*"But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy'" (**1 Peter 1:16**).*

Paul tells us in **Romans 12:1-2**, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." How do we live as living sacrifices holy unto the Lord? The next verse tells us. "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." If our lives are a sacrifice unto God, our gift to Him, then what does Scripture tell us about this? Well, first we need to be right with God. Yeshua's (Jesus') message to all was just this: "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (**Mark 1:15**). This is the start to holiness. Yeshua was telling His hearers that God was with them, for God is His kingdom. Repentance is a change not only of mind, but action. **Matthew 5:23-24** tells us, "Therefore if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift." If we are to bring a continual sacrifice of holiness to God through our daily lives, then we must stay in a state of holiness. We must examine ourselves daily, and when we do we see that, "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (**Lamentations 3:22-23**).

If we cannot forgive, then God will not forgive us (**Matthew 6:14-15**). Repentance and forgiveness seem to be key in the walk of a believer. We are to bless and not curse (**Romans 12:14**). "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing" (**1 Peter 3:9**). We are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (**Matthew 5:44**). As **Romans 12** tells us, if we are to be holy then we must not be like this world. "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not from the Father, but from the world. The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God remains forever" (**1 John 2:15-17**). We need to think differently than the world. We need to be set-apart. As we have seen so far, there are things required of us. What I have quoted from the New Testament is from our foundation, what we are built upon, and that is the Law of God, the Ten Commandments. We find that the Holiest place—the place that even the High Priest could not enter but once a year, and at that only with the blood of a sacrifice and the incense from the altar to create a cloud that mingled with the cloud of God—this place was the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God was. In this place was the Ark of the Covenant, or Testimony. In the Ark was placed the Ten Commandments. Why? Because it was the keeping of these laws that gave a testimony to the world that the keeper was a child of God.

"Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the peoples, who shall hear of all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people'" (**Deuteronomy 4:6**). We are to be light, and we are to be set-apart. Nothing sets us apart like keeping God's commandments. Yeshua said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (**John 14:15**). Yeshua even expounded on many of His commandments in **Matthew 5:21-48** because He tells us in **verse 48**, "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." This is what the psalmist writes about God's law: "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is Your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression" (**Psalm 19:7:11**). The commandments of the Lord do not only make us a wise and discerning people, but they also set us apart from the world. We cannot live separate from God's teachings, His words. They are the foundation of our lives. In fact, they must be our lives. Every fabric of our being must be the Word of God.

This is what **Proverbs 4** tells us about God's Word and life: "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." **Proverbs 3** tells us the rewards of living by God's Word: "Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed." **Matthew 6:19-24** tells us about our heart and God's Word: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." God's Word is our treasure. The more we have the knowledge of His Word in our lives, the more we will live by His Word. "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

If we are going to be holy and set-apart, then we must live by God's Word and we must treasure His Word in our hearts. God's Word is light, and it brings light to our very souls. When our hearts and souls are committed to God, then we can truly do what the Lord requires, which is to be totally surrendered to God. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (**Mark 12:30**). As a holy priesthood coming before the Lord, let us lift up holy hands and worship God night and day. "Behold, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who serve by night in the house of the Lord! Lift up your hands to the sanctuary and bless the Lord" (**Psalm 134:1-2**). "Lord God, at dawn You will hear my voice, and at dawn I shall be ready and shall appear before You" (**Psalm 5:3**). Our lives must be a holy sacrifice before God, pleasing to God as a sweet aroma going up to heaven. "May my prayer be set before You like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice" (**Psalm 141:2**). And again, "For we are a fragrance of Messiah to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Messiah in the sight of God."

Are your lives holy as He is Holy?

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