

A Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

by Trevor McDowell | Jul 18, 2023 |

When God blesses our lives, it is easy to thank Him for the abundant blessings since “*every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above...*” (James 1:17); but it is a whole different thing to give God thanks when negative circumstances come into our lives. I believe this is what the Bible refers to as a “Sacrifice of Thanksgiving” when we thank Him for something we wish did not happen to us or our loved ones.

A sacrifice is defined as giving up something of value for something of greater value. When we offer up a “Sacrifice of Thanksgiving” we give up something of value, our will, for something of greater value, God’s will.

When Jonah ran away from God because he didn’t want to do God’s will, God thwarts Jonah’s desire by threatening to destroy the ship he is on – unless they throw Jonah off the boat. The crew throws Jonah overboard and he is swallowed up by the great fish so God can bring him back to complete the mission He has for Jonah.

In Jonah 2:9 while in the belly of the fish he says, “*But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of Thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the Lord.*”

Note that Jonah offered a sacrifice of thanksgiving before he was delivered. After he does this then God commands the fish to spit him out on dry land (Jonah 2:10).

Not knowing what his outcome will be, Jonah praises God in the midst of his turmoil.

Let me suggest to you Jonah was delivered out of his circumstance before the fish spit him out. He did business with God and praised Him when his circumstances were bleak. Our spiritual well-being is a matter of the heart and not a matter of our circumstances.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 *Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

When we give a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God, we are looking at the things which are unseen, rather are seen. This pleases God when we acknowledge His sovereignty and His goodness in our lives despite our circumstances. As Paul writes in Thessalonians, *“in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”* 1Thessalonians 5:18

“Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.” Hebrews 11:15

Through the power of Christ’s Spirit living in us we can continually offer up sacrifices of praise to God. The resulting fruit that comes from it will be a life of peace knowing God is working perfectly in our lives.

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