

Text: 1 Pt 2.5

Proposition: The spiritual sacrifices the New Testament calls us to perform encompass all aspects of the Christian life.

Last week we talked about Jesus, *the Living Stone*, who made us into *living stones* to build us up into a spiritual house for the purpose of forming a holy priesthood and offering spiritual sacrifices.

Read 1 Pt 2.1-5, text last phrase of 5

In today's message, I want to talk about *Spiritual Sacrifices*.

What are they?

How do we do them?

Peter doesn't specify in the passage what the *spiritual sacrifices* are. His theme is the Living Stone.

Still, if this is one of the reasons the Lord turns us into living stones, then what exactly is it?

One commentator gives us this:

"we should not limit the sacrifices here to any one item, for everything that is pleasing to God is probably included (cf. Rom 12:1; Heb 13:15–16)."¹

Schreiner does refer us to Rm 12 and Heb 13, but another commentator gives us more:

"The spiritual sacrifices of the New Testament priest are: (1) the living sacrifice of his body offered to God for service (Rom. 12:1–2); (2) his praise (Heb. 13:15); (3) his voluntary acts of self-dedication (Phil. 2:17; Eph. 5:1–2); (4) his good deeds (Heb. 13:16), and (5) his material possessions used for God's service and transmuted by the Spirit into worthy sacrifices (Phil. 4:18; Heb. 13:16)."²

That's Edmond Hiebert, and he gives us our outline for tonight's message.

Proposition: The spiritual sacrifices the New Testament calls us to perform encompass all aspects of the Christian life.

¹ Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 107.

² Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 134.

I. Offer your bodies a living sacrifice (Rm 12.1)

Rm 12.1 ¶ 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.*

- A. The basis for the sacrifice is the mercies of God (your salvation, or, the doctrine of Rm 1-11)
- B. The nature of the living sacrifice
 - 1. It is living! (*i.e.* it is your life)
 - 2. It is holy
- C. A living sacrifice gains God's acceptance as true worship

II. Offer your voice in continuous praise (Heb 13.15)

Heb 13.15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

- A. The basis for offering your voice is Jesus, who suffered scorn for us (see v. 12)
- B. Notice the description: "the fruit of lips"
 - 1. Of course, our words should be praise (see Eph 4.29)

Ep 4.29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

- 2. But this also surely means: Sing! (Eph 5.18-19)

Ep 5.18-19 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

III. Offer your self in service to others (Phil 2.17, Eph 5.1-2)

Phil 2.17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.

Ep 5.1-2 ¶ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

A. Poured out as a drink offering: a life given over for others

1. The drink offering in the OT was offered to God by pouring the cup out on the altar – entirely dedicated
2. In the context, Paul talks about living out the life in a perverse generation — so, even if that means pouring out one’s life to serve others, *so be it*

B. Walking in love is a spiritual sacrifice in imitation of Jesus: well pleasing (a fragrant aroma) to God

IV. Offer your actions for the benefit of others (Heb 13.16)

Heb 13.16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

A. The verb is “do not neglect”

B. What are we not to neglect?

1. “The good deed”
2. *Koinonia* – sharing (it’s more than just giving things)
 - a. *Koinonia* often trans. “fellowship”
 - b. But more intimate than that: “warm-hearted partnership”
 - c. So, in giving things (which is a “fellowship”) it involves a communication of heart from life to life
 - d. KJV trans. “to communicate”

V. Offer your goods as a fragrant aroma to God (Phil 4.18)

Phil 4.18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

- A. Paul is the recipient of a spiritual sacrifice here (a money gift from Philippi)
- B. The gift is acceptable, a fragrant aroma, well-pleasing to God

Conclusion:

Last week I used a metaphor of the three-dimensional spiritual life.

I meant a relationship with God and with others and with the whole body, through various connections upwards and downwards in time, connected to one another by strong spiritual ties.

As we live out this life, offering *these* sacrifices, our bodies, our voices, our hearts, our deeds, our cash... when we offer these, we please God and we live the three-dimensional spiritual life.