Dear Open Door Family,

Thank you for your prayers for Carol and me as we were away on vacation. It was a good time filled with walks, swimming, and reading. As we spent time together we had a chance to talk about a challenge that I was given. Someone challenged me to look at Romans 12 as a description or a list of characteristics describing a mature Christian. That was an intriguing prospect so Carol and I took some time to read and study Romans 12 and to think about the kinds of qualities that are revealed. In the back of my mind, as I was reading, I was asking the question "Lord, are these things true in my life?" Let me challenge you to read through Romans 11:33-12:21 and ask the Lord to work in your heart... ask Him to show to show you if these qualities are true in your life?

Romans 12:1-2 *(JBP) With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good...*

In these verses there are two actions which the Scriptures require of me. First, I am challenged to offer myself as a LIVING sacrifice to God. Second, I am warned to reject the world's pressure on me. Let's look at the first one today. What does it mean to be a LIVING sacrifice? There is a huge difference between a normal sacrifice and a living sacrifice. A normal sacrifice is killed and burned on the altar. A living sacrifice can be offered over and over. It is a day by day, minute by minute kind of sacrifice. Someone once said "the problem with living sacrifices is that they keep crawling off the altar." So, as we think about God's mercy and grace towards us, may we willingly crawl back up onto the altar and say, "Here I am Lord. Use me in anyway that will bring You glory."

PRAYER: *Have Your own way, Lord! Have Your own way! You are the Potter, I am the clay.*
Mold me and make me after Your will, While I am waiting, yielded and still.
Have Your own way, Lord! Have Your own way! Hold over my being absolute sway!
Fill with Thy Spirit till all shall see Christ only, always, living in me.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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