

Living Sacrifice

Ready:

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. - Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)

Set

Last year, I was on the junior varsity basketball team. Our record was 23-4. It was the best record our coach had ever had. However, he was not pleased with us all of the time. He continually told us that even though we were winning games, we had not played to our full potential. He told us we had yet to play a full four quarters at our hardest. Just because we beat other teams the coach believed we were not living up to the standards he had for us on the court.

I believe this same scenario happens in life too. We may feel like we are a good person, by what world's standards, but what about God's standards? Christians often hear the words "The world is going to tell you (fill in the blank) is OK. I know I have heard this a countless number of times. As a Christian we hear this and make a decision not to listen to the world. Some of those things that worlds says are normal are drinking, telling vulgar jokes, using profane language and premarital sex. When we abstain from these things we are saying no to the world. But if all we are doing is trying to be "a good Christian" than we are still living by what the world's standard of Christianity. How does the world view Christianity? I might be so bold as to say they view Christians as people who do not go to parties, do not use profane language, and are kind. Overall, they are goody two shoes who are made fun of and looked at as weird.

Have you ever felt like this? Sometimes we think we are being what God wants us to be, but God asks, "Are you living by how the world thinks you should live as a Christian or are you living by my standard of Christianity?" You see, by trying to not be conformed to what the world's standard of what Christianity should look like, we do not reflect the relationship that God truly wants from us, we do not reflect His standard which is not only doing the right thing, but living a transformed life. God wants his children to live much higher than the world's standard of Christianity! Being made fun of because we are not cool is not enough! God wants our whole effort, 24/7. He wants a living sacrifice! He wants our attention in the TV shows we watch, the music we listen to, and the clothes we wear. He wants us to represent him to the people we hang out with and the way we talk to our parents. He wants every second of every waking moment devoted to Him!

So you could be "winning games" right now. But are you playing the whole four quarters? God doesn't want a win, he wants a full effort the entire game, which is as long as you live. So let's try to be a living sacrifice for God.

Go

1. How do we conform to the world even when we think we are above it?
2. What things can you change in your life to be a living sacrifice?
3. Are you doing what God calls His followers to do by giving Him your all, all of the time?

Workout

1 Cor. 1:10

Rom 6:13

Eph. 5:10



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