



WATCHMAN'S TRUMPET



Vol. 1 SN. 023 A monthly online publication of Watchman Outreach Mission

May 2022



FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

Hello,

I welcome you to this new month and present to you May 2022 edition of Watchman's Trumpet. This month, our theme is "A life of Sacrifice" (Romans 12:1-2)

The Lord and the world expects much from Christians. We are expected to put others first, we are supposed to turn the left cheek when smitten on the right, we are to love our enemies, pray for and do good to those who despitefully use us and persecute us. We are to be good examples in word, conversation, charity, spirit, faith and purity. In short, we are to be a peculiar people unto the Lord our God. We are to refuse to conform to the patterns, customs and ways of life in the society where we live or work, especially those ways or lifestyles capable of diminishing our spiritual enthusiasm, distract us from intimate relationship with God, undermine the dictates of a clean, clear, sensitive conscience and harden our hearts. We are to be holy and perfect as the Lord our God is holy and perfect.

Many who are converted especially new converts consider the possibility and reality of this kind of lifestyle daunting and intimidating and some may ask "How can this be? The answer to this question is what this edition of "Watchman's Trumpet" is all about.

Many believers overlook the fact that Christianity is not a religion of "doing" but "being" with primary emphasis on relationship. Jesus has been and is all that we are commanded to be. In Him resides all the power we need to be and do all that God has ordained or commanded.

The more intimate we become in our relationship with God and with Christ, the easier it is for us to live heavenly life on earth and live in conformity with the will of God.

However, the Lord will not force His will on us, hence the need for consecration and commitment of our entire being and personality as a living sacrifice to God to enable God's Spirit renew our minds, transform our lives and align us with God's will. His Spirit work in us to work through us. This is Paul's main message in our text. It is all about making choices in cooperation with God and in submission to His Spirit.

The modalities and gains of such choices, life and transformation you will find in this spiritual menu. It is my prayer as you read that you will be empowered to live a life of sacrifice as demanded by God and earthly and eternal profits of living such a life will be yours in Jesus name. Welcome!

PASSIONATE INVITATION TO A LIFE OF SACRIFICE

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" Romans 12:1-2.



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The salvation experience provides a door or gateway access into God's kingdom. Remaining inside the kingdom and enjoying the full benefit of it depends on what we do inside the kingdom. Paul's letter to the Romans can be divided into two key segments. The first part comprising of eleven chapters deals with theological and doctrinal argument or conversation on salvation plan and its possession by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. However, the second part contain ethics of Christian faith. While the first part described our state- past and present, the last comprising of five chapters prescribed practical, personal and communal responsibilities of those who are saved as evidence that they have been saved. The two are connected and our text Romans 12:1-2 provided the bridge that connected the two. In it, Paul impressed upon Roman believers that they need a new mind-set and life transformation to be able to appraise, discern and accept what is good, perfect, and acceptable to God, and conforms to His perfect will. Our old sinful pleasure-seeking and self-gratifying mind-set and nature will remain and life transformation will elude us if we do not in a

positive practical way consecrate our bodies and our lives to God and set it apart for holy use.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Fundamental lessons from biblical sacrificial system
2. Passionate plea to believers to make sacrifices
3. The centrality of sacrifice in acceptable worship

1. Fundamental lessons from biblical sacrificial system

"And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee." **1 Kings 3:4-5**

"For by one offering he (Jesus) perfected forever them that are sanctified" **Hebrews 10:14.**

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" **Hebrews 13:15.**

It has been eternally ordained that when men come to God, they must come with sacrifice to obtain His approval, favour and to obtain blessings from Him. Old Testament sacrifices were offered for atonement as commanded by God because of universality of sin. Sinful men approaching holy God for blessings must come by the way of sacrifice and offer for atonement first. Hence, sin or trespass offering and sacrifice precedes all others in the Old Testament church followed by burnt offering wholly burnt on brazen altar. It prefigures believers' entire consecration to God. The burnt offering is followed by peace offering which is a fellowship offering. Part of it is burnt on God's altar and the rest is shared and eaten by officiating priest, the offerers and others, illustrating that there cannot be meaningful fellowship with God and God's people without salvation. The sacrifice of Christ cancels the need for offering sacrifices for our atonement but we must offer sacrifices in gratitude for our atonement by Christ and as part of our gratitude consecrate our entire lives to God.

2. Passionate plea for believers to make sacrifices

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" **2 Corinthians 5:14, 15.**

Paul pleaded with Roman believers to present their bodies to God as living and holy sacrifice. Paul uses the word "*holiness*" in his writings in moral sense to refer to absence of defilement. "*Bodies*" and "*living*" emphasizes practical daily life and actions; the things we do and the choices we make. According to Paul, becoming a living sacrifice on God's altar is a unique way to show our gratitude to the Lord for all that He has done for us. It is an invitation to show gratitude to God for His great mercies and compassion that we have received and are enjoying. We should do so by rendering sacrificial service to Him and in His kingdom. Before we met Christ and was granted salvation, we were blind, dead and orphaned slaves to sin and Satan; and aliens to the covenant of God's promises, privileges and blessings; condemned and with hangmen's noose hanging around our necks. We would have suffered fierce indignation and God's wrath here on earth and eventually in hell throughout eternity but for God's great mercy and compassion. God gave us life. Our restoration to life cost Him the death of His only begotten Son; we must not forget that.

After delivering us from death, sin and Satan, He justifies us, made us righteous, granted us access to God's presence, filled us with the Holy Spirit and made us heirs of God with the prospect of future redemption of our bodies and eternal glory in God's presence forever. We should daily think of how we can; in our own little way reciprocate God's kindness to us. Paul suggested that the best and most significant way to do this is to present our whole person as a sacrifice - living, active, alive and lively to God.



3. The centrality of sacrifice in acceptable worship

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" **James 1:26, 27.**

"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" **Hebrews 13:16.**

True and genuine worship and service to God has always been accompanied by sacrifice whether in the Old or New Testament. Invitation to Christianity is invitation to a life of sacrifice. Putting others ahead of ourselves require sacrifice. Yet, that is our calling as Christians. As the Lord's sacrifice, we have both personal and communal responsibilities to God and to one another. Romans 12 began with personal responsibility and then moved on to our responsibilities in the committee of believers. Our bodies become living sacrifice when we dedicate or consecrate our entire being and personality including our time, talent, abilities, energy, resources, desires and ambitions to God and then invest them in serving others in God's name and for His glory within and outside the church. Paul stated that this is the right thing to do, an epitome of true befitting, authentic, genuine and acceptable worship and service to God. Claiming to be Christians when we fail to consecrate our time, abilities, skills and talents to God is a height of folly and irrationality. It amounts to ingratitude, a despite of God's grace, compassion and mercy that we received and are enjoying daily. If we are indeed grateful to God for His mercies, we must show it by sharing other people's pains, grief, loss, joy, rejection and needs as if it is our own. Our sacrifice ought to involve every area of our lives.





ABOUT WATCHMAN OUTREACH MISSION

Watchman Outreach Mission as envisioned fundamentally comprises of men and women of faith who watch over one another and together watch for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next to this primary assignment is an equally important responsibility of bringing others into the same state of watchfulness and readiness as the coming of the Lord draws near. Ours is a trans-ministerial, trans-denominational mission. Our core values include expository teaching, prayer and counselling. We train in principles and practice of Christian discipleship and equip for effective Kingdom Service.

The Lord Jesus Christ in one of His parable said *"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept"* **Mathew 25:5**. Watchman Outreach Mission is a response of faith to this and similar warnings about events in the last days. Our response is based on the premise that prophecies, visions and revelations about the future such as the one documented in the Lord's parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins are sign-posts by which men are warned to keep vigil to avoid disastrous end. We serve to wake up the church and men everywhere to remain alert and watch for the Lord's return.

The Mission, based in Ibadan, Nigeria, was launched in 2009 and its maiden outing took place on the 20th November of the same year. On that day, we partnered with All Nations Evangelical Ministry (ANEM), Akobo, Ibadan for Evangelistic and Medical Mission Outreach to Idi - Ose Village on Arulogun - Olorunda Road in Lagelu Local Government, Ibadan.

In the years that followed we networked with churches and other Christian groups too to implement our mandate which include conducting gospel outreaches, discipleship training for new converts, organizing and facilitating workers and ministerial training, conducting administrative reviews in churches and ministries, writing of proposals for reforms and church growth strategies that can enhance social cohesion, improve church finances and foster overall development, unity and growth of such ministries; monitoring and/or supervision of the implementation of such reforms and strategies.

Some of these Christian groups and ministries include with Christ Apostolic Church, Oke - Ife in Ajangboju, Ibadan, Nigerian Military Christian Fellowship, Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment Chapter in Oyo - State Nigeria, Christ Gospel Mission International, Light of Jesus Evangelistic Ministry with branches in different cities in South Western Nigeria, and Ark of Salvation Church of Christ (ASCC) with headquarters at Molade, Monatan Ibadan.

Till date, although partnered ministries change from time to time depending on the leading we receive from the Lord, we remain committed to our main purpose and vision; that of service to the church and in the world to wake up men everywhere and encourage them to remain alert and watch for the Lord's return. Through our activities, souls had been saved, believers edified and church workers' spiritual growth and development enhanced, all to the glory of God.

WATCHMAN PRAYER HOUR



Prayer Points - For May 2022

1. Thank God for His call to a life of sacrifice, consecration and commitment.
2. Thank God for the revelation of His will in the scripture
3. Thank God, for the possibility of mind renewal, transformation of life and conformity to divine will.
4. Pray against any distraction from intimate relationship with God and conformity to His will.
5. Pray against worldliness; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and pride.
6. Pray for renewal of mind and transformation of life by the Holy Spirit
7. Pray for grace to live a life that bears clear testimony to the goodness, perfection and acceptability of divine will.
8. Pray for grace for sacrificial living and a life wholly dedicated to wholehearted service to God and to others.
9. Pray for the gains and profits of sacrificial consecrated living on earth and in eternity.

"..... men ought always to pray, and not to faint," Luke 18:1

May the Lord hear and answer all our prayers - AMEN!

Watchman Prayer Hour holds every Saturday from 10.30am - 12.00MD. We invite you to join us at our office in 78/80 Nepa (IBEDC) Building, Opposite U.I. Second Gate, Ibadan . Oyo - State. You can also follow us on any of our Social media platforms during the prayer session and send inquiries or prayer requests to any of our digital addresses.

For more info on the Mission, log on to: www.watchmanoutreachmission.org

NONCONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"
Romans 12:2

Paul implores Roman believers and those of us reading today not to be conformed to this world, for all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life 1 John 2:16. Whosoever that is a friend of the world is an enemy of God James 4:4. You cannot be a friend of the world and be a friend of God, neither can you love God and love the world at the same time. It is impossible. Nonconformity to the world is about abstaining from present popular acceptable pattern of life in our community or society that contravenes the word of God or can impede spiritual progress or make intimacy and closeness in our walk with God difficult or impossible. It is the style or pattern of life that constitutes a distraction from divine purpose and absolute consecration to God. The world's value system and that of the kingdom of God are mutually exclusive, the more we draw closer to one the farther we are from the other, vice versa. The commandment of God, His desire and plan is that we will live a life of separation from the polluting corrupting influence of the world. May God make this a reality in our lives today in Jesus name!

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Roman's Rome in Paul's days
2. Meaning and mandate of nonconformity in modern society
3. Gains of believer's separation from the world

1. Roman's Rome in Paul's days

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not

*convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them"***Romans 1:28-32**

Rome was the single largest city-state in the first century A.D. Its population had become thoroughly heterogeneous through gradual absorption of elements from every part of the Empire. The city swarmed with travelling merchants from all walks of life. Lives of Romans under early Emperors were varied and complex. War was no more. With peace come abundant idleness, revelling, pleasure seeking, amusements and idolatrous festivals. A senate shared nominal legislative and administrative power with the Emperor but the will of the monarch supersedes in all things. Public offices are offered by favouritism and often used to advance personal interests. Criticism of the Emperor was considered as treason and a host of informants enrich themselves by accusing the guilty and innocent alike. The upper class live luxuriously and idly in costly dwellings and on wealth gained by inheritance or extortion. The lower productive class comprising mostly of the poorest among the citizens lived on pittance doled out by government or their rich patrons.



Most choices and decisions of many especially the ruling class are motivated by distrust, suspicion and superstition. Marriage was usually a matter of convenience and divorce frequent. Rome's business thrives on a false foundation created much more by plunder and extortion than productive industry or legitimate trade. The largest source of capital was from tribute from conquered territories or labour of captive slaves.

All classes of people indulge in public amusement of every kind. Gladiatorial shows with associated cruelty were the chief attraction. Religion took the form of nature worship whose gods personify physical forces. The numbers of gods, great and small were infinite. Ancestor worship was practised in every household. Emperor worship was an outgrowth of this, initially limited to deceased rulers but later extended to the living and became the supreme test of political loyalty.

Roman Christians were numerous enough to attract the notice of the Emperor and later became victims of his cruelty because of their nonconformity with the day's societal evils that Christ and the Apostles preached against. A parallel of these evils in Paul's days exist in every modern society today.

2. Meaning and Mandate of nonconformity in modern society

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you. the unclean thing;



And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” 2 Corinthians 6:16-18.

“For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you” 1 Peter 4:3-4

Paul instructed Roman believers in his epistle not to conform to the pattern of life in the world as exemplified by the decadent social and moral lifestyle of an average Roman citizen in his days. It was a call to abandon the chase after pleasure, possessions and status that was in vogue in Rome at that time.

Nonconformity to the world was clearly taught by Christ and the Apostles. It is a mandate from God implied in Israel's relationship with God in the Old Testament. We are a peculiar people driven and motivated by different value system. The craze for fortune, fame, power and pleasure by the worldly is foreign to heaven's pilgrims. The use of dirty or offensive language, singing of scurrilous songs, reading of filthy books, wearing of tempting attire, extravagant lifestyle, ballroom dance, wild parties, theatre movies, and sports festivals will dampen spiritual enthusiasm, distract from intimate walk with God, undermine clean, clear and sensitive conscience, and harden men's heart. Even though Paul emphasized the need for a change that begins in the heart and mind, the context of the entire

Romans 12 underscored the need for Christians to have recognizable, definable outward appearances. Our dressing choices, tastes, habits, manner, affiliations and pattern of relationship must be acceptable to God and be scriptural, good and be in perfect conformity with the will of God. We must honour God in everything we do.

3. Gains of believers' separation from the world

“... and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” 2 Corinthians 6:17-18

“... godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come 1 Timothy 4:8.



Nonconformity has its gains even though it is an unpopular choice that sometimes requires resilient faith. Nonconformity call and mandate is an invitation for converted Christians to come up higher into the presence of God. It is an invitation to ascend higher in our journey towards heaven and move beyond the outer court and the inner court; to come and reside in the Holy of Holies. Heaven is nearer and God is closer to believers who live a life of separation from the world. While the worldly Christian is described as an enemy of God, separated believers by their lifestyle are dear to Him, they are His precious sons and daughters. Separated life makes our testimonies as possessors of divine grace believable. When deliberate, intentional and consistent, nonconformity enhances reputation and wins the trust of those inclined towards sound morality. It increases productivity as God multiplies our grace.



It influences others positively and it is a good advertisement on the possibility of positive practical change in an unjust world or relationship.

The greatest gain of believers' separation is the prospect of eternal fellowship and relationship with God. The specific benefit mentioned in our text is that nonconformity will align us with the will of God. We will be able to discern and accept God's good and perfect will. Our lifestyles, choices and decisions will win God's approval and acceptance.



“And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;” Genesis 22:16-17

THE RENEWED MIND

*"And be not conformed to this world: but **be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"*
Romans 12:2

Paul in our text urged Roman believers to separate themselves from worldly ideals, patterns and standards and place their bodies, in other words their entire lives on God's altar as a living sacrifice and reserve them for strictly holy use. This far-reaching and comprehensive consecration desired and commanded by God will transform their lives, but it must begin in their hearts. They must develop a new mindset different from the one they have when they were sinners or became newly converted. Renewal of mind will transform our lives; there is no other way because our minds and thought processes control every area of our lives, past, present and future. The old man with polluted mind can only live a new, Christ-like, heavenly and godly life after mind renewal. This is Paul's message to Roman believers in Romans 12:2. It is the same message for us today

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. The impact of mind and thoughts on lifestyle
2. Life transformation originating in the heart
3. Divine approval and acceptance of heart and life transformation

1. The impact of mind and thoughts on lifestyle

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"
Proverbs 4:23.

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh"
Luke 6:45.



Our heart, mind or thought rule our lives. Every choice, decision and action first originates in the heart as thoughts before manifesting them physically. Good, clean, healthy, positive, godly thoughts will impart positively on our lives. We will live responsible God-honoring lives. On the other hand, a lifestyle that is injurious, murderous, filled with bitterness, hatred, deceit and rage is the evidence that such persons given to such lifestyles have *"deceitful and desperately wicked heart"*. As converted Christians, we must sincerely desire a renewed mind and cleansed, purged heart before we can have one.

2. Life transformation originating in the heart

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
Jeremiah 17:9

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"
Psalms 51:9, 10.

Our text revealed clearly that anyone who wanted a new and renewed life must pay attention to the state and condition of his/her mind. Most of the thoughts of the unconverted and unregenerate persons are at best self-serving. Lasting goodness in the heart is a product of divine operation, cleaning and purging in the heart by the Spirit of God. God promised to perform this operation in the heart and life of those who sincerely come to Him seeking His touch. This was the case with David after he messed up with Uriah's wife and killed her husband. He was able to put his finger on the source of the problem. As he was finding his way back to God, he prayed *"create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"* Psalm 51:11. This should be the prayer of every believer who finds consistent Christian living difficult as well as sinners and backsliders who are far away from the kingdom of God. We must saturate our environment and fill our hearts with resources that promotes God's

interest. We must shun evil companions and abstain from all appearances of evil. Scripture reading and study, Prayer and fellowship with brethren must be on our priority list. We must resist temptation and dangerous ambitions. God is able to keep us from falling and present us blameless before the throne of His glory.

3. Divine acceptance and approval of heart and life transformation

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation"
Psalms 24:3-5.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God"
Matthew 5:8.

Renewal of mind is mandatory for all who hope to spend eternity in heaven with God. We cannot live as we please or choose here on earth and hope to arrive safely on heaven's shore. We are not here to please ourselves. We are on assignment for God. God is building a kingdom and He expects us to be part of it and contribute our own quota. God expects every new convert and believer to dedicate the rest of his or her lives to God and fulfil His will and counsel.

Blessings of purity of heart and transformation of life are many. The pure in heart shall see the Lord. The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. Nothing good will God withhold from those who walk uprightly. Purity's power affects every part of man's life. It qualifies us to live, work and walk in God's presence. God is pleased with us, regularly pours His blessings upon our lives and uses us as instruments in illuminating, converting and blessing others. Nothing affirms God's acceptance and approval of heart and life's transformation like the guarantee of everlasting life in God's presence at the end of our life on earth. *"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God"*



EVIDENCE OF ACCEPTABLE LIFE AND SERVICE BEFORE GOD

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" Romans 12:1-2.

Paul in our text set up some steps that anyone who desire a meaningful and intimate relationship with God here on earth and eventually in heaven will have to follow; a pathway that will lead to steady and consistent growth into Christ-likeness, a life that will find expression in true worship and acceptable service to God. According to our text, it all begins with sacrifice that involves the consecration of our entire being and personality to God and the renouncing of allegiance to world's values, pattern of life, beliefs and way of thinking. This will make it possible for God by His Spirit to work in our lives without inhibition or restraints and transfigure or transform us into heavenly-minded pilgrims. Such transformation will align us with God's will. We will be able to discern, accept and do the will of God in general and God's specific will of God for our lives in particular. The transformation when complete will bear clear testimony regarding the will of God, that it is good, pleasant and perfect. The key message in Romans 12:1-2 is that we do not have to live in the world like groping blind men; a believer crucified to the world and consecrated to God can test know, accept and walk in God's will for his life and His service to God. May God grant us this grace today in Jesus name!

We shall consider two subtopics:

1. The will of God and proof of acceptable life and service before God
2. Satisfaction and safe arrival at desired destination by saints who do the will of God

1. The will of God and proof of acceptable life and service before God

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" Galatians 6:7-8.

Our text revealed clearly that God's will for our life is not something that God will bring and impose upon us whether we like it or not. Heaven must be desired for us to arrive there at the end of our life's journey on earth. It is misleading to separate our present choices and decisions, and our ongoing walk with the Lord from our fate in time and in eternity. Eventually, what will come to us is today's aspect of God's will that we choose to believe, accept, work with and walk in. A person living in sin and asking for God's will is living in self-deception; whatever a man sows, he will reap. We are invited to live a life of absolute surrender and consecration to God that will earn us God's acceptance and approval in time and in eternity.

Gratitude to God for all that He has done for us should result not only in lives that honours Him and are implicitly obedient to His word, it should make us His servants, ambassadors and representative on earth. It would make us render acceptable service to God. We will desire to find and do the will of God in life and in our service in His kingdom. The verses following our text in Romans 12 concentrated on practical service in cooperation and partnership with other believers. Crucified, consecrated and transformed believers should serve God and serve others in His name.



2. Satisfaction and safe arrival at desired destination by saints who do the will of God

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve

me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" John 12:25-26.

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" Mark 10:28-30.

The tone in which Paul concluded his message in our text is that God's will, if we find it and do it continuously for the rest of our lives and till the end of our lives will bring us great blessings. In the light of eternity, we shall discover that the greatest thing we will ever do, the greatest thing that can ever happen to us is consecrating our talents, time, resources, ability, gifts and desires to God; and accepting to live a life that put others first as we serve God. Denying self, carrying the cross may not be an easy thing to do, but in the end, the entire world and we shall discover that those who live for Christ are happier than those who do not. Paul affirmed that the will of God is good, pleasant and perfect. The word "perfect" as used by Paul in this text refers to something that is complete, matured and has attained its full destiny and destination, the wholeness and satisfaction of a life immersed totally and permanently in the will of God. The joy, fulfillment and satisfaction that comes from living such a life in the end will be unquantifiable. On the other hand, if we reach the end of our lives and are dissatisfied, it may be because we lived for ourselves, we live the world's way and reject God's call and offer of renewed mind and transformation of life.

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Jonathan Edwards was born October 5, 1703 to Timothy and Esther (Stoddard) Edwards. He was the only son in a family of 11 children.

Both parents were known intellectuals and shaped him from his early childhood days. His father was well respected as both a teacher and preacher. His mother was well educated and had as much of an influence on Jonathan as his father did. Though his father was a preacher Edwards did not experience what he called his conversion experience until later in his life. It wasn't until January of 1723 that Edwards dedicated himself to God. Edwards entered Yale College at 13 years of age and graduated 3 years later. His first position after college was as the preacher of a New York Presbyterian church that began in 1721 and lasted just 8 months. He then held a 2 year tutorship at Yale between the years of 1724 and 1726.

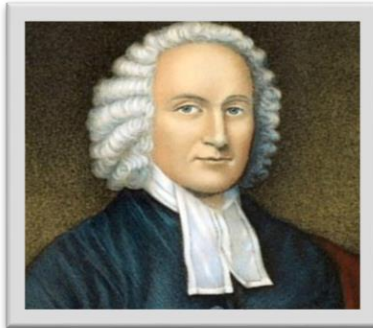
In 1727 Edwards married Sarah Pierrepont whom he met when she was just 13 years old. Her strong Christian faith was one of the main aspects that attracted Edwards. Sarah and Jonathan had many children and Sarah was adept at managing the household and the children.

Upon the death of Solomon Stoddard, Edwards became full pastor at the First Church of Northampton. It was here that his sermons began to stir the fires of revival in his church. Perhaps Edwards' greatest contribution to history was his part in the Great Awakening. The 1700s ushered in a time in American churches of revival. Jonathan Edwards spurred this revival with his own fiery brand of preaching.

Revival that began at Northampton soon spread to all of the New England area. Edwards and fellow preacher George Whitefield traveled the area preaching and winning converts.

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

JONATHAN EDWARD
1703 - 1758



This revival and awakening was unlike any seen in the country or abroad. Hundreds came to repentance and saving faith during the 1700s.

Edwards was prolific during his preaching years and his mastery of prose left Christians with lasting lessons of faith in the sermons he published. One of his hallmark works, *"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"* was written 1741. Edwards plan to retire in the pastorate at Northampton Church came crashing down on him 1750. On June 22, 1750 he was dismissed from his position in an almost unanimous vote by his congregation. Shortly after his dismissal he received an invitation to join the church in Stockbridge. He accepted and went back to the pulpit. The years at Stockbridge were somewhat more leisurely than the years at Northampton and he had much time to devote to his writing again. It was during this time that he finished *Freedom of the will*.

In 1757 he was asked to become the president of Princeton but passed away after a reaction to a small pox shot on March 22, 1758. He was 53 years old.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

" is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: "

2Timothy 2:11-12

SONG OF THE MONTH

TAKE MY LIFE AND LET IT BE

1. Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in endless praise,
let them flow in endless praise.
2. Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee,
swift and beautiful for thee.
3. Take my voice and let me sing
always, only, for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee,
filled with messages from thee.
4. Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
every power as thou shalt choose,
every power as thou shalt choose.
5. Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne,
it shall be thy royal throne.
6. Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee,
ever, only, all for thee.

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