

July 14, 2019

Session 15: Yielding our Bodies

In our last session, we were running the references to what it means to present our body a living sacrifice. The first time Paul mentions anything about the “bodies” of the saints is in Romans 8:11.

Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also **quicken your mortal bodies** by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

As we live in accordance with what God has made us to be in Christ, as we refuse to yield our bodies to sin, but yield the members of our bodies to God because that is who we have been made to be in Christ, that is what it means to present our body a living sacrifice. Just look at the verses:

1. We are called to walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so **we also should walk in newness of life.**

Let’s step aside to talk about “newness of life” for a moment. Simply put, could we not say that “newness of life” is in contrast to our “old” way of life; the way we used to live? And how did we used to live?

Ephesians 2:2 Wherein **in time past ye walked according to the course of this world**, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also **we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind**; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Notice in vs. 3, it says that we all had our conversation (the way we lived our lives) in the lusts of our flesh. We lived to fulfill the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

Now keep this in mind. We used to live to fulfill the lusts of our flesh. Without knowing anything else, if you learn that you must now walk “in newness of life,” then what does that tell you? It says that we no longer live to fulfill the desires of our flesh; we no longer live to please the prince of the power of the air, but we now live to fulfill the desires of the Spirit and please our heavenly Father.

2. We reckon ourselves to be dead to sin and live unto God.

Romans 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves **to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God** through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ah! This now is the mechanical means by which we no longer live to fulfill the lusts of our flesh. God has given us a new identity in connection with the sanctification that He gave us a free gift of grace when we trusted Jesus Christ as our Savior.

By doing so, God has broken the old ties we had to sin so that we no longer are subject to it. Part of the process whereby that was accomplished was by putting us under grace (and not under the law). (Rom. 6:14)

3. We do not let sin reign in our mortal body (which is to say that we do not obey it)

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

4. We yield ourselves unto God and the members of our bodies as instruments of righteousness unto God

Romans 6:13 Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

And here comes the important part: We do not overcome the temptations of sin by the best efforts of our flesh. Neither do we yield ourselves to God by the best efforts of our flesh. We do both of those because God has provided those things for us through the death of His Son, and gave them to us as a free gift of grace in response to our faith in Christ.

We say no to sin because God has made us dead to sin.

We yield ourselves to God and our members as instruments of His righteousness because He made us spiritually alive unto Himself. In other words, we are supposed to take the information about our new identity in Christ, see it for the actual true thing that it is, understanding that is the only way we will acceptably overcome sin (i.e. – by the Spirit and not the flesh), and live out of it every day.

When we trusted Jesus Christ, we were made to be the righteousness of God in Christ. That is our justification status.

We were also made to be the holiness of God in Christ in connection with our sanctification status.

Before we trusted Christ and received a new identity in Him, it was impossible to produce a righteousness that God would accept because of who we were in Adam. It tainted everything. Even the good things we tried to do were nothing more than the self-righteous efforts of the flesh to produce its own good works, its own sanctification.

But thank God, He made us to be a new creature. That is to say, God did away with who were in Adam; God put that “old man” to death so that all of that identity in Adam died too. That way, we are no longer “under sin” and “unrighteous” and “enemies” of God. All of the old things (in Adam) are passed away and they have been replaced with the elements of a new identity in Jesus Christ. We do not live the way we used to because Christ has put our old man to death.

Romans 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

In response to our faith in Jesus Christ, God crucified our old man (which was a servant to sin) and then He raised us to walk in newness of life, giving us the ability to overcome sin by the power of the sanctification which was given to us in Christ. Our new identity gives us the ability to produce the righteousness of God in our mortal bodies. Our mortal bodies are quickened when we live out of who we have been made to be in Christ.

We are not doing this to “be a better person.” You have already been made to “be a better person” (to use the vernacular). Now, we are being called to live in accordance with who God has made us to be in Christ.

Now, to pull all these loose ends together, let us say it this way: When Paul beseeches us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, he is asking us to allow the Spirit to take possession of our bodies for His use; that use specifically being for us to be dead to sin and alive unto God in our daily function. That we yield our members to righteousness and not to sin because God has made us to be a new creature in Christ.

When you understand this issue and you begin to live out of it, you will be able to go before your Father in prayer, and present your body as an instrument of His righteousness and that is what it means to present your body a living sacrifice. We used to be servants to sin but now we yield our members (bodies) servants to righteousness unto holiness.

I need to add something to this understanding we are supposed to have. By what is said in Romans 7, we also should understand that none of this will be accomplished by keeping the law or some manmade version of it. This is going to be accomplished by grace.

And how is this done by grace? It is done by what God provided (our new identity in Christ; i.e. – dead to sin and alive unto God) and gave to us as a gift of His grace. When we live out of that, we are living by grace. And when we live out of that, we are allowing the Spirit to dwell in us and when the Spirit dwells in us, He is rousing us to fullness of spiritual function; quickening our mortal bodies. When He is quickening our mortal bodies in connection with overcoming sin, that is the reality of being a living sacrifice. For all intents and purposes, being a living sacrifice involves living out of the first two components of your sanctification.

Summation:

Being a living sacrifice involves understanding and living out of our new identity of being dead to sin and alive unto God.

Being a living sacrifice means we understand we are no longer servants of sin, but we reckon ourselves to be servants of righteousness (we are yielding the members of our body unto righteousness).

Being a living sacrifice means we are producing fruit unto holiness.

Being a living sacrifice means we understand that producing fruit unto holiness is not going to be done by keeping the Law, but will be by grace through faith; living out of our new identity in connection with our sanctification.

Being a living sacrifice means that with regard to sin, we “mind the things of the Spirit” (we are dead to sin and alive unto God) and when we do, the Spirit dwells in us to quicken our mortal bodies and produce functional life.

Because of our sanctification, we have to have the ability to replace sinful, carnal thinking, sinful conduct & behavior and the works of our flesh for a godly thought process, a godly conduct and a godly lifestyle.

Being a living sacrifice means we want to get grace abounding in our functional life.

The last thing to say here is to take the above issues which are part of what it means to be a living sacrifice and present yourself before your Father as functioning in accordance with these in your daily life.

Praying about your understanding of a living sacrifice:

- Tell God what it means to be a living sacrifice.
- Explain to God how it works; explain the process.

Praying about your function of being a living sacrifice:

- Tell Him how well you are doing functioning as a living sacrifice in your everyday life.
- Give Him an example of when you were a living sacrifice.
- Give Him an example of when you were not and how you can handle that differently in the future.

Once you understand how it works, this is about making decisions to deal with sin according to His provision.

We need to ask ourselves:

- Is there something I need to work on here?
- Have you talked with God about that?

This is a personal and intimate time of prayer with your Father whereby you will either pass this first aspect of the sonship checkpoint or you will not.

Does this checkpoint demand perfection in our function? I do not think it does.

But, it most certainly requires an absolutely clear understanding of how to employ the first two components of your sanctification to deal with sin in your life. There can be no “wiggle room” on that count.

Obviously, the better we function in accordance with this issue of being a living sacrifice, the more ready we will be to receive the education. If this is something you need to focus on, then do so. If this is already up and running in you, then great.

If you have neglected this issue of overcoming sin by living out of your new identity in Christ, you may be tempted to think you have blown it and you cannot go on. But before you think that, remember those five probing questions sitting over in Romans 8.

Romans 8:34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

That condemnation has to do with when we reject some doctrinal area and we balk at putting it to work in our lives. The good news is that this is fixable. All we have to do is go back, pick that doctrine up and begin to live out of it. Christ in his death and resurrection has made it possible for us to pick up anything that we have not putting into practice and integrate it into our lives without losing everything up to that point.

So, are you ready to go before your heavenly Father and tell Him what you know about being a living sacrifice? Are you ready to report on how well that has been working in you? Are you ready to present your body a living sacrifice? Are willing to give up (sacrifice) the desires of your flesh (your body) in order to be educated by your Father?

Look, this is a decision. Of course the flesh hates this. But you have been made “free from sin” and “alive unto God.” Live in accordance with who God has made you to be.

One aspect of our presentation is done and there are two more to go.

Presentation Issue #2: Holy

Romans 12:1 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.

What is the basic definition or concept of holy?

OED: holy – 1) Kept or regarded as inviolate from ordinary use, and appropriated or set apart for religious use or observance; consecrated, dedicated, sacred. 3a) of persons: specially belonging to, commissioned by or devoted to God

As we looked at the first two components of our sanctification, we have already encountered the concept of holiness. And in connection with that, we have already presented our body (and the members of our body) as “holy” in the sense of it being a living sacrifice; in the sense of it being quickened (endued with spiritual life which rouses it to fullness of function).

So why repeat that “holy” concept again in Romans 12. Actually, this is not a repeat but an emphasis on a particular aspect of presenting ourselves “holy.” By presenting ourselves as “holy,” we are not presenting the members of our body as “instruments of righteousness” or something like that. We have already done that as part of presenting ourselves a living sacrifice.

And since the “living sacrifice” issue was contained in Romans 6:1-8:13, we understand that this next issue of “holy” is going to be in connection with something more specific that what we have already encountered. In other words, this next aspect of our presentation goes beyond the information up to Romans 8:13.

We have talked before about something being “holy” when it is set apart to the purpose for which it was created. What we find in the next section of Romans is the particular purpose for which we were created.

Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the **sons of God**.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the **Spirit of adoption**, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

We were created to be adult, adopted sons and daughters of our heavenly Father; the third component of our sanctification. This is our purpose. It is the manner of our service. It is why our Father saved us, so that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, **that we might receive the adoption of sons**.

When we understand what adoption is (the installing of the Father’s wisdom in His sons with a view toward equipping them to labor with Him in His business), when we understand this is what God had in mind for us before the foundation of the world, when we understand adopted sons and daughters are the means by which God will repossess the heavenly place back to Himself, then we realize that this “sonship” is goal of all our Father desires to do with us.

Sonship (from the state of being an adopted son) is the manner in which we are to put our sanctified position in Christ into effect from now on.

With that in mind, let us now tie that to the second aspect of our presentation. The manner in which we have been set apart; the purpose for which we were created; the way we are to “walk in newness of life,” and the means by which we put our sanctified status into practice is as an adopted son who is walking after the Spirit and not minding the things of the flesh.

In Romans 8:14-15 we encountered our first volitional testing point where we are asked to make a decision about the offer being made to us. Are we going to know wisdom and instruction or are we going to be a “foolish” son? The cry of “Abba, Father” is the “yes” to the opportunity to be educated by our Father.

And this is the specific aspect of “holy” that we are after. Romans 12:1 is where we present ourselves as “holy,” which means we are intelligently presenting ourselves as being adopted sons who will be educated to labor with our Father, as adult sons and no longer treated as children, as those who have said “yes” to our Father’s opportunity to go to work with Him throughout eternity.

Romans 12:1 is asking us to:

- 1) Present our bodies a living sacrifice by knowing how to overcome sin by the first two components of our sanctification and produce a righteousness God is well pleased with
- 2) Intelligently present ourselves as “holy” in the sense that we know what being an adopted son is all about and we have said “yes” to the opportunity

By saying, “intelligently present,” I mean to say that we should have an appreciation for at least **3 general components:**

- 1) What adoption as an adult son is going to mean for the son

It means the son understands:

- the nature of the relationship from now on: a real Father-to-son relationship!
- the purpose of Biblical Adoption: a father installing his wisdom into his son so that the son would labor with his father in all his father’s business.
- the 3 basic features of sonship liberty: 1) Freedom from fear motivation. 2) Freedom from the rudiments of the world. 3) Freedom from governorship and limited decision-making.
- As a beneficiary of the New Covenant, God has made the son spiritually fit through JUEL and SUFL

Understanding those four issues give the son a foundation for being an adopted son means.

- 2) Appreciation for what the son’s responsibilities are in connection with it
 - to appreciate the value of the Father’s wisdom and the curriculum which contains it
 - that nothing in this life can compare to it
 - that every other endeavor is worthless compared to this
 - And therefore to make the 3-fold commitment to the education

3) Appreciation for what it holds as a prospect for the son throughout the balance of his sonship life

- That Christ will be formed in the son
- That Satan's PoE will oppose the son to make him quit
- The sufficiency of God's word to produce a patient endurance, and to make the son more than a conqueror

Once these things are understood and they do their work in the heart of a son, the son begins to have the same measure of zeal and enthusiasm for getting this education that His Father has to give it.

I think this enthusiasm is often behind the statements I hear people make when they say things like, "When I found sonship I found what I did not know I was looking for." Or "I knew there had to be something more." Or other things along those lines.

Once we have made the cry of "Abba, Father," we will be able to talk to our Father about those three issues we covered earlier and present ourselves as sons who understand that we are presenting ourselves as adult, adopted sons who are "reporting for training" so to speak.

Summation of presenting ourselves as "holy:"

- That we have an intelligent understanding of the information in Romans 8:14-15
- That we have made the cry of "Abba, Father" and we have an understanding of what that entails
- We present ourselves as having been "set apart" but in a more specific sense than sanctification in general, but as an adopted son who is looking to be educated in his Father's wisdom for the purpose of laboring with His Father

And now we can move to the final aspect of our presentation.