

Better Way Apostolic Church- Bible Class

Subject: SACRIFICE Now Celebrate Later! 2 Samuel 24:24

In our common use of the term, sacrifice is a kind of substitution. We think of giving up one thing in order to obtain something of greater value. Parents sacrifice a fancy new car to save money for a child's education. A baseball player executes a "sacrifice bunt" to give a teammate an opportunity to score a run. In the Old Testament a sacrifice was an act of worship by which the blood of an animal was shed to obtain forgiveness from sin-which is of far greater value. All the sacrifices of the Old Testament anticipated God's ultimate sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for the sins of the world.

WHY DID PEOPLE SACRIFICE ANIMALS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT?

Genesis 3:21 . . . The Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife. When Adam and Eve sinned, God used animals to cover their guilt and shame.

Genesis 8:20 . . . Noah built an altar to the Lord and sacrificed on it the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose. And the Lord was pleased with the sacrifice.

The first people understood that blood sacrifice was necessary to cover (atone for) sin.

Leviticus 10:17 . . . The sin offering . . . was given to you for removing the guilt of the community and for making atonement for the people before the Lord.

Leviticus 17:11 . . . The life of any creature is in its blood. I have given you the blood so you can make atonement for your sins. It is the blood, representing life, that brings you atonement.

Hebrews 9:22 . . . Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.

In order for sins to be atoned for and forgiven, death-the shedding of blood-is required. Before Christ, animal sacrifice fulfilled this function.

Exodus 12:3, 23 . . . Announce to the whole community that on the tenth day of this month each family must choose a lamb or a young goat for a sacrifice. . . . For the Lord will pass through the land and strike down the Egyptians. But when he sees the blood . . . the Lord will pass over your home. He will not permit the Destroyer to enter and strike down your firstborn.

Animals were used as substitutes for people so that people's blood would not be shed.

Genesis 15:9-10, 17 . . . The Lord told him, "Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Abram took all these and killed them. He cut each one down the middle and laid the halves side by side. . . . As the sun went down and it became dark, Abram saw a smoking firepot and a flaming torch pass between the halves of the carcasses.

Psalms 50:5 . . . Bring my faithful people to me-those who made a covenant with me by giving sacrifices.

Sacrifice was the way God ratified (sealed) his covenant relationship with his people.

WHY DID GOD REQUIRE SACRIFICES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT-AND WHY WERE THEY SO BLOODY?

Leviticus 1:1-13 . . . Lay your hand on its head so the Lord will accept it as your substitute, thus making atonement for you.

Exodus 24:6-8 . . . Then Moses sprinkled the blood from the basins over the people.

Leviticus 17:11 . . . It is the blood, representing life, that brings you atonement.

The sacrificial system reminded Israel of the seriousness of sin before their holy God. The sacrifice symbolized the person's desire to be forgiven for sin and thus be restored to God and receive new life. A life had to be given up (the animal's) so that a life could be spared (the

person's). The blood of the sacrifice represented one life being poured out in substitution for another.

WHY DOES GOD SAY, "I DESIRE MERCY AND NOT SACRIFICE"?

Isaiah 1:11-13 . . . I am sick of your sacrifices . . . [they] are all sinful and false.

Amos 5:21-27 . . . I hate . . . the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies . . . Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice.

The sacrifice was an important part of worship for the Israelites. But when their worship became mere ritual without sincerity, it was worthless in God's eyes. He desires sincerity from us just as much.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SAY, "JESUS IS THE LAMB OF GOD"?

John 1:29 . . . Look! There is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Just as a lamb's blood brought about forgiveness in the Old Testament, so the blood of Jesus, through his death on the cross, takes away the sins of the world.

Hebrews 9:11-15 . . . He took his own blood, and with it secured our salvation forever.

The sacrifice of Christ's shed blood replaced once and for all the blood of lambs and bulls.

1 Peter 1:18-19 . . . He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.

The death of Christ, confirmed by his shed blood, was the precious price paid for our salvation.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE?

John 1:29 . . . The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! There is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Romans 3:25 . . . God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger against us. We are made right with God when we believe that Jesus shed his blood, sacrificing his life for us.

1 Peter 2:24 . . . He personally carried away our sins in his own body on the cross so we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. You have been healed by his wounds!

Christ took the punishment that our sins deserved and made atonement for us, not by covering our sins, but by taking them away.

Matthew 26:26-28 . . . As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. . . . "Take it and eat it, for this is my body." And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, "Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out to forgive the sins of many." Christ's death ratifies (seals) a new covenant relationship between God and those who come to him by faith.

Romans 8:3 . . . The law of Moses could not save us, because of our sinful nature. But God put into effect a different plan to save us. He sent his own Son in a human body like ours, except that ours are sinful. God destroyed sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins.

Animal sacrifices could not take away our sin; only Christ's sacrifice could take away our sin and make it possible for us to have eternal life.

John 3:16 . . . God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

John 14:6 . . . Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

Acts 4:12 . . . There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them.

1 Timothy 2:5 . . . There is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and people. He is the man Christ Jesus.

Because Christ is the means by which forgiveness has been obtained, faith in God through Christ is the only means of salvation.

WHAT KINDS OF SACRIFICES ARE WE CALLED TO MAKE?

Genesis 13:9 . . . Take your choice of any section of the land you want.

Like Abram, sometimes we need to give up something we want in order to keep peace in the family.

Ruth 1:16 . . . I will go wherever you go, and live wherever you live.

Ruth was willing to leave her homeland in order to care for Naomi. Such a sacrifice showed her understanding of what is truly important.

Matthew 19:29 . . . Everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or property, for my sake, will receive a hundred times as much in return and will have eternal life.

Following Jesus involves personal sacrifice.

WHAT KINDS OF SACRIFICES DOES GOD WANT US TO GIVE HIM TODAY?

Romans 12:1 . . . Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice-the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask?

2 Timothy 4:6 . . . As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God.

God wants us to give him our whole lives.

Hebrews 13:15 . . . With Jesus' help, let us continually offer our sacrifice of praise to God by proclaiming the glory of his name.

When we praise God, we are offering him a pleasing sacrifice.

Ephesians 5:2 . . . Live a life filled with love for others, following the example of Christ, who loved you and gave himself as a sacrifice to take away your sins. And God was pleased, because that sacrifice was like sweet perfume to him.

Hebrews 13:16 . . . Don't forget to do good and to share what you have with those in need, for such sacrifices are very pleasing to God.

As Christ gave himself for us, he wants us to give ourselves in serving other people-even to the point of giving our lives for them.

WHAT KINDS OF SACRIFICES ARE DANGEROUS FOR US TO MAKE?

1 Samuel 3:13 . . . Judgment is coming for his family, because his sons are blaspheming God and he hasn't disciplined them.

2 Samuel 11:15 . . . Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed!

Eli sacrificed his family life for his career. David sacrificed the life of another man to hide his lustful deceit. Sacrificing good for evil fulfills our selfish desires and leads to ruin.

PROMISE FROM GOD:

Hebrews 9:27-28 . . . Just as it is destined that each person dies only once and after that comes judgment, so also Christ died only once as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again but not to deal with our sins again. This time he will bring salvation to all those who are eagerly waiting for him.

BODY

GOD IS THE CREATOR OF THE HUMAN BODY.

As an artist gives value to his or her work, so God gives infinite value to us by being our artist. God's character goes into the creation of every person. When you feel worthless or even begin to hate yourself, remember that God's Spirit is ready and willing to work within you. We should

have as much respect for ourselves as our Maker has for us.

KEY BIBLE VERSE: Our earthly bodies, which die and decay, will be different when they are resurrected, for they will never die. (1 Corinthians 15:42)

WE DO NOT DIE WHEN OUR PHYSICAL BODY DIES.

In this section Paul launches into a discussion about what our resurrected bodies will be like. If you could select your own body, what kind would you choose-strong, athletic, beautiful? Paul explains that we will be recognized in our resurrected bodies, yet they will be better than we can imagine, for they will be made to live forever. Our present bodies are perishable and liable to decay. Our resurrection bodies will be transformed. We will still have our own personalities and individualities, but these will be perfected through Christ's work. These spiritual bodies will not be limited by the laws of nature. This does not necessarily mean we'll be superhuman, but our bodies will be different and more capable than our present earthly bodies. The Bible does not reveal everything that our resurrected bodies will be able to do, but we know they will be perfect, without sickness or disease (see Philippians 3:21).

KEY BIBLE VERSE: Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice-the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? (Romans 12:1)

OUR BODY IS TO BE A LIVING SACRIFICE.

When sacrificing an animal according to God's law, a priest would kill the animal, cut it in pieces, and place it on the altar. Sacrifice was important, but even in the Old Testament God made it clear that obedience from the heart was much more important (see 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 40:6; Amos 5:21-24). God wants us to offer ourselves, not animals, as living sacrifices-daily laying aside our own desires to follow him, putting all our energy and resources at his disposal and trusting him to guide us. We do this out of gratitude that our sins have been forgiven.

KEY BIBLE VERSE: Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

GOD'S SPIRIT LIVES IN THE BODIES OF CHRISTIANS.

What did Paul mean when he said that our body belongs to God? Many people say they have the right to do whatever they want with their own bodies. Although they think that this is freedom, they are really enslaved to their own desires. When we become Christians, the Holy Spirit fills us and lives within us. Therefore, we no longer own our body. "Bought with a high price" refers to slaves purchased at auction. Christ's death freed us from sin but also obligates us to his service. If you live in a building owned by someone else, you try not to violate the building rules. Because your body belongs to God, you must not violate his standards for living.

Bible Verses about Body Piercings

Leviticus 19:28 - Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I [am] the LORD.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Exodus 21:1 - Now these [are] the judgments which thou shalt set before them.

Exodus 21:6 - Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

Galatians 3:23-25 - But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (

1 Corinthians 10:31 - Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Timothy 2:9 - In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

Ephesians 2:15 - Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, [so] making peace;

1 Corinthians 6:19 - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Romans 14:23 - And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because [he eateth] not of faith: for whatsoever [is] not of faith is sin.

Romans 10:4 - For Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

1 Corinthians 6:13 - Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body [is] not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

Deuteronomy 15:17 - Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust [it] through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise.

Deuteronomy 14:1 - Ye [are] the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.

Exodus 33:5-6

For the Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.

Hosea 2:13

And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the Lord.

Isaiah 3:16-21

16 Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon,

19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

21 The rings, and nose jewels,