

## “How to Live as a Living Sacrifice.”

Lately, I have been reading through the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

With the exception of Haggai and Zechariah all the other Prophets were called to bring warnings of Judgement to the people over their unfaithfulness, disobedience, sin-filled practices and their false sense of security in their privileged relationships with God.

I am not sure that I would have wanted to deliver the things they were required to speak to the Kings and people of the day.

I have been teaching over recent weeks on being a Living Sacrifice. We have looked at the questions of:

- Am I a Living Sacrifice?
- Is my Sacrifice Living?
- What ‘IS’ the Word of God over my Life and How to get it?
- TODAY – ‘HOW’ to live as a Living Sacrifice.

Every now and then I get an overwhelming and slightly frightening leading to remind you about God’s Sovereignty, His Majesty and His Absolute Power and Authority.

This ‘leading’, has been growing in me as I have read through the Books of the Prophets. And as I have taught on being Living Sacrifices I have had growing in me the sense that GOD’S AWESOMENESS NEEDS TO BE DECLARED AGAIN & AGAIN.

Last September I took the Church through a series of messages on the Kingdom of God and I described how many throughout the Bible and today lived and are living. This is what I said:

*I asked what was needed in the Church for the Manifest Presence of God to be experienced and concluded that God was looking for someone, a people, a Church; who would give Jesus complete unhindered and irrevocable Lordship of their lives.*

I described how I have seen in many Churches of today; *these being filled with Christians who are operating out of a JUDAS SPIRIT.*

*Judas was near to Jesus, sat with Jesus, ate with Jesus, was taught by Jesus, cared about Jesus ... but Judas wanted intimacy without covenant.*

*Judas wanted to simply 'co-habitat' with Jesus, not 'covenant' with Jesus. He wanted a defacto relationship with Jesus.*

**We cannot have a defacto relationship with Jesus!**

THE DIFFERENCE?

*Defacto - Cohabitant = I want you to meet my needs.*

*Covenant = I will lay my life down for you.*

Jesus regularly spoke of the "Kingdom of God" not the "Democratic State of God".

The "Kingdom of God" was the central message, theme and point of all of Jesus' teaching. Over one hundred times in the New Testament we read the term "The Kingdom of God".

Some people may say that is wrong ... Jesus' main message was 'Salvation'. Actually, No – Jesus said in:

LUKE 4:43(NKJV)

"...but He said to them, "I must preach the Kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."

Western thinking makes the Kingdom of God an '*after death destination*' and wants to continue to live in a democratic mindset.

Here is the failing of a Western Democracy ... WE ALL STILL WANT WHAT 'WE' WANT AND IF WE DON'T GET IT WE VOTE THE LEADER OUT!

KINGDOM = (Gk –Basileia) = 'the dominion & rulership of' – 'a foundation of power'

If we are to understand 'HOW' to live as a 'Living Sacrifice' then we have to understand what it is to live under the authority of a King and not an '*elected by us*' government.

We must understand that we cannot treat the Bible simply as a Book of History. It actually is a 'Book of Life' ... THE WHOLE BOOK !

2 TIMOTHY 3:16

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

ROMANS 15:4

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NKJV - For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

MSG - Even if it was written in Scripture long ago, you can be sure it's written for us. God wants the combination of his steady, constant calling and warm, personal counsel in Scripture to come to characterize us, keeping us alert for whatever he will do next.

The conditioning of mankind is such that we are always looking for the 'new thing' the 'next', the 'wonderful' ... even Christians, as if God is constantly evolving into something more and more wonderful, spectacular - but we serve a God who never changes.

HEBREWS 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

JOHN 8:58

Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

Perhaps you are sitting here today and you are wondering, "Tom – just what are you saying today?"

Well in short – If you are not prepared to live a life completely sold out for Jesus, in such that He has total authority, not selective or partial – democratic – authority, but complete Lordship, complete Kingship, Absolute Power in your life, then you run the risk of being one of the ones who don't make it.

MATTHEW 25:1- 13

The five who missed out all 'knew the Bridegroom', had a form of relationship with the Bridegroom, lived in 'partial preparation, not complete commitment' to the Bridegroom.

There is much that is vying for our attention these days. And I believe the attention grabbing headlines and concerns of the world will increase more and more as the Day for Jesus' return draws closer.

I hope you don't think I am simply preaching a Hell Fire and Brimstone message here – but if it does cause you to stop and think seriously about your 'eternal' future ... EXCELLENT!

The Fear of Global Warming should not consume us – the Fear of Eternal Warming should consume us!

We should be more concerned about:

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- redemption than recycling
- God's Peace instead of Green peace
- God's House rather than Greenhouse

### MATTHEW 24:3-14

Verse 12 makes a clear statement; “because lawlessness will abound the love of many will grow cold”.

What is lawlessness? It is the choice to live outside of the authority of God.

Here's the really scary bit ... if people continue to ignore God, thumb their noses at His Righteousness and Holiness ... if they continue as described in 2 TIMOTHY 4:3 ...then God Himself will take action:

### 2 Thessalonians 2:11 (MSG)

And since they're so obsessed with evil, God rubs their noses in it—gives them what they want.

I want to finish this series on “Being a Living Sacrifice” with three passages of God's Word that is His call to you:

### 1 THESSALONIANS 5:14-22

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

### HEBREWS 10:19-25

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus,<sup>20</sup> by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,<sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God,<sup>22</sup> let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.<sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.<sup>25</sup> Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in

the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

## 2 TIMOTHY 4: 1-5

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: <sup>2</sup> Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup> They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup> But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

Discharge all the duties of your ministry? What is that? Where does that start?

## 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.”