

Titles of The Church (#6)
The Spiritual House
Sermon by Pastor Sylvia Chan

Today we study another title of the Church, this is the 6th title we are studying.

^{NASB} **1 Peter 2:5** ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1Pe 2:5 NASB)

Here Apostle Peter is telling us that Christians are living stones, and that we are being built up as a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices to Yahweh God.

Since we have studied Christians as living stones in an earlier sermon called “Titles of Christians (#10) Living Stones,” please refer to that sermon. Today I will not repeat the part about living stones, but will only focus on the Church as the spiritual house.

We Cannot Isolate Ourselves from Other Christians and Live by Ourselves

This title “the spiritual house” tells us that we cannot isolate ourselves from other Christians and live by ourselves. Here Apostle Peter compares Christians to stones that build up a spiritual house, but one stone by itself is not enough to build up a house, no matter how big and wonderful that stone is. Just one stone is not sufficient. We need many stones to build a house.

There is no room for individualism. Today many Christians don’t want to relate to other Christians; they say they don’t need to go to Church, for they can worship God and meditate on the Word of God at home; that is not Christianity in the Bible. Our concern is not only for our own salvation. Even though salvation is important, that’s not our only concern. We are baptized into one body. As living stones, we are being built up together as a spiritual house of Yahweh God.

We are to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ

For what purpose are we being built up into a spiritual house? This passage 1 Peter 2:5 says: “you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” So we are being built up as a spiritual house in order to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The Spiritual House

In Old Testament times, before the Lord Jesus Christ came, the high priest would enter the Holy of holies in the Temple once a year with the blood of animals as an offering for himself first, because he also committed sins, and then for the people of God.

^{NASB} **Hebrews 9:7** ⁷ but into the second, only the high priest *enters* once a year, not without *taking* blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. (Heb 9:7 NASB)

Then the Lord Jesus Christ came, and when he died on the cross, he offered himself up as a sin offering.

^{NASB} **Hebrews 9:11-12** ¹¹ But when Christ appeared *as* a high priest of the good things to come, *He entered* through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹² and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. (Heb 9:11-12 NASB)

Please pay attention to the phrase “once for all” in this passage; it indicates that this sin offering is final, after which no more sin offering is needed.

But it doesn’t mean that we can just neglect our sins. When we commit sin (or sins), we have to come immediately before Yahweh God to confess our sin and ask for forgiveness. Even though we don’t need to offer up physical sin offerings, we have to repent of our sin.

In the Old Testament there were many different kinds of sacrifices besides the sin offering. Now, in the New Testament age, we don’t need to offer blood sacrifices for sins because the Lord Jesus is the perfect sacrifice for sin. But what about the other sacrifices, do we need to offer up other sacrifices?

Yes, we still need to offer sacrifices to God, but it is not physical sacrifices, it is spiritual sacrifices according to 1 Peter 2:5 “you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

How are we to offer up spiritual sacrifices? What are our spiritual sacrifices?

1. To offer our lives as a living and holy sacrifice to God

^{ESV} **Romans 12:1** ¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living

sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (Rom 12:1 ESV)

Here Apostle Paul says we are to offer up our bodies (that means our lives) as a living and holy sacrifice to God. Our spiritual sacrifice is to offer our lives to God, we let Him use our lives in whatever way He sees suitable.

The first spiritual sacrifice is the offering of our lives to Yahweh God.

2. We offer a sacrifice of praise to God

^{NASB} **Hebrews 13:15-16** ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

(Heb 13:15-16 NASB)

“Through him” means that through the Lord Jesus, we offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. Do you know how important your thanksgiving is? Our thanksgiving is our sacrifice of praise to Yahweh God.

^{NASB} **Philippians 4:6** ⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (Phi 4:6 NASB)

Here in this passage apostle Paul teaches us to give thanks in everything. Even when we are in trouble, even when we are being attacked, we still give thanks to God. That’s what I have been doing, I give thanks to God when people attack me left and right; the more they attack me, the more I give thanks to God.

Unfortunately most people, even Christians, are doing exactly the opposite, they like to complain and criticize about everything. Many years ago I was like that; but the Lord convicted me of my sins and I repented of it.

While most people are complaining all the time, if we do something different, giving thanks to God in everything, we will really stand out as a light to the world; people will wonder what kind of people we are. Do you want to be a light? Start with a very small step! Do you have the boldness to do that?

Actually, if you give thanks to God even when you are facing troubles, you will immediately experience the peace and the power coming into your heart; you are the first one to benefit. That is something for you to experience, not

to just analyze intellectually.

3. We do good and share with others

Also according to the above passage, Hebrews 13:15 – 16, we need to do good and share with other people, which is part of our spiritual sacrifice to Yahweh God. That is the third point, that we do good and share with those who are in need, for that is our spiritual sacrifice to God.

Conclusion

Now let's sum up everything. Christians are being built up as a spiritual house, and we offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. Our spiritual sacrifices are:

- We offer up our lives to Yahweh God and let Him use us in whatever way He wants.
- We give praise to Yahweh God, which is our sacrifice of praise.
- We do good and share with others

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