

A Living Sacrifice Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Describe a time when someone other than a family member made a sacrifice for you.
2. What is one area of your life in which you have difficulty showing restraint?

Read the following passages: Romans 12:1-2.

When it comes to making decisions, many individuals, families, and organizations are paralyzed by competing interests and a lack of clarity around the question, “What is most important?” We are often uncertain about whom we should try to make happy and what our priorities should be.

Paul addresses this issue in Romans 12:1; we are to live to please God. In fact, understanding whom we are trying to please is more important than deciding the particulars of what we will actually do.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. What does it mean to offer your body as a living sacrifice to God? Why do you think Paul adds the phrase “in view of God’s mercy” before he tells his readers to make this sacrifice? Do you think living this way will be joyless? Explain.
2. Read the following passages: Galatians 1:10; Acts 4:18-19; John 5:30. What common theme do you see in these passages? How can living to please God bring clarity to our decision making?
3. Read Colossians 3:22-4:1. Slavery in the ancient world differed in some significant ways from American slavery. Nevertheless, being a slave was certainly not a preferable lot in life. What instructions does Paul give Christian slaves in the ancient world? How might we apply some of these instructions in our work environments? How do these instructions help us avoid the errors of overworking or underworking?
4. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-6. Identify some of the negative ways of relating mentioned by Paul in this passage. Now read 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12. How did Paul characterize the way he related to the Thessalonians? Looking again at 1 Thessalonians 2:1-6, what was the reason Paul and his co-workers were able to avoid negative ways of relating? What are some ways living to please God can positively impact our relationships with people?
5. Are there any areas of your life that you think are not currently pleasing to God (e.g. your use of money, your use of time, your marriage or relationships, your consumption of media, etc.)? Explain. What could you do to change?

6. Read Matthew 28:16-20. Why do you think Jesus wants us to fulfill these instructions? What are some ways you can play a role in this mission?

7. What is one way you can live to please God this week?

Pray