

THE ROMAN REVEALING
Theme: The Reign of Righteousness
From the Sermon Notebook of Dr. Doyce H. Nolan

SUBJECT: THE SECRET OF HOLY LIVING
SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 12:1-2

Introduction

We are pilgrims and strangers living on foreign soil. Heaven will be a blessing, but in the mean time I need practical help for my day to day walk with God. These first two verses of **Chapter 12**, give us some insight into an area of our walk with God that we must never over look. Paul tells us what God expects from us and how we are to achieve His goals for our lives. He tells us that holy living revolves around our surrender to three powerful concerns:

- I. The Worship of God. (1).
- II. The Wisdom of God. (2a).
- III. The Will of God. (2b).

I. THE WORSHIP OF GOD. (1). I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Paul tells us that presenting our bodies to the Lord is our "*reasonable service*." The word "*reasonable*" implies a logical action. The word "*service*" implies specific action of worship.

When we are totally yielded to Christ, it is the highest form of worship that we can render! Nothing says "*I love you*" to the Lord like a consecrated, dedicated, holy life, **John 14:21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:**

and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. With that in mind, let's look at this first verse and see what Paul means when he calls on us to present our bodies to Him.

1. The Challenge - We are called upon to "***present your bodies.***" This has reference to the flesh that you and I wear around. The word "***present***" means to "***place at one's disposal.***" It means that we are no longer holding anything back from God, we have placed our all on His altar and we are His disposal!

Far too many people want to be saved, but they are not willing to lay everything on the altar. They are guilty of holding back areas of their lives that are precious to them. God wants it all! Don't be guilty of being an Indian-giver. Give and then take it back.

2. The Cause - Notice the phrase "***therefore by the mercies of God.***" We may ask why God would think that He can control every aspect of our lives. The reason is simply because He bought us at Calvary and we belong to Him, **1 Cor. 6:20; Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. 7:23; Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.** Since that is true, we have no rights! We are supposed to be subject to God's commands, regardless of what they are! Never forget that we were headed to Hell when He found us!

God has the right to issue any command to us that He may wish to. And we do not have the right to say anything but "***Yes, Lord. Here am I, send me!***"

3. The Consecration - We are told that these bodies are to be presented "***a living sacrifice***". the sacrifice the Lord is

commanding each of us to make is *costly, painful, difficult, personal and necessary*. Basically, God is commanding every one of His people to lay the totality of our lives on the altar of sacrifice. But, at the same time, this sacrifice must continue to function in the world around it. *Four ideas are in view here:*

i) A living sacrifice means that we are to be on the altar wherever we are. Regardless of where we are including our surroundings, we are to remember that our body and all belongs to God. There is never an instant in life when we are out of His view or free to live as we please.

ii) A living sacrifice means a constant, continuous sacrifice. This is not something we do from time to time. But we are to offer this body up to the Lord and never ask for it back again!

iii) A living sacrifice means that the body sacrifices its own desires for the desires of God. To be a living sacrifice will require that the body does not live for the world, the flesh or the devil, but that everything the body does is held to the guidelines of the Word of God.

iv) A living sacrifice means that the body is devoted to the task of serving God. This means that we are to lay down the ambitions and desires of the body and commit ourselves to doing that which God bids us to do! We are to be His vessels through which He can live and work in this world.

The sacrificed body sees itself as the Temple of God. It realizes that God must be in absolute control of the will, the emotions, the passions, the deeds and the thoughts of the body.

4. **The Conditions** - Paul tells us how these bodies are to be sacrificed. He gives us two conditions that this sacrifice must meet.

i) **An Awsome Sacrifice** - The word "*holy*" means "*something consecrated and set apart*". It has reference to that which inspires religious awe in the sight of an observer. Imagine how awe inspiring it would have been to have stood with Elijah on Mount Carmel as God sent the fire down from Heaven on that altar, before those prophets of Baal.

When a life is totally sold out, separated and sacrificed to God the Father, it will demonstrate the power of God like nothing else! The problem in our church age is the half-heartedness of believers playing the church game!

ii) **An Acceptable Sacrifice** - The word "*acceptable*" means "*well-pleasing, satisfying*". God is pleased when a life is sacrificed on the altar of His service for His glory. It honors Him, proves His power and His glory. It tells a lost world that God makes a difference in the lives He touches by His power.

Notice the words "*brethren*" and "*ye*" in verse 1. This command to sacrifice all on the altar of consecration is not just for a select few super saints. It is a command that is given to every member of the family of God.

II. THE WISDOM OF GOD (2a). Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,

Paul moves from dealing with the body to dealing with the mind. Here is the root of all our problems anyway. When we can get the mind to think as it should, then the body will obediently follow

along. *In this matter of conquering the mind, there are two steps that must be taken:*

1. Shunning The Mold - We are commanded "***be not conformed to this world.***" The word "***conformed***" means "***to fashion, or to shape.***" It literally means "***to mold***". We are not to allow this world to squeeze us into its mold. You see the world, and those who are controlled by its influence, are vastly different from that which God intends men to be. We must be different and remain different!

2. Shaping The Mind - Then we are commanded to be "***transformed by the renewing of your mind.***" The word "***transformed***" gives us our English word "***metamorphosis***". It describes the transformation a caterpillar goes through to become a butterfly.

That is the change God wants to effect in each of His children! He moved into our hearts when He saved us. He transformed our spirit and changed us into His child. Now, He wants to transform the mind so that the flesh might be changed. What we must remember is that this flesh will do what the mind tells it to do. It is only when the mind is changed and brought under the power of God that the flesh can be brought under control.

How is this accomplished? By surrendering the will to God. By filling the mind with the Word of God. By ordering one's life after the teachings and commands of God. By cutting oneself off from the influences of the world and by allowing the Spirit of God to control the mind.

There are basically three types of people in the church. These types are distinguished by the way their minds operate.

i. The Sensual - This kind of individual is ruled by the physical world around them. They live by their senses. Everything comes down to how they feel, what they see, what they want, what they hear, etc. They may be saved, but they are living far below their potential!

ii. The Soulish - These people are those who are ruled by their intellect, their will and their emotions. To be intellectual, emotional or to possess a strong will is not necessarily to be spiritual!

iii. The Spiritual - This kind of individual is very rare in the church. These are people who are under the control of the Holy Spirit. He controls their thinking, their actions, their speech. He rules their lives. They have given over total control to Him and they have no life but that which He gives them! This is God's will for every believer - **Eph. 5:18 Be filled with the Spirit.**

III. THE WILL OF GOD (2b). That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

As we yield our bodies and our minds to Him, His will becomes more clear and more important to us.

1. A Description Of God's Will - Paul uses three identifying words to describe the will of God.

i. It Is Precious - Regardless of what the Lord may ask us to do, we will find in the end that it is good. It is the devil and the flesh who tell us that the Lord's ideas will bring hurt and problems. However, God will never ask us to do anything that is not for our eternal good. So, don't be afraid of the will of God for your life because it is good!

ii. It Is Pleasant - When His will is revealed to us, it is something that we are made willing to do. As we move through this life, God is in the business of maturing us. As we grow, His demands on our life change. Through the experiences of life God grows us and matures us so that when His call comes and His will is revealed, we are equipped and ready for whatever He calls us to do.

iii. It Is Perfect - Nothing we could add to God's plan would improve it. When He reveals His will to us, we need to realize that God sees the end of the matter before the matter begins. He knows the path we will take and He knows the obstacles and valleys we will pass through as we go. He knows where the provisions are that He has already placed along the way. His plan cannot be improved upon, but it must be followed for their to be victory and blessing! We can be in no better place that the perfect will of God for our lives!

2. A Demonstration Of God's Will - By yielding our bodies and our minds to God, we will be able to "*prove*" or "*live out*" God's will before a world that is looking. When the world sees you and me living lives that are absolutely spiritual, they will know that we have been transformed by the power of the Gospel of grace. We will be proof positive to a doubting world that God can take the worst and make the best out of it. We will be the evidence of His power to a perishing world.

Conclusion: So, the secret of living a holy life boils down to God having control of our minds, our bodies and our wills. Does that describe the life you are living? Is God in absolute control of all you have and are?