

Reasonable Service

As we examine our expectations in life **Romans 12:1-2** comes to my mind frequently. It reads: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Paul goes on to point out that we need to be a living sacrifice. What does it mean to be a living sacrifice? Just consider what it means to be alive. It means to be active, persistent, to not be dead. Jesus goes on to talk to church in Sardis of their failure by being dead (**Revelation 3:1-6**).

Secondly, he states to be holy and acceptable to God. We cannot expect God to accept us based upon our own righteousness. It is directed and given by God of how we are to be acceptable. It does matter how we live our life. But also, holiness is key to this. Holy can be defined as pure, hallowed, and sacred. We are to be set apart from evil (**Romans 12:9**) in understanding holiness. Sin corrupts us and separates us from God.

But this is a reasonable service or request given by God. How many times do we hear that God's way is just impossible? Or what about when people say we just need to get with the times; God's way is ancient and needs to know that change or adaptation to the times needs to take place. Or another word is progressivism. We are never asked something that is a burden (**I John 5:3**). For instance, commands are not burdensome for us to keep as the perception of others may differ. Also, we are not asked or put into a situation beyond what we are able to handle (**I Corinthians 10:13**). God has a plan for each one of us if we will seek and find him. We can be assured that each trial we have in this life we can handle and overcome and have a way of escape.

We understand how this reasonable request takes place in verse two of Romans twelve. Do not conform to this world. The world is passing away and all the lust that is of it and in it (**I John 2:15-17**). These works are not of God and will no longer be in existence. However, the world wants us to mix and mold into the same cut as everything and everyone else. When one does not practice holiness, being a living sacrifice, and no longer being acceptable to God one becomes conformed to the world.

We look at verse two again and Paul says transform by the renewing of our mind. Think about a butterfly. Before a butterfly is seen flying around it is first this caterpillar. Something that is not as beautiful as the butterfly. But as the caterpillar develops and begins to transform it enters into the pupa and into the cocoon. After some time, it comes out into something completely different than when it enters in. That is what it means to be a Christian. We are to be transformed. We are told we need to repent (**Acts 2:38**) and what this transformation truly means in **Ephesians 4:17-24**. It is to no longer walk or live as everyone else lives. But we are to change. The care for God comes first (**Mark 12:30**). We are to keep all His commands (**John 14:15**) not just pick and choose what we want. Again, this is a reasonable request or service that God has indeed given to us.

However, if we are willing to follow and obey in this reasonable request God has offered eternal life for the faithful (**Matthew 7:21**) not just saying but truly whole heartedly doing the will of God our Father. The question is, will you? Will you put the cares of this world aside? Will you make that transformation from being in sin and have them washed away through baptism and being transformed and live faithfully to God? It is our reasonable service and expectation from God!

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