

LIFE GROUP GUIDELINE TERM 2 WEEK 5

8 June 2017

THE PERFECT PATTERN OF OBEDIENCE

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.

Romans 12:1 (NIV)

Icebreaker

Share with your group about a time you were making something according to a given plan (pattern, recipe, diagram, etc.) and the instructions were faulty. What did you do to get back on track?

OR: Just for fun, give each person a sheet of paper and instructions on how to make an origami design. For some ideas see <http://www.origami-instructions.com/simple-origami.html>. Ask each member to write a word of encouragement on their sheet of paper and, once folded, to give this to someone in the group.

Introduction

Authentic worship which pleases God includes living a life which is sacrificed daily to God. Sacrifice involves a surrender to God in which we freely give Him control over our lives and open up space for Him to work. This surrender is not once-off; it is an ongoing action. Each day we should renew our surrender to Christ and walk as He walked in our spheres of influence – our homes, communities, and places of work or study. In this way we glorify God and we attract others to Christ through our godly lifestyle.

Discussion

1. Paul urges us to yield our bodies to God as part of our ongoing, daily surrender to Christ. Our physicality can be summed up in the five faculties of hearing/speaking, touching, tasting, smelling and seeing. Consider the challenges we experience in bringing these faculties under Christ's control: listening attentively and sensitively to another person's point; speaking the right thing and keeping silent at the right time; using touch to show love, concern and healing; making the choice to see suffering and to look away from things which don't please God, etc.
2. Taking the point of the surrender of our bodies further, what special physical gift do you feel you have been given and how are using that to serve God? For example. someone may have a beautiful singing voice, the ability to play sport, use complicated equipment,

to make things, to cook well or the physical stamina to carry on working when others tire. Identify needs in your life group which require 'physical' abilities and consider how you could serve your group in new ways using your physical gifts.

3. What is the pattern, the plan, the direction of this 'world'? Robert Barron, a contemporary theologian, sums it up this way: the world is single-minded in the pursuit of wealth, power and pleasure. In contrast, what is the distinguishing focus of God's kingdom? Discuss how we can pursue Kingdom objectives in our families, our immediate community, our places of work?
4. Using our bodies and pursuing God's glory every day in our normal routine has to start with a rational decision and the right thought pattern. For most of us, a regular time of study of the Word and prayer is where we make these mental adjustments. Share with the group what works the best for you with regard to personal Bible study and prayer.
5. This passage contains a great promise: if we surrender our bodies to obey God and continually renew our attitudes and outlook on life to conform to His pattern, we will recognize God's will for our lives. Share an experience with the group when God revealed His will to you in a time of uncertainty or confusion as you showed yourself willing to obey Him at all costs.

Prayer

- Thank the Lord for revealing His plan and purpose for our lives on a daily basis as we surrender ourselves to Him.
- Pray for a fresh understanding of how we can use our physical abilities and gifts to serve Christ and one another.
- Pray a prayer of unconditional surrender of all of your life to God. Invite Him to lead you into new ground where you can live even more fully to His glory and praise.