

SERVICE STARTS WITH SACRIFICE



Romans 12:1

His Sacrifice Motivates Our Sacrifice

It is said that Cyrus, the founder of the Persian Empire, once captured a prince and his family. When they came before him, Cyrus asked the prince, "What will you give me if I release you?" "The half of my wealth," he replied. "And if I release your children?" "Everything I possess." "And if I release your wife?" "Your Majesty, I will give you myself." Cyrus was so moved by his devotion that he freed them all. As they returned home, the prince said to his wife, "Was not Cyrus a handsome man?" With a look of deep love for her husband, she answered, "I did not notice. I could only keep my eyes on you, the one who was willing to give himself for me" (Unknown).

Our Sacrifice Resembles His Sacrifice

- The word translated “present” (Gr. *paristēmi*) in the context of Rom 12:1 means to offer a sacrifice or dedicate something (Rom 6:13, 16, 19; cf. Luke 2:22; Eph 5:27; Col 1:22; 2 Tim 2:15).
- What we offer/dedicate to God is our bodies (= sanctification; Rom 12:1; cf. v. 2; 1:24; 6:6, 10, 12; 7:24; 8:13; 1 Cor 6:18–20; 9:27).
- Like those sacrifices in the OT, we must offer our bodies to God as sacrifices that are living, holy, and pleasing to him (Rom 12:1; cf. 6:11, 13; 2 Cor 5:9; Eph 5:10; Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 2:5).

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Ministry that costs nothing, accomplishes nothing.
(John Henry Jowett)

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Our Sacrifice Becomes Our Service

- The OT service/worship (Gr. *latreia*) foreshadowed the service that we offer to God (i.e., the sanctification of our bodies for Christ; Rom 12:1; cf. 9:4; Heb 8:5; 9:1, 6; Matt 4:10; Rom 1:24–25).
- The word translated “spiritual” (or “reasonable”; Gr. *logikos*) indicates that our sacrifice/service must stem from the mind and be “characterized by careful thinking” (Rom 12:1; cf. v. 2; 1 Pet 2:2).
- Our sacrifice/service to God is not unconscious. It is our decision to dedicate our bodies to God just as Jesus gave up his body for us.

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Great occasions for serving God come seldom, but little ones surround us daily. (Francis de Sales)

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One of the greatest rewards that we ever receive for serving God is the permission to do still more for him. (Charles Spurgeon)

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