Spiritual Sacrifices Acceptable to God

TEXT: 1 Peter 2:5

INTRODUCTION:
A. PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS IMPORTANT IN THE NT.
   1. Important distinction in the Old Law between priesthood and others.
   2. Clergy is a special class in the denominations.
   4. We are all priests.
B. OUR ROLE AS PRIESTS DESCRIBED (Heb. 8:3; 1 Pet. 2:5).
C. WE NEED TO STUDY FURTHER.

I. SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES.
A. TYPES OF SACRIFICES TO BE OFFERED BY CHRISTIANS.
   1. Our bodies, as "living sacrifices" (Rom. 12:1-2).
   2. A lifestyle characterized by sacrificial love (Eph. 5:1-2).
   3. Praise and thanksgiving, which we do in prayer and song (Heb. 13:15).
   4. Doing good and sharing with others (Heb. 13:16; Phil. 4:15-18).
   5. Even in the way we die for the Lord (Phil. 1:20; 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6).
B. THE PURPOSE OF THESE SACRIFICES.
   1. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were offered for one of two reasons.
      a. To sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh (Heb. 9:13).
      b. To make remembrance of sin year by year (Heb. 10:3).
   2. But in the New Testament only Jesus can provide the sacrifice needed to restore us back to God (Heb. 10:11-18).
      a. Therefore, our sacrifices are not to "remove sin" or "earn" heaven!
      b. Rather, to express thanksgiving and praise, and love for his goodness!

II. ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.
A. IT MUST BE THE BEST WE HAVE TO OFFER (Mal. 1:6-8).
   1. Otherwise we despise the Name of God by offering "defiled food."
   2. Be careful not to "shut the doors." (Mal. 1:9-11).
B. IT MUST BE OFFERED WITH SINCERITY AND ZEAL (Mal. 1:12-13).
   1. Lack of either results in offering "blemished sacrifices" (Mal. 1:14-2:1-9).
   2. Does this apply to our spiritual sacrifices, like singing praises? doing good?
C. OFFERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH RIGHTEOUS LIVES (Mal. 2:13-16).
   1. The priests of Malachi's day had been quick to endorse divorce.
   2. Righteousness is important to God (Isa. 1:10-18; 1 Pet. 3:12; 1 John 3:7).

CONCLUSION:
B. OTHERS HEEDED HIS WORD (Mal. 3:16-18).
C. SHALL WE BE AMONG THOSE WHO SERVE GOD? (Rom. 6:17:18; 6:3-4).