

1 Peter chapter 2

What are the “spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God” that we are called to offer in verse 5? [9-12]

In verse 13 Peter speaks of submitting willingly to “every human institution” and then offers kings, governors, slaves, wives, and husbands as specific examples. He introduced the theme of “suffering” in 1:6 and 1:11 and returns to it here when talking about slaves. Is this section primarily about slaves, or is its scope larger? [18-25, see also 3:14-17]

1 Peter chapter 4

In what way does Christ's suffering serve as an example to us? [1-3]

What does verse 6 have to do with suffering?

How should we respond to suffering? [7-11]

Verse 12 reminds us of Christ's statement in John 16:33. How can we avoid suffering? Is all suffering noble or commendable? [12-19]

1 Peter chapter 5

What advice does Peter offer as one who actually witnessed the suffering of Christ? What will be the result of following that advice about suffering? [1-10]

When we suffer what should we do? **Accept** it as sharing in Christ's suffering and as an inevitable part of being human; **believe** in God's faithfulness toward us and His promised blessings for those who endure; **continue** to live holy lives of love and service. Keep calm and carry on.

Next week: 2 Peter chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible; Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown: Our sacrifices are prayer, praise, and self-denying services to Christ.

EasyEnglish Commentary; Helen Pocock: Christians are also 'holy priests'. The Jewish priests were the only people who could go into the temple. They worshipped God and prayed to him. They sacrificed animals to God so that he would forgive sins. They went to God on behalf of other people. Now Jesus has died on the cross to forgive sins. We do not need to sacrifice animals any more. Everyone can come to God through Jesus. 'Spiritual sacrifices' are what Christians offer to God. This shows God that they love him. In the *New Testament there are 4 ways by which Christians offer sacrifices to God:

- (1) They give their whole life to God (Romans 12:1).
- (2) They praise and thank God (Hebrews 13:15).
- (3) They do good work and share what they have with other people (Hebrews 13:16).
- (4) They support people who explain the good news about Jesus (Philippians 4:18).

Coffman's Commentaries on the Bible: There are sacrifices which God's holy nation of the new Israel, which is the church, must now offer according to the will of God. And what are these?

(a) Our faith is our sacrifice. "Even if I am to be poured out as a libation upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all" (Philippians 2:17).

(b) The love of God is our sacrifice. "And to love ... is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Mark 12:33).

(c) Our repentance is our sacrifice. "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; and say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; and so will we render the calves of our lips" (Hosea 14:2). It is safe to assume that if repentance, even under the old covenant, was a "sacrifice," so it still is.

(d) Our confession of faith in Christ is a sacrifice. "Through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips which make confession to his name ... with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Hebrews 13:15,16).

(e) Our baptism into Christ is our sacrifice. "I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service" (Romans 12:1). See also Hebrews 10:19-22.

(f) Our praise of God is our sacrifice. "Let us offer up a sacrifice of praise unto God, that is, the fruit of our lips" (Hebrews 13:15). There are also important Old Testament glimpses of this same truth. "Bringing sacrifices of praise unto the house of God" (Jeremiah 17:26). "Sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare his works with rejoicing" (Psalms 107:22; Psalms 116:117).

(g) Our contributions are our sacrifices. Paul spoke of having received a contribution brought by Epaphroditus thus, "an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God" (Philippians 4:18).

(h) Our songs are our sacrifice. "Singing with grace in your hearts unto God" (Colossians 3:16). By virtue of these songs being "unto God," they are understood as sacrifices.

(i) Our prayers are our sacrifices. "Having golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints" (Revelation 5:8). "My name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen" (Malachi 1:11).

(j) The whole life of honor and love on the part of devoted Christians is their sacrifice. Paul wrote, "I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand" (2 Timothy 4:6). "Even as Christ also loved you and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell" (Ephesians 5:2).

Faith, love of God, repentance, confession, baptism, praises, contributions, songs, prayers and a total life of devotion - these are our sacrifices; no wonder they are called "better sacrifices."