

DOES MY SACRIFICE LIVE?

A couple of weeks ago I brought a message asking if we are a “*Living Sacrifice*” and “*are we expectant of God*”.

I quoted Pastor Paul de Jong:

Our future is conditioned by the revelations we activate. We end up living out ‘what we see’! Paul de Jong Senior Leader - LIFE AKLD - NZ

Today I want to address the issue of being ‘Living Sacrifices’ again but from another angle.

The Bible gives us a standard for our commitment and faith that establishes our motivation and commitment for everything:

ROMANS 12:1

“I beseech (urge) you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable (rational) service.”

Personally I have always limited or restricted my thinking on this passage to “yes I am willing to lay my life down for God” ... you know with that ‘final sacrifice mind-set’.

But I have been thinking a whole bunch about what God has called me to do. And if I couple that with the things I have recently been hearing from God ... it has got me thinking ... that whilst ‘*yes I am willing to lay it all down for God*’ ... there is clearly a lot that I need to PICK UP!

I read in my Friday morning reading something that really made me stop and think. This is what I read:

We seem to think that God wants us to give up things! God nowhere tells us to give up things for the sake of giving them up. He tells us to give them up for the sake of the only thing worth having – that is, life with Himself. It is of no value to God to give Him your life for death. He wants you to be a "living sacrifice," to let Him have all your powers that have been saved and sanctified through Jesus. This is the thing that is acceptable to God.
Oswald Chambers

As we begin to get into the New Year I really want you to begin to think about what it is that God has called you to. When I brought the last message about Living Sacrifices, I asked a question of you:

Q. WHAT IS THE WORD OF GOD OVER YOU, OVER YOUR LIFE?

If you remember I was speaking partly about Mary and how the ‘Word’ over her was that she would carry and give birth to God’s Son.

Each of you was made in God’s Image: GENESIS 1:26-27

Thus I believe it is OK to say, “You were made in the image of a Creator God – thus each of you has **creative genius** within”.

WE NEED TO BE COMFORTABLE WITH THAT!

GENESIS 1:1 – In the beginning God created

EPHESIANS 5:1 – Be imitators of God

IF YOU WON’T BE THE YOU THAT GOD CREATED – THERE WILL BE A GAP!

What is it that God has called you to, designed you to, created you to – CREATE?

Is it a:

- Great Home
- Machinery
- Processes of Industry
- Methods of Information Gathering
- Amazing Young People who are hungry for God

The list is virtually endless!

Theologians have ascertained that 70% of Jesus’ teaching was application!

We need to be prepared to roll up our sleeves and ‘have a go’. God has not and will not leave us ... neither is He about to ‘hang us out to dry’. He has created a good work for each of us to do and He will be there with us while we do it!

Did you realise that Creativity and work are actually joined at the hip?

Just imagine what would happen if a woman who has carried a baby for the God-prescribed period of 9 months then turns around and decides that ... actually I am not prepared to do the ‘Labour’, just give me my baby.

For anything to be birthed there is a three step process: CREATION – LABOUR – DELIVERY

We need to be willing to go through the Labour BEFORE the Delivery. Sometimes it can get a little messy ... that's OK, God isn't scared of a little mess ... Look at what happened with the Apostle Paul and yet this is what he said

1TIMOTHY 1:12

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me as faithful, putting me into the ministry.”

He wants you to be a ‘living sacrifice,’ to let Him have all your powers that have been saved and sanctified through Jesus. This is the thing that is acceptable to God.

We don't need to be afraid about going through it alone. God has sent His Holy Spirit to be the one that empowers and enables us.

God through His son and through His Holy Spirit empowers and enables creativity. God is not one for Robotic Boredom ... in the Holy Spirit there is FREEDOM.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17

“Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit is there is liberty.”

GALATIANS 5:1

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made you free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”

There is a warning that comes with this creative freedom given to us by God...

GALATIANS 5:13

“For you brethren have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

The very words ‘living sacrifice’ ... make it very clear that we are not just for ourselves, but we are for each other.

WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE ‘BREAD OF LIFE’ ...LET’S SERVE IT AS CREATIVELY AS POSSIBLE!

THE FATHER INVENTED IT! THE SON MODELLED IT!

THE SPIRIT EMPOWERES IT! PEOPLE DESPERATELY NEED IT!

God has placed within each and every one of you something that He has personally designed you to do.

The Apostle Paul recognised this when he said:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:10

“But by the Grace of God, I am what I am, and His Grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me.”

Don't trade imagination for standardisation - don't trade dreaming for dogma

(Dogma – a code or unbendable doctrine)

Don't let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put that passing time to the best possible use. Earl Nightingale motivational speaker and author

In conclusion can I ask you, right at the beginning of this year to set some time aside and really ask God what He is calling you to do?

Let's come before God with humility, recognise our absolute, complete and utter dependence on God and allow Him to speak into our lives.

We need to recognise God with reverence and awe and come before Him with humility, recognise our absolute, complete and utter dependence on Him and allow Him to speak into our lives.

PSALM 25:9

“The humble He guides in justice and the humble He teaches His ways”

This year ... let's not be like the Israelites in the desert who lived every day in the miracle atmosphere of God but never actually 'knew God personally'.

Let's be like Moses who knew God personally. The difference: Moses knew God's heart and ways – the Israelites only knew God by His acts!

Let's be sacrifices who are prepared to LIVE for God and allow Him to work through us!