

# The Sacrifice of Praise

By Steve Pruitt

*Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.*

Hebrews 13:15 ESV

The Greek word used for fruit in this verse refers to plucked fruit, ripe, ready to eat, good fruit, fresh from the tree. This would lead us to believe that our sacrifice of praise is the best fruit of our lips, the first fruit of the picking, not something that is left over, blemished or rotten.

Many people over the years have taught that a sacrifice of praise is praise that is given when the worshiper doesn't feel like praising. This definition totally misses the meaning of the scripture and places the focus of worship on the worshiper instead of the one receiving the worship.

As you read the Old Testament book of Leviticus you learn that the sacrifices required in the Tabernacle of Moses were only acceptable if they were without blemish. The worshiper didn't bring something he didn't want or could not use. He brought the best of his flock, and brought in willingly. The requirement of a true worshiper is the same today. He must bring the best he has, not his leftovers, and he must bring it willingly.

Worship doesn't depend on how the worshiper feels but on how great a God he is worshiping. Worship doesn't depend on the outward appearance of the worshiper or his circumstances, but on the greatness of the one who controls the circumstances and the work he has done on the inside of the worshiper.

Notice the writer of Hebrews says, *Through **him** let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise...* (emphasis mine). The "him" he is referring to is Jesus.

We cannot offer to God the best we have apart from the blood that Jesus shed on the cross. His sacrifice makes our sacrifice of praise acceptable. We must come to the Father by him. Though we have a responsibility to worship the Father, we cannot come to him on the basis of our own merit. We only have access to his presence by the blood of Jesus. Not only that, but Jesus' sacrifice should fuel our worship. We should offer to him the best that we have because he offered for us the best that he had.

Are you offering your best to the Father? Do you acknowledge his name by what you say and how you live? Ask the Father to show you areas in your life that you have held back for yourself. Ask him to give you boldness to declare the greatness of his name to those in your circle of influence.

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## **Scriptures for meditation:**

Isaiah 57:19

Psalm 40:10

Psalm 119:108