



# PASSIONFORTRUTH

WHERE NEW LIFE BEGINS

## Decoding Romans: Chapter 12

### *The Ancient Living Sacrifice?*

- 0:00:00 **What does it mean to be a living sacrifice for God? What does it mean to lay down your life for your friends or for God?** We're walking through the book of Romans, so join us this week as we dive into chapter 12—not from the 21st-century Western perspective but from the first-century Jewish perspective, where the nuggets come alive by letting the Bible speak for itself in its original time. And we do so right after this.
- 0:00:33 **Hello, everyone. Jim Staley, Passion for Truth Ministries, and welcome to today's broadcast,** where we're diving verse by verse into the book of Romans, uncovering the gap—hopefully making the gap smaller—by going back to the first century and discovering what Paul the Rabbi Shaul, who sat under the feet of Gamaliel, really meant when he penned these, what we call letters to the churches, what we now call Scripture inspired by the Holy Spirit. But unfortunately, we've been looking at them through the lens of the 21st-century Greco-Roman, really Catholic, even Protestant-Catholic lens, and it's really skewed our vision. And out has come theology and doctrines and creeds that Paul never meant.
- 0:01:18 So that's what we've been doing in this channel. We've been uncovering verse by verse from the original Christian roots, which are Hebrew in origin. And by the way, **the word "Hebrew" simply means "crossed-over one."** So if you've crossed over from death to life, then you're like Abraham. He was a Gentile that crossed over from death to life, and he was an Ivrit—he was a Hebrew. So we today have been going through the first 11 chapters and learning all about Paul as he's been writing to the Jewish believers in Rome, the Gentile believers in Rome, chastising them in the early chapters about how they're living, and then diving into the theology of what it means to truly be Jewish, to truly be Israel. How do the Gentiles relate to their Jewish counterparts, and vice versa? And we've gone through all of the last three—the Trinity heart of Romans—[chapters 9, 10, and 11](#). If you've not seen that, you absolutely have to go back and watch that so that you can really digest what Israel is all about—the olive tree, the branches. We dealt with all of that in the last chapter. And today, Paul is going to move the conversation into how to

practically live out our faith. What does it mean? What's really important to God, especially as it relates to these early-century Jewish and Gentile believers?

0:02:33 Now, it's really important to remember that we cannot infuse into this what we already believe. We must keep in sight that this was written to a specific group of people in the *ecclesia*, in the assemblies of Rome. All of the instructions, all of the doctrine, all of the creeds, all of the Torah that God, through the apostle Paul, is giving, is meant for them. Now, by extension, we get to partake in that beautiful blessing of instruction, but we must keep in sight what he really meant towards them. So that's what we're going to do right now. Let's dive into **Romans, chapter 12**. Here we go.

0:03:12 **Verse one says:**  
***"<sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."***

0:03:31 Now, every good Bible student has memorized this verse 100 times over, but what I want to do is help you focus on what it really means to the first century and Paul's mindset when he wrote it. Now, remember, this is written to the Jews and the Gentile believers in the *ecclesias*, or the assemblies—what we call today the churches—of Rome. Now, he's never been there. These are not churches that he started, as we discussed early in the intro of the entire book of Romans series that we're in right now. This is critical to understand: Paul is Jewish. He has a rabbi mindset. Everything is going to be from the perspective of God, which is corporate.

0:04:12 That's why you see here, "your bodies"—the way we would write this in English would be, "present your bodies as living sacrifices." Everything would be plural—that would be proper English—but that is not how Paul does it. Paul shifts the gear to show the reader that this is all about corporate. Unfortunately, in Christianity, we've taken it that everything is about a personal relationship, and it's all about my personal walk with God, and we forget that everything is connected to one another—many members, one body. And that's why he says, "your bodies are a living sacrifice," singular—that when we present our individual bodies before God, we are corporately coming together and offering Him one sacrifice. Everybody doesn't offer individual sacrifices. There is one sacrifice that's offered on behalf of the entire people, right? And also, the second thing that's important to notice here is that Paul is using temple language. Everything is in the mindset of the temple. So it's very helpful to know what the temple looks like so that you can fully understand the nuances and the beautiful linguistic symbolism that's happening in the mind of Paul that's coming out of his mouth.

- 0:05:26** "It is wholly acceptable to God. Look at this: which is your reasonable service." When he says "reasonable service," what's he talking about? He's talking about the service of the priest. The priesthood is—and are—the ones that are offering the service to God. A service is coming from a servant, and a servant, in biblical terminology, is a slave. We don't have a mind, will, and emotion of our own. We put that aside when we came to Christ, and we now do what is in His mind, will, and emotions on a matter. And how do we know what that is? Based on the Word of God, period—the Holy Spirit driven by the Word of God. That's a worshiper that's worshiping in spirit and in truth. That's the true servant. That's our true service.
- 0:06:10** And that's why he says in **verse two**:  
***"Do not be conformed to this world."***  
To be conformed by this world, ladies and gentlemen, is to allow the world to begin to massage your mind, will, and emotions. You begin to think like the world, and that is not at all what the Father is intending. He's intending us to be conformed by Him and by His image. That's why it says:  
***"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."***
- 0:06:40** Now, look, I do a lot—me and my wife do a lot of counseling—and I will hear, I'm here to tell you, that the majority of the sins and the problems and the addictions, the grooves that we're in, the habits, all the things, the devices that we're into, are all objects of the mind. As a matter of fact, I love to play golf. I'm a sports fanatic. I've been an athlete my whole life—or at least used to be. Now I'm not quite so in shape to do so. But everything is what they say, a game of seven inches. And the seven inches are right here. It's the game of seven inches between your ears. It's in the mind.
- 0:07:14** The battle is in the mind. When the enemy serpent came to Eve and Adam in the garden, he didn't start in the spirit. He started in the mind. He got them thinking that, "Oh my goodness, I want to be like God." He says, "Don't you want to be wise? God didn't really mean what He said." He started playing with their mind. He started making them think in different directions. And as a man thinks, so he is, and he becomes. So it's very, very critical how you think and what you think—what you allow into the mind gate eventually makes it out of the mouth gate, and it makes it out of the hand gate and the feet gate. The heart gate is all a part of it. This is why everything must be renewed in the mind. And how do we renew the mind? We renew it by the Word of God. We do it through meditation, through thinking upon the Word, by memorizing the Word, by practicing the Word, by keeping inside the guardrails. God calls that *Torah*—the instruction manual, basic instructions before leaving Earth: B-I-B-L-E. And that is how we begin to be transformed. We begin to read the Word, know the Word, live the Word, breathe the Word.
- 0:08:25** But what happened so many years ago—1,700 some odd years ago—when the Roman church got involved, is that the serpent's poison began to infiltrate the

church and began to teach us that the Word of God is not relevant. Now, for the average believer, they would never agree with that statement. But unfortunately, when you say that the Torah—the instruction manual of God—has been done away with, is no longer relevant in a person's life today, you're stripping him of the only significant power that has the ability to renew his mind. It's the Word of God. You can't strip the Word of God from the Word of God and still say it's the Word of God and has all of its power.

0:09:02 No, the power of the Word of God is in all of the Word. That's why in Timothy it says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."<sup>a</sup> It is not the New Testament that it's talking about—it didn't even exist. He's talking about the Old Testament. That's what they used for doctrine. That's what they used. And certainly, the New Testament with the Old Testament together becomes the powerhouse of the Spirit and the truth together.

0:09:28 If we're going to renew our mind and get out of the vices that we're in and move into a place of prophetic power, having victory over everything in our life, we must daily spend time and marinate in the Word of God and in the presence of the Most High if we're going to change. And ultimately, this entire Word, ladies and gentlemen—from Genesis to Revelation, especially in the book of Romans—God's trying, Paul is trying, God through Paul is trying to say, "It's time for everyone to get together and do the right thing." And the right thing is found in the Word of God.

0:10:06 That's why he says, "Do not be a hearer of the Torah, but be a doer." James says the same thing: "Don't look into the perfect law of liberty and forget what it looks like. Don't be that man. Do what it says. Show me your faith without works, and I'll show you my faith by what I do."<sup>b</sup> So, chapter 12 is all about what you do. And incredibly, he starts off right here. So I encourage each and every one of you to find your quiet time again. Somebody right now needs to hear this message. You have left God at the altar, and you have been doing this and that and everything else. And the Father is waiting for you in the holy place. He's waiting for you to sit on His lap on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies. He's waiting to commune with you. And you've left your first love. If that's you, would you just put in the comments right now, "I've left my first love," and make a commitment to get back into your time with Father, back in that intimate time with God, to renew your mind? Amen.

0:11:10 All right, let's get back to the Scriptures.

***"<sup>3</sup> For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. <sup>4</sup> For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. <sup>6</sup> Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion***

***to our faith;<sup>7</sup> or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;<sup>8</sup> he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."***

- 0:11:51 Now, my friends, it's really important that we recognize again, the context here is talking to the Romans—the believers, Jewish and Gentile believers, that are in Rome—and they've been fighting one another. They've been arrogant against one another. He's writing this to them, and it has incredible application for us. That's why he's beginning to wrap up this letter in his salutation by saying, "Guys, look, every one of you is a part—you, Jewish believers, stop looking down on the Gentiles because they don't know 'come here from Sichem.' They're brand new. They don't know anything. And Gentiles, stop looking at the Jew and judging them—for they hold the oracles of God. They have the Torah. They have so much to teach you."
- 0:12:29 And he's coming together and saying, "Look, all of you are part of one body. Stop judging one another at the level of condemnation. It's okay to judge sin, but don't judge one another for the place that you're in." That's why all of the arguments that people have—the petty arguments of calendar and how to say God's name properly, and should we wear jeans, and should women wear head coverings, or all of the petty arguments that are happening in Pentecostal, non-denominational, Baptist, Lutheran—you name it—what we really need to focus on is you making sure that *you* are renewing your own mind, that you are taking the talent that God gave *you* and that you are giving a return on His investment in your life.
- 0:13:14 This is the power that God is trying to get across to every single one of us that are out there today: Stop. The power is found in just becoming the image yourself. You can't fix your mate, you can't fix your boss, you can't fix yourself. The only thing that you can do is *focus* on what God is doing in you and renewing your mind. That's why he says, "Present *your* body." He doesn't say, "By the way, John, present Jerry's body. Cindy, present Sandy's body." No, you can't fix or present anyone else but yourself.
- 0:13:50 God says, "Come and be the best that you can be. *Focus on you*. I came and died for you. Worry about you. Stop judging and pointing out all the sins of everybody else. Focus on you." Everybody has a part. So the very person that you think might be the devil—all right—and has a YouTube channel that you disagree with what he's saying—God is using everything and everyone. If He can use a pagan king to help Nehemiah bring back the remnant of the house of Judah to start Jerusalem again—from which all of modern-day Judaism has its birth—He can use *anyone*. So let's give Him the opportunity to do that.
- 0:14:31 Okay, so whoever is out there that maybe you've fallen into that of judging your neighbor a little bit too strongly—and I'm not talking about not calling out sin, right? But don't call out sin in someone that's not in your life, that you don't have authority

over, that you don't have influence over. That doesn't do any good. We're supposed to only point out sin with absolute intrepidity and fear that God would judge us—only pointed out for the purpose of helping them repent, not for the purpose of exposing them, or you'll be committing the sin of Ham.

0:15:01 **Alright, I love this next verse.** It really encapsulates the heart of Romans chapter 12. Let's get to it. It says in **verse nine**:

***"<sup>9</sup> Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another."***

0:15:12 Now, I'm going to encourage you to turn this off right now if you don't want to be convicted, and if you don't want to be cut to the heart, because this absolutely is heart-wrenching and amazing instruction that goes literally right to the core of who we are. Let me read it again. It says:

***"<sup>9</sup> Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. He's going to tell us what it is, <sup>10</sup> Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love."***

0:15:45 Guys, these are people that are fighting. These are people that don't like each other. These are people that don't have anything in common. Do you feel that way ever in your life with someone that you just feel like all you do is fight? You have nothing in common, but you're stuck right in relationship with them, no matter what it might be. God is saying, "Look, be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, and in honor giving preference to one another." Stop putting yourself first.

0:16:13 Some of you need to put in the comments, "God, forgive me for putting myself first." Have you ever been in an argument with your spouse or with someone, and you always defer to your viewpoint? You defer to what *you* believe. You defer to *your* feelings. You defer to how *you* think in a matter? I remember, not too long ago, I was in an argument with my wife, Cheryl, and she said something or was acting a certain way that kind of made me feel a certain way. And I was so focused on what I was feeling, how she was making me feel, it didn't even dawn on me that maybe she's having a bad day and something went wrong. And it never dawned on me to just care about how she's feeling—like, look into what is she feeling? And it took me a few minutes, and the Holy Spirit really convicted me and said, "Jim, this isn't about you. Obviously, she's feeling something. Why don't you inquire and make it about her? She's the one that's hurting. She's the one that had a bad day. She's the one that had a bad experience. Why don't you just inquire?" And it just dawned on me: This is the mind of Christ. *It's so easy to make everything about us* instead of living for the sake of someone else.

0:17:22 Let's keep reading. It says:  
***"Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit,*** be diligent. Be like an athlete that

gets up early in the morning that's exercising right? ***Serving the Lord***, All of this is serving the Lord, even though the instructions are about people and how to love people and how to be diligent, it's all serving the Lord, ***rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer.***" Now, I'm going to stop right there, because this is a direct connection to what he said in Romans chapter five. Let's go back and check it out. He says this in **Romans 5:3-4**:

***"<sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, character; and character, hope."***

- 0:18:17 The whole purpose of tribulation, the whole purpose of frustration, is to produce patience, which produces character—what character? The character of Christ. Christ went through tribulation beyond anybody's imagination. He was patient. He went to the cross and said not a word. It created a character for us to emulate, and that creates hope for all of us. Your tribulation, listen, brethren, your tribulation will create a character that will produce hope for someone else. For all you know, it's not actually about you. What you're going through may not even be for you. I remember when I was falsely accused by the government. I remember when I was falsely accused by those that were closest to me. I remember being in chains, being completely handcuffed in my wrist, in my waist, and in my feet, and having to shuffle across an airport tarmac to get on Con Air to go someplace I didn't even know where I was going.
- 0:19:25 I thought, "God, why are you punishing me? I really thought I was serving you." It wasn't about me. If I was ever going to be able to minister truly, God had to take the silver spoon out of my mouth. I had never had pain in my life. I'd never had a single person in my life—even grandparents—die. I had never experienced what it's like to be abandoned, to be rejected, to be falsely accused, slandered. I'd never experienced how to minister or to be around those that had been—as eight-year-olds—over and over by their cousins, to be forced into trafficking when they were seven, or when their parents sold them out just so that they could have money to put on the table to buy food.
- 0:20:14 I've never experienced or been around hurting people or criminals in my life, but God showed me what it means to be rejected, to destroy the pride that was in my heart that I didn't even know I had. So I came out of my higher learning experience—my education—with pain and suffering, and I learned that it never was really about me to begin with. For how could I minister to you and encourage you to hold on to God, to consider it pure joy to face trials of many kinds, if I've never faced a trial in my life?
- 0:20:52 So think about the depth of God's love for the world, that He would choose you in whatever you're going through so that you could really minister to someone else and feel empathetically their pain. You know, when an arm comes around me from another pastor, it feels so good, because nobody knows what we go through except for if you've been there. When someone's been to prison, they say, "Brother, I know

exactly what you're going through. I know what it feels like to be in a cell, and you sleep on one side with the door open because you're afraid that somebody might come into your cell and do something to you at night. So you sleep with one eye open. I know what it's like, brother, when I hear the chains walking down that hallway from the COs—the correctional officers—and feeling like you're in the pit of hell, and it's Satan himself, and you don't know if they're going to come into your cube or not."

0:21:47 But there's one thing that all of us have in common: that sorrow only lasts for a night. That promise is there—that joy comes in the morning. So I want you to consider that your sorrow in your night is not for you. That's why Paul says, "Wear it with praise." Wear it proud. It is a garment of praise. The suffering that He puts on you is really a garment of praise. And if you've ever *really* been through something, you know exactly what I'm saying. The Father has this uncanny way to *press us* like an olive so He could bring out the best of the oil, so that He could use it to light the menorah in the temple—to be the light of the world. You see, as long as we're growing on the vine, as long as we're fat and happy on the olive tree, the oil doesn't even get made. It's only through the shaking of the tree and the crushing of the olives and their pride that what God originally planned all of that growth for was to grow the juice so He could use it to light your life, the temple, and the world.

0:23:07 **All right, let's get back to Romans chapter 12.** I hope that encourages someone that's out there. If that does, would you please let us know in the comments what you're going through so that we can pray with you? **And the last scripture he says is this:**  
*"<sup>13</sup> Distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality."*

0:23:29 See, Paul takes it from, "Hey guys, you need to get along," to the real truth of the matter: taking care of the widows and the orphans, taking care of those that are less fortunate, taking care of the needs of the saints. Who are you taking care of? What are you doing with your finances? Is it all about you, or are you investing into the Kingdom culture? What does the image look like? How are you spreading the gospel around the world? Maybe you're working 24 hours a day, and God has caused you to be one of those that just seeds—that like the oil that comes from the olive trees in [Zechariah 14](#), through the golden pipe that goes into a menorah. It may be someone else is building, but you're part of the process. What are you doing to further the kingdom for someone else? That is the key. All of the image that He's trying to build in you is not for you. It's for someone else.

0:24:26 Are you imaging Christ to your spouse, to your children, to those around you? Because this is what it means to be the light of the world. It is all about the menorah. The "light of the world" was an idiomatic expression that was talking about the temple that was glowing at night from the menorah—the Word of God, Yeshua, the seven spirits of God. It was the tree of life in a golden menorah symbolism.



- 0:24:52 That's why Jesus said to the disciples, pointing to the temple probably, "You are the light of the world." They knew what that expression meant. That was a very well-known expression of Judaism in the first century. It was the temple. And He's saying, "You are the temple. I am the menorah. I am your light, and I'm about to be crushed so that My oil of gladness can come into you and light you from the inside out." You see, we look at everything the wrong lens. We look at it through the lens of the kingdom mindset. Tribulation is simply the preparation before the oil comes for the inauguration of your priesthood.
- 0:25:32 **All right, here we go. Let's continue here:**  
**"Bless those who persecute you;** as you walk through the rest of Romans 12, this is the Sermon on the Mount. Paul is literally putting the entire sermon on the mount right here. **Bless and do not curse.** This is right out of Matthew chapter five. **Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep."** Have you ever had somebody have something amazing happen to them? Great news—maybe something happened, they got a promotion, and you didn't get a promotion. He says, "Rejoice with them." Stop making everything about you and how you feel, says the Lord God. Paul says, "Look, rejoice when someone gets saved, rejoice when someone gets promoted, rejoice when great things happen to someone. Rejoice with them. Because when they win, you win. We all win. God wins."
- 0:26:23 It's about Kingdom mindset. We've got to get out of the '80s, my friends—even though it's my favorite decade. The '80s was when the whole concept of Christianity as a relationship began, and it is a relationship. But we've missed the corporate connection with one another. We've missed the olive tree that's Israel. We've missed the covenants of promise, and we've missed the power of connecting with one another and rejoicing with one another, and then weeping with one another—empathy.
- 0:26:55 I know that God is working deeply inside of me in this area alone—to be to weep with those who weep, to feel their pain. That's why, quite frankly, I went to prison for five years. And I don't hide from it, because God transformed me through the process. I wish, in some ways, everybody could experience what I experienced—the most supernatural parts of my life: visions upon dreams, almost 300 prophetic dreams, visitations, angels, Yeshua Himself. Never have I ever had the kind of supernatural experiences like I had in that cell where He visited me personally. I probably never have that until I get to the other side, but I needed it the most. Never look down on the deep, dark moments of your life. They're what's writing the DNA for tomorrow. Did you hear that, my friends? **Never look down on yesterday, because that day is what's writing the DNA power for tomorrow.** Amen.
- 0:28:00 **All right. That's why he says:**  
*"Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion."*

- 0:28:13 In other words, don't think that you know anything. I remember this saying—I think it was Edmund Burke—he said, ***"The beginning of knowledge is knowing you know nothing."*** That's where everything begins when we come to the end of ourselves. Have you ever thought, my friends, that maybe God does what He does in every part of our life, and we ask the proverbial question, *"Why?"* Can I give you the answer of why? It's to bring you to the end of yourself. Because once you get to the end of yourself, that's when the spirit man becomes alive, and not until then. The supernatural blessings of God start when the natural blessings end. Think about that for just a moment: when we come to the end of ourselves is when we come to the beginning of our true walk and our true identity with God.
- 0:29:11 He goes on to quote Matthew five, for sure:  
***"<sup>17</sup> Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. <sup>19</sup> Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."***
- 0:29:27 Did you hear what he says? He says, "Don't avenge yourself. When someone harms you, get out of the way." I remember when I was in prison, in my cell, and people on the outside that were very close to me were doing horrible things to me. They were destroying everything that I thought was important. They were hurting me, my family, the ministry that God had given me, and I wanted so bad to take matters into my own hands.
- 0:30:01 But God sent me a vision and said, "Don't move. Stay dead. What I'm doing is bigger than you." You see, even in my closest pain—that was closest to me, my own family—where I felt the right to defend, God said, "Shut your mouth" (which is difficult for me to do, if you haven't figured that out). He said, "I'm doing something bigger than you, but it involves you, and I'm sorry that involves your pain. And I'm sorry that you don't have control over the situation anymore, because, Jim, you're a control freak, and that's partly why you're here. But I'm making—and allowing—the enemy to bring chaos in your life so that you can realize that I am God and I've got this. Let Me get this. Let revenge be Mine."
- 0:30:51 That's why He literally says, "But rather, give place to wrath." That's a really strange thing for Paul to say. He says, "Don't avenge yourself. Give place to wrath." And if it stops there, it sounds like an oxymoron. What do you mean, "Don't have vengeance, but be angry"? No, "give place to wrath," and wrath is defined as what? "Vengeance is Mine, says the Lord." Let God be the God who judges. Stand back and say, "You know what? They hurt me, but hurt people hurt people. And I'm going to defer to the idea that maybe I'm missing information, maybe that they're being deceived, maybe that they're doing something they shouldn't do."

0:31:29 How would we treat King David when he committed adultery and murder? Would we judge him? Would we throw him out? Would we cast him in the street? Would we start a YouTube channel and say how horrible he is and what a terrible leader, and he's a cult leader, and on top of that, he's a wolf in sheep's clothing? Religious people only know how to destroy the olives. They don't know how to crush lightly, because if you know how olives are crushed, they're not like grapes. They're lightly pressed, and they let God do the pressing.

0:32:03 And see, that's how we're supposed to treat one another—lightly press one another. "Brother, are you doing okay? Why are you doing this? Can I help you in any way, shape, or form?" And if they think you're the enemy, let them think you're the enemy. Christ was the enemy. He crawled on a cross, and it cost Him His life, and His life went into the ground and created life for other people. How do you know if what you're going through is literally to bring life to someone else behind you? Don't make it about you. Vengeance is His.

0:32:36 And that's why he says, my friends:

***"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink."***

He's given instructions to these Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome who are fighting one another. They're enemies to one another. Church splits didn't start in the 21st century, my friends—they started in the first century.

***"If he's thirsty, give him a drink, for in doing so you will heap coals of fire on his head."***

0:33:11 All right, so this particular phrase doesn't mean a whole lot in English. When we say "heaping coals of fire on his head," like we immediately would assume anger—it's causing him to be angry. He's a hothead, right? That's our local, any-mac expression that we would attach to it. But when you go back to the ancient times, this was an incredible phrase that had a totally different meaning.

0:33:33 So let me unpack it. For you to understand this, you have to know what a brazier is. So in ancient times, when someone wanted to keep warm, we would have like a fireplace, right? You flip the gas fireplace on, you can keep warm. But back then, it was kind of like a pot. Sometimes it had legs, sometimes it had handles to carry on it. And when you ran out of fire, you would go to the next-door neighbor, and you would borrow the coals from their fire to relight your fire. That was called a brazier, and many times they had it on their head.

0:34:04 So, because they carried everything—pots of water, food, everything effortlessly on their head. So what is this idea that he's trying to share? He's trying to say, "Look, when you feed your enemies, when you clothe your enemies, when you are nice to someone that is not nice to you, do you know what you're doing? You're actually

taking them out of the cold. They have no fire in their life at all. You are heaping coals of fire on their head."

0:34:36 In other words, you're giving them the fire that's inside of you, and you're putting it on their head, which is causing them to have a place of rest and refuge. You're bringing them closer to the Messiah. Think of Acts chapter two, ladies and gentlemen. What did God do? He forgave us, He loved us, He clothed us. We were the enemies according to the Gospel. And what did He do? He came and died. He took the slander, He took the gossip, He took the false allegations, and in return, He put fire on our heads—the Holy Spirit, tongues of fire that filled us with the Holy Ghost and allowed us to draw deeper into the Holy of Holies.

0:35:18 This is the idiomatic expression that he's talking about. He's not talking about making the enemies mad—and it might happen—but ultimately, you're taking your fire, which is the Spirit of the Living God inside of you—that only the power of God can do, because you cannot love your enemy without the power of God. But the love and the image of Jesus Christ—Yeshua, the Messiah—in you is what allows you to take the fire that was on your head, that He placed, that's in your temple—Holy Spirit—and put it on their head and allow them to hear the voice of God in their language. And there's only one language that everybody speaks, and that's the language of love. Yeshua gave it to us when He put the tongues of fire on our head. It was the language of love that allowed everyone to hear God in their language. And Paul says, "Look, if you love your neighbor like you love yourself, you love your enemies, it will literally spread the fire of God around the world." Somebody say, "Hallelujah," and say, "Amen."

0:36:20 All right, praise the Lord. Let's get back to the Scriptures here and end this chapter with this verse:

***"<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."***

Guys, the entire Christian Church has this right. We cannot overcome evil by repaying evil. Every time someone does something wrong to you, it is so natural inside the carnal Adam inside of us to do what's evil to them—to give it right back, the eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But God says through the apostle Paul—Jesus' sermon on the Sermon on the Mount—"Overcome evil."

0:37:03 You want to overcome evil? You want to change somebody? Really, then do what Jesus did. Do what Christ did—overcome it with good. And what is good but laying down your life for your brethren, laying down your life for that Jewish believer that you don't like in the first century, lay down your life for that Gentile that doesn't do anything right—still eating bacon, right? Just love them where they're at, and let the love language spread throughout Judea, Samaria, and the utter parts of the earth.

0:37:41 That's why the great disciple James—the president of the Council of the first early church, some would call him bishop, pastor of the early Messianic Christian church—he said this in Acts chapter 15, verses 20 and 21. He said, "Look, these

four things they can't do, but they're going to learn the rest when they come to the synagogue every Shabbat. Moses—the Torah—will be read. They'll learn the rest of it. Guys, give them a break. Just tell them they can't do these four things for now, but they'll learn it all—step by step, precept by precept."

0:38:15 So my friends, as we come to the end of this broadcast, let us remember: Love is the answer to *everything*. When we get it right and we come to the end of ourselves, your own prison door will open. It's not just those that are in prison—prison—that are in prison. All of us have been in prison, and some of us don't even know. May God open your prison door by letting you soak in this Word—that vengeance is His, love your neighbor, focus on yourself, and let the power of His love transcend your own situation. Real joy comes in the morning for those who trust Him, regardless of whether the situation ever changes. You can have peace in the midst of your own storm, my friends. Let the peace of God come over you this day. Trust in Him, and be nice to one another, because He's coming, and He's coming with vengeance.

0:39:22 My friends, I'm Jim Staley. I pray that God blesses you and keeps you. Would you do us a favor and share this message with someone that needs to hear it? Thank you for supporting us both through prayer and your finances. If you don't have a local church, would you consider partnering with us, helping us to plant the seed around the world? We need your help. We're doing big things behind the scenes, but we can't do it without you. Go to [passionfortruth.com](https://passionfortruth.com) right now, and every little shekel helps us build a tabernacle somewhere else on this planet. May God bless you and keep you, may His face shine upon you, may His countenance be lifted up over you, and when He comes, I pray that He will give you peace at the end of your day. Shalom, my friends. I'm Jim Staley with Passion for Truth Ministries, and we'll see you in the next video. Have a great week.

Watch full teaching here:

<https://youtu.be/Kiq6fJOBAtM>



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