

The Joy of Giving It All (Part 2)

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer emphasizes the importance of presenting our lives as living sacrifices to God, motivated by His mercies and compelled by His love.

Duration: 37:21

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 2:8-9

Topics: "Surrender To God", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker urges the audience to recognize and appreciate the abundant mercy of God. He emphasizes the need to continually die to self and submit to the sovereignty of Christ. The speaker warns young people against taking control of their lives and encourages them to surrender to God's plan. He also highlights the central importance of Jesus Christ in our lives and emphasizes the simplicity of following God's Word. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the transformative power of God's mercy and the need to live a life fully surrendered to Him.

Transcript

I want us to go to Romans chapter 12, verse one, Romans chapter 12, verse one. Two weeks ago I was here and we only got through the first few words. We'll begin again.

Romans chapter 12, verse one. So we'll all stand for the reading of God's word. Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God to present your bodies 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 is the will of God, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Let's pray. Father, I come before you in the name of your son, and I thank you for every mercy that has been granted us.

And I know, Lord, that we know so very little. We've tracked down so very little of your mercy. It has been so lavished upon us, Lord, with grace that sometimes we fail to even recognize the greatest portions that have been given to us.

But, Lord, I pray that you would open up our minds, that we would see all that you have done for us in Christ and that it would cause us, Lord, to give our lives as living sacrifices. To walk with you for your glory. To honor you in all that we do, to conform every aspect of our being to the word of God.

Give us grace, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen. You may be seated.

Thank you. Last week, we went over the first phrases of this text, and I just want to kind of go through a summary. It says, Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God.

Paul uses the word urge, which is sort of pastoral. In a sense, he is speaking as a father, as a spiritual father, as a pastor, as someone who dearly loves the people to whom he is writing. He loves them.

And so he's urging them to do certain things. I can't tell you how many times throughout my ministry and fatherhood and friendships this has applied to my life. And I'm sure it is applied to yours.

You have seen loved ones, people that you dearly loved, who were either lacking in some things they should have been doing or walking down a wrong road into danger. Maybe a child, maybe a friend. And you've urged them.

You've pleaded with them. You've exhorted them. Or you see someone who's kind of lackadaisical in their Christian life and they're beginning to be influenced more by the world and you hurt inside for them.

And you want to urge them and plead with them to return to Christ. That's the idea that Paul has here when he says, I urge you, brethren. Another thing of this word that pops out, brethren, to me is so very important and it is this.

And I tell you this because you're going to have a pastor one day in this pulpit. You need to understand this. I am not the anointed of God, nor will the pastor that you choose be the anointed of God.

You are all the anointed of God. And when I speak from this pulpit, I speak with authority only if what I say conforms to the word of God. That's where the authority comes from.

And we are all given the Holy Spirit. So when I preach to you from this pulpit or someone else preaches to you, you are to open up your Bibles and see if these things are so. Because the same Holy Spirit that dwells in me to a degree dwells in you to a degree.

We are all priests. We are all ministers. We are all required.

We cannot simply close the book and depend on someone else. We are all required to know God's word. That's something I strongly want to admonish you about, is that you would believe that and do that.

Every one of you has the Holy Spirit if you are born again. Every one of you has discernment. And for this church to function, you must all believe that you are ministers of Christ and must open up the Bible.

And you must investigate everything that is said and done. So Paul says, I urge you, brethren, here he is an apostle. I mean, the big twelve.

I mean, you don't get much bigger than this. And he says, brothers, brothers, listen to me. So here we see, he says, therefore, I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.

Paul is going to tell these people to give their life away. Now, he needs something of motivation. I mean, if I were to tell someone, look, you need to give your life away, they would probably ask why? And Paul says here, by the mercies of God, because of God's mercies demonstrated to you through Jesus Christ, give

your life away.

You say, well, what are these mercies? First of all, it's a plural. The multifaceted mercies of God. I mean, it doesn't matter how you look at it.

You're always going to come up with a bigger and better picture. You look at mercies of God from one side, and you think, well, maybe it's one-dimensional like most things in our life. But then you get behind the thing, and you realize you've discovered something completely new.

And then you go to one side or another, or you go below and look up, or you go up and look down, and you try to grasp, comprehend the beauty of this mercy that's been given to you. And you say, what mercy? You go to the first eleven chapters of this book of Romans, and you discover what mercy. The fact that we were all lost and deserve condemnation.

The fact that we could not save ourselves by our own works and didn't even want to. The fact that God sent His only begotten, precious, holy Son to die on a tree, carrying our sin and condemned under our judgment. And when He died, He paid the price.

And after paying the price, He rose again from the dead. And forty days later, He was exalted in the heavens. He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

And He sat there as God's man for you. And He ever lives to intercede on your behalf. Now, do you need more motivation? Because if you do, you're lost.

If you need me to tell you that if you serve God, you'll get a Mercedes, you're lost. If you need me to tell you that if you serve God, He'll heal your body and fix every one of your problems, if you need that, you're lost. If Jesus is not enough to motivate you to godly living, you don't know Jesus.

So let's keep it simple. Christ and Christ alone. No one else.

I have need of nothing else. It is well with my soul. It says, therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, now we're going to get into it, to present.

This word is very, very, very important. Παρ■στε με. In the Greek language.

And this is, it means, now listen to this, I want us to break this down. He's telling us to present our bodies. Now, the word present means to place beside or near.

Okay? We have so many people running all around, even doing a lot of Christian activity, and I think one of the reasons for that is to run away from God. Sometimes we stay so busy so that we don't have to hear God telling us what He really wants us to be doing. We get involved in, I had a friend many, many years ago, twenty-some years ago, when this church was Christ's memorial.

It was a friend of mine. And God was calling him into the ministry. Man, he got involved in everything in this church.

He got involved in the nursery, in the softball league, painting walls, anything he could do. And the reason why, he wanted to stay so busy that he wouldn't have to hear God. But when you present your life to God, the first thing you do is you're placing it near Him.

One of the greatest problems today that we have in America are the preachers. And one of the greatest problems of the preachers is this, they're running around with everyone else and they're doing all kinds of things, but they're not drawing near to God. The main thing is the main thing.

Somebody around here has got to tarry in God's presence. Just be near. Lord, I put my life near You.

It also means to set at hand or to place at a person's disposal. God, I put my life at Your disposal. What do You want to do with my life? It's an amazing thing when people say to me, well, what are you doing saving for your son's college? I say, well, I'm saving for my son, but I don't know if he's going to go to college.

What do you mean he's not going to go to college? You went to college all your life. Yeah? Well, no, he's not necessarily going to college. As a matter of fact, when he's 17, God might tell him to put a backpack on and go to some Middle Eastern country, preach one time in the middle of a plaza and be martyred.

I don't want my son to just follow the ladder of the upward mobile. I want my sons to put their life at God's disposal. Here I am, Lord.

Speak to Your servant. What do You want from me? That's all. That's all that really matters.

As a matter of fact, my dear friend, when you're on your deathbed, and you will be there, when you are on your deathbed, the only thing that's going to be running through your mind is did you put your life at His disposal. I mean, I want to tell you something right now. If I were to go to Ethiopia and start 500 churches in three years, but God told me to be a janitor in a small Midwestern town, I'd be disobedient planning all those churches.

It's not to do great things, it is to obey God. It is to put your life at His disposal, and that is it. Isn't it simple? I had a guy walk into my office one time, he said, you know, the Christian life is very, very complicated.

I said, no, it's not. He said, yes, it is. I said, no, it's not.

He said, yes, it is. I said, no, it's not. And I won because I was the pastor.

I could also whoop him. I said, no, it's not complicated. He said, well, there's so many decisions.

I said, no, there's not. I said, God's already made all the decisions, son. Now you've got the same problem I do.

Are you going to obey or not? Are you going to put your life there or not? And I want you to understand. Let's go back to that word brethren. When I'm preaching this to you as my preacher back home says my pastor, he says, I've got one finger pointing at you, I've got three pointing back at me.

This is as much for me as it is for you today. All of us struggle with this. You know, we say we have so many struggles and so many things.

No, you only have one struggle and it's the same one I have. Are you going to put your life at God's disposal? That's the only thing. It's really only one thing matters.

And I guarantee it. I struggle with it just as much as you do. Are you going to put your life at God's disposal? You say that's pretty big stuff.

So is dying on a tree over a garbage dump outside of Jerusalem. That's your motivation for putting your life at God's disposal. Now, also it implies an action that is free and voluntary.

Now, I've preached about the sovereignty of God. I believe in the sovereignty of God. But it just comes down to this.

This is an action free and voluntary. Now, I don't want to get into all the theology of it. It's just choose what you're going to do.

What are you going to do? It's free and voluntary. Lay down your life. Put it at His disposal.

It's free and voluntary. But then again, is it? I remember the words of an apostle who said, I am constrained. I am compelled by the love of Christ.

Now, what do I mean by that? You know how many times Paul the apostle said that he was a prisoner of Christ in chains? No? He said it so many times. And he was. I mean, he literally was a prisoner.

But I believe that Paul was saying so much more here. He was a prisoner to the love of God. It was no longer, you know, a free man just goes, Well, you know, I'm free.

I'm going to go over here. So he goes over here. And he said, Well, go here for a while.

And he goes over here. But Paul was different. He was like a prisoner.

He said, No, I'll go. Lord, where do you want me to go? Your love brings my heart and my will into submission. I love you, Lord.

What do you want me to do? That's what love is all about. That's why marriage is so hard. Love is putting someone else first in the marriage.

That's hard to do. At least for me. Christ first.

Lord, what do you want me to do today? What do you want me to see? What do you want me to say? What do you want me to hear? How do you want me to spend what you've given me? How do you want me to do everything you want me to do? How do you want it, Lord? Here I am, Lord. And the Lord just goes back again to being at His disposal. I remember one time in seminary I decided I'm going to live one day totally at the disposal of God.

Well, that was an ambitious thing to do. I didn't make it. But I did notice some differences.

I remember just... You know, when you're young and you're in the ministry, you ought to just be locked away for a few years because you're just not right in the head. So, you know, I just got outside of the door of my house. Okay, Lord, now what do you want me to do? It's like, well, Paul, you've got a class in five minutes, so you better get there.

But I'm trying to walk across campus. Just be sensitive. And I mean, just being goofy is what I was being.

But I'm just trying to just... Every step, Lord, where do you want... And then all of a sudden, there out of the left, there was a lady that I'd talked to several times. She was an older lady, a cook there at the seminary. And she came walking out and was standing there kind of sad.

And I'm, you know, just trying to be this spiritual giant. And the first time God... I felt like God told me anything that morning was, go tell her about my son. And guess what? Oh, I was willing to walk around like a zombie looking spiritual.

But when it came to just loving somebody, go tell her about me. And I remember just kind of having to collapse like this and just walk over there. That day, she received Christ.

You know, sure it was goofy, but God will honor a heart that makes any kind of attempt to be at His disposal. You know, sometimes I think we love daytimers because we can somehow write God out of our day. Well, God, You know, I want to make every minute productive for You.

Every five minutes, I'm going to break down. And what we're doing is, Lord, I want to be so active that You have no time to tell me what to do. So many times I can remember in my younger years because I was so headstrong in the mission in Peru, so many churches to be planted and things to be done, and I would be ready for a day of just 16 hours worth of everything going in the right direction.

And some little lamb, some saint, some brand new Christian would walk in the door and had some silly problem. And I'd sit there for three and a half hours going through their silly problem. Go home for lunch because the church was in our house.

And my wife said, What's wrong with you? I said, Well, you know, I've got so much to do today. I just got interrupted. You got interrupted? You got interrupted? My, how your pants have grown since breakfast this morning.

You got interrupted? By whom? Who would dare take your time? A saint of God actually come to see you with problems and you couldn't get all your stuff done? I hate my wife sometimes. It's not about what you have to do, Mr. Washer. It's about what's God want? What's God want? And so it's about putting ourselves at His disposal.

Why? Because we're compelled by the love of Christ. I mean, we look at this thing. Sometimes I think I must be the most ungodly man ever walked on the face of the earth.

Sometimes I think I must struggle so much. But there's one thing this hard head of mine cannot pound through. And that's the love of Christ.

I can make every excuse in the world not to be obedient. I can make every excuse in the world not to do what I ought to do. And then BAM! Like a sledgehammer comes what? The love of Christ.

The love of Christ. Just knocks me to my knees. Put one at one's disposal.

Now, that is the thing that I want you to see about the life of our Lord and Savior Jesus. Now, listen to this. Jesus was poor.

That's all there is to it. He was. Regardless of what the TV preachers tell you, the guy was poor.

Didn't ride around in a king's chariot. He was poor. He was many times tired.

He many times had anguish. He many times had all the things that you and I have to deal with. But here's the thing about Jesus Christ.

He was never empty. He was never empty. And why was He never empty? Because He had food to eat that we know not of.

He was never empty for the same reason we usually are. Because He wasn't empty because He was about doing the will of His Father. He was putting His life at the disposal of His Father.

You're empty? You ever feel empty? Guess what? Let a little red flag go up. I do. I just feel so empty.

I need a vacation. I just feel so empty. I need to get away from the ministry for a while.

I just feel so empty. I just need to, you know, get by myself. No, I just feel so empty.

I need to put myself at God's disposal and I won't be empty anymore. Put myself at God's disposal. Now, I have to step back here for a second because I've got some of you in here who are always under guilt that you're not doing enough for God.

So when I say that, you're going, yeah, I just need to get back in there and do some more. No. Not get back in there and do some more for the church or anybody else.

I said put yourself at God's disposal. There's a big difference. Draw near unto God.

He might want you to draw near unto Him and to rest. He might want you to draw near unto Him and to read through the book of John. He might want you to draw near unto Him and cut half your activities.

What I'm talking about is putting yourself at His disposal, not doing something extra. Beautiful passage in Scripture in Ephesians 5.2. It says, Just walk in love just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. Just give yourself to God.

Well, I have nothing to give. How dare you talk about God that way? You say, hold it, Pastor. I'm not talking about God that way.

I'm talking about me. I have nothing to give. If you have nothing to give, you're saying God gave you nothing.

And I don't believe that. God gives every one of His children gifts and graces. None of this false humility stuff.

It's better to say what He hath given me I shall return to Him. Never say I have nothing to give. Never.

Never. False humility is a great destroyer of many things. But Jesus Christ lived His life as giving it up as an offering.

As an offering. What a beautiful thing. You know, let me tell you something.

I have really struggled here. And I'll tell you why. I am a hillbilly.

If I had my druthers, I would be out in the woods 24 hours a day hunting something. I love living on the farm where I live. I love beat up old trucks.

I love to work on tractors and build things with my hands. And I have been in this city for about three months and I'm about to go crazy. If I don't go out in the woods and shoot something, there's going to be

some problems here.

And I have been moping and moping and moping. I even tried to get Laura Whitlock to put on camouflage and go hunting with me. I mean, I've just been moping.

Why? I am totally out of my element. Look up Bubba in the dictionary. It's me.

And it is so hard. And the Lord has been dealing with me saying, no, your problem is not that you're in this city. Your problem is that you're not in me.

Your problem is that you're not dwelling and putting your life at my disposal. When you do that, Paul, I'll give you more joy than anything else. And that's something you all need to understand.

We all need to understand. It's not where we are. It's who He is and our relationship to Him.

That is something very, very important. I want you to know most of you are striving to be happy and that's not necessarily bad. You're just doing it totally the wrong way.

I preached the Gospel in a country that was at war with the worst terrorist group at that time in the world, the Sendero Luminoso in Peru. I walked through jungles in that place where military was not even supposed to go. I went to that mall yesterday and I was terrified.

People striving for what? For what? And they don't know there stands Jesus saying, come unto me, you who are weary and heavy laden. Take my yoke upon you. Learn from me.

But then there was all the noise. Just all the noise. And that same noise can be found even in this church.

Listen, my dear friend, I don't need to talk about other churches in Austin. We've got enough problems of our own. There's enough of that noise here.

Just not dwelling in Christ. How can I tell you this? Again, I didn't even get... I got through three words. Actually, one word.

How can I tell you this? I am a perfect example of laying down your life for Christ. You say, man, that's a bold statement. No, just wait.

I'm just like you. The times that I have died to self have been very few. But the times that I have died to self and laid down my life as a sacrifice, put myself at His disposal, I have been the happiest man on the face of the earth.

Even though it might have cost me greatly, there was such a peace, such an overwhelming joy. And all the times, and there have been many, when I put Paul Washer before other people, which actually meant I put Paul Washer before Jesus Christ the Lord, I have been the most miserable human being on the face of the earth. Can anyone out there identify with what I'm saying? Well, then stop it.

You know, sometimes theologically, we just want to get through all these things, you know. Well, theologically, why do I do this? Just stop it. It's like a friend of mine down in Peru one day walked in, he told his mom, he said, Mom, when I do like this with my arm, my arm hurts.

She said, well, stop doing that with your arm and it won't hurt anymore. It's the same thing. You know, those of you who are truly Christian, you know the times when you have surrendered yourself to Christ.

You know the times when you've put Christ before everything, when you've presented your life to Him as a sacrifice. And you know the joy of that. And you also know the misery of doing the opposite.

Well, the thing about it is, die. I know this isn't too seeker friendly, and I'm glad about that. Die to yourself.

You want to fix your marriage? Die to yourself and offer yourself to God. You want to fix everything. Well, what you can fix, die to yourself.

One who tries to gain his life will lose it. Accept a kernel. Accept it, fall to the ground and die.

It bears no fruit. But if it dies, bringeth forth much fruit. It's all about Jesus Christ being first and second and third and fourth and fifth.

What I'm saying is, don't put Jesus first. Jesus is everything. He's not just first in a rank.

He is everything. The whole shooting match, as we might say. Lay down your life.

I was with Charo several years ago in Peru, and she's always been a very, very wise person. After about teaching four or five classes, some Romanian girls came up to her and they said, we don't need to hear anything else you've got to say. Charo said, why? She said, because you say the same thing every time.

Charo said, yeah. It's really that simple. Read the Word of God.

Seek to submit your life to it. Pray for power. Lay down your life.

Live for others, not for yourself. Die to self that you might have life. That you might have life.

Die to yourself that you might have life. That's what it comes down to. I have never given anything away that I have felt sorry for.

I have kept things that I have regretted. I have never been self-sacrificing that I look back on it now and say, I wish I hadn't done that. But I've been selfish so many times and said, I wish I hadn't done that.

It is really what Jesus said. Die and give your life to Him. Die.

Should we be theologically correct? Yes, we should. Should we be other things? Yes, we should. Does any of it matter if we don't do this first thing? No.

Die to ourself. Give our lives away. Not self-promotion.

Self-demotion. So that Christ might be promoted. He must increase.

I must decrease. And oh, did He have joy, that John the Baptist. Tonight we're going to talk about offering your body.

Why did He say body? Body. For a very, very important reason. He didn't say give your heart.

He said give your body. And we're going to talk about that tonight. Now if you're here this morning, what can I say to you? You know, I'll be honest with you.

I'm not expecting you to hear this message and just be flat out transformed and everything go right the rest of your life. I'm more hoping this message will be like a kuckabur under the saddle. And it'll be always this

reminder to you.

Are you empty? Then die. Are you miserable? Then die to self. Live for Christ.

Are you just feeling all dirty inside? Then put yourself at His disposal. Draw near unto Him. A constant reminder of these things that you and I are called to habitually, continually die to self and to give our lives to God.

Some of you young people out there, you are going to terribly mess your life up. You are. And I'll tell you why.

Because you're going to take the reins and you're going to run with it. And when you do, well, in a few years you'll be in my office. You're going to take the steering wheel and you're going to say I'll drive my own car.

And you're going to regret it all the days of your life. I implore you to throw down the reins, to let go of the steering wheel and to submit to the sovereignty of Christ. Not to the sovereignty of this preacher because this preacher... You know what preaching is like? Sometimes I don't like the way it's done.

And I'll tell you why. Because it looks like I've got some message and I'm like God's co-pilot or something and I'm giving the message to you. When in fact it is, the message, if it is of God, it's like I should speak it, run down there, sit and listen to it just like you.

This is not on the authority of some preacher. You read the Bible yourself. Do you agree with what I just said about Romans 12 verse 1? It's not about submitting to a pastor or a church or anything else.

It's about submitting to Jesus Christ and putting your life at His disposal and becoming everything that He desires you to be. But you have to die. You have to die.

Now if you're not a Christian here today and you're saying, what is all this lunacy? That's exactly what it is. Come lose your life for a carpenter's son, for a madman who died for a dream, and you'll have the faith his first followers had and you'll feel the weight of his beam. It is lunacy.

To someone who doesn't know God, to die to self in this world. We live in the Roman Empire where it's all about self-promotion, being strong and powerful and getting everything so that people will applaud you. Not in the kingdom.

It's not about going up the ladder. It's about going down it. It's not about having your feet washed.

It's about washing other people's feet. Jesus Christ, knowing where He came from, where He was going, basically knowing that He was God in the flesh, put on a towel and wiped everybody's feet. Now that's strong self-esteem.

That's what this is about. And it's just as much for me as it is for you. But if you don't know the Lord, this is what the Bible wants you to know.

The Bible says something that is extremely offensive. Can you handle it? The Bible says something extremely offensive. You are not a victim to society.

You are not a victim of other people's problems. You, sir. You, ma'am.

You, child. You're the problem. Just like me.

The Bible says we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We're not lost sheep looking for a shepherd. We're God-hating rebels running with all our life to get away from Him because we want to be sovereign Lord over our own universe.

And the Bible says you keep doing that, you'll even be more destroyed. The Bible calls you to repent, to recognize your sin, and to hate it. And to run back to God.

A just God who could not forgive you because you have broken every law except that He sent His Son to pay for every crime you ever committed. The payment has been made. Justice has been satisfied.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. That's what it's about. Your good works are like filthy rags.

They are dead before God and of no account. They're just like mine. The only merit, the only virtue we have is Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected from the dead.

Our only hope and our only glory. Our only hope and our only glory. Let's pray.

Father, we come before You in the name of Your Son. God, sometimes I just, I really feel about an inch tall. God, when I think of Your mercy and Your grace and my need of it and our need of it, and I think, Lord, of how I have lived and haven't lived, I would ask, oh Lord, that every day we would walk with You more.

That every day we would die to self. That every day we would, Lord, offer our bodies as living sacrifices. Dear God, I ask You to bless Your people this morning.

Those who know You, that they may grow, that they may abound, that they may not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of their mind. Father, I ask that there's someone here today who doesn't know You, or they think they know You and they do not, that You would make it evident to them. In Jesus' name.

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