianity.

Romans 12:1–2 is a battle cry:

Present yourselves.

Resist the world.

Renew your mind.

Walk in God's will.

This week, ask yourself:

1. **What part of my life needs to be placed on the altar?**
2. **Where have I allowed the world to shape my thinking or behavior?**
3. **How can I renew my mind daily—starting today?**
4. **Am I walking in God's will or my own desires?**

Real transformation doesn't happen by accident.

It happens by surrender.

Let's be men of sacrifice.

Men of discipline.

Men who feed on God's Word.

Men who choose holiness.

Men who seek God's will above our own.

Because when God has all of you...

You will finally become all He created you to be.