

THE ALTAR

This journal is designed to be a study guide around the basic principals of the altar, what it is, what it isn't. Please use it to learn and grow from.

Find this lesson taught by Pastor Byron Stevenson during a Bible Study on Wednesday, September 29, 2021. The lesson is available on YouTube

Provided by Pastor Byron Stevenson

West Orlando Christian
Center Church Of God In Christ
1301 East Bay Street
Winter Garden, FL 34787

www.WestOrlandoChurch.tv

THE ALTAR

Romans 12:1-2

A study of the purpose and the need of the altar in our church and most importantly, in our lives

The word “salvation” is mentioned 156 times
The word “mercy” is mentioned 269 times
The word “grace” is mentioned 137 times
That’s a total of 562.

The word “altar” is mentioned 322 times
The word “sacrifice” is mentioned 302 times
That’s a total of 624.

There’s a lot of emphasis placed on “**salvation, mercy and grace**” and there should be because that’s the major theme of redemption, however, without the altar and sacrifice there would be no mercy. There would be no grace and there would be no salvation. Redemption is beautiful but it was graphic.

1. WHERE is the altar?

Where – it could be anywhere – it’s the intent of the heart that makes the altar successful.

2. WHAT is the altar?

It’s not just some old religious relic or icon. It is a place of covenant and therefore a sacred place. The altar is a place with God and man meet and it is a place where you come to our High Priest.

Hebrews 4:14 - 16 (NKJV) “14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

The Hebrew word for altar comes from the word “to slay”. The Altar in the Old Testament was recognized by Blood, Pain, Covenant. The altar is not a glamorous place:

1. The altar is not a sterile place, it’s a place of filth, degradation, a place of pain, a place of sacrifice, a place of death.
2. Preaching to some is about looking good – Altar ministry is about getting dirty.
3. It’s a dirty place – where all your dirty hidden sins you bare to the altar
4. It is a place to bring your broken life, your broken marriage, your wayward children, your unsaved loved ones. It’s a place to bring the impossible to God. The altar is a place to bring your sickness, your anxieties, your cares.

1 Peter 5:6 - 7 (NKJV) “6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

5. It’s a place to bring your career goals, what you want, what you are striving to achieve in life.

You are to be a living sacrifice. **The problem with living sacrifices is that they keep crawling off the altar.**

Abraham had the knife up ready to thrust it into the chest of God’s promise and that’s the precise moment that God gave Abraham a breakthrough. The altar is a place where you pour yourself out to God.

Hanna poured herself out....

1 Sam 1:9 - 18 (NKJV) “9 So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the £tabernacle of the Lord.

10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish.

11 Then she made a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed

look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.”

12 And it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli watched her mouth.

13 Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. 14 So Eli said to her, “How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!”

15 But Hannah answered and said, “No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.

16 Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.”

17 Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.”

18 And she said, “Let your maidservant find favor in your sight.” So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. She poured herself out before God!”

Psalm 34:17 - 19 (NKJV) “17 The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles.

18 The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.”

Psalm 141:1 - 2 (NKJV) “1 Lord, I cry out to You; Make haste to me! Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You. 2 Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”

Psalm 142:1 - 7 (NKJV) “1 I cry out to the Lord with my voice; With my voice to the Lord I make my supplication.

2 I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble.

3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, Then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me.

4 Look on my right hand and see, For there is no one who acknowledges me; Refuge has failed me; No one cares for my soul.

5 I cried out to You, O Lord: I said, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

6 Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name; the righteous shall surround me, for You shall deal bountifully with me."

THE ALTAR IS A PLACE WHERE YOUR FAITH IN GOD IS EXPRESSED.

Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV) 3 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

Jeremiah 29:12 - 13 (NKJV) "12 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."

When you get up from the altar your faith expressed in your obedience.

Illustration – In a little country church each week when the pastor gave the altar call Bill would go to the altar to spend some time with the Lord and reflect upon the message the pastor had preached that morning.

Invariably Tom would knee beside him and pray that same prayer each week. “Lord I need you to clean the cobwebs out of my life. Lord each week the devil spins his web of sin in my life, so Lord clean the cobwebs out of my life”.

Week after week Bill would hear this same prayer. Finally one day Bill got fed up with Tom praying the same prayer every single week.

This week when Tom knelt at the altar beside Bill and prayed his same prayer, Bill laid his hand on Tom’s shoulder and prayed, “Lord each week my brother comes to you with the cobwebs of his life and asks you to clean ‘em out, but Lord I pray that you will kill the spider”.

- The altar is a place of worship!

You may not have sin, sickness, etc...but you want to offer a sacrifice of worship unto the Lord. Example of King David bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem, he did it wrong the first time but got it right the second time and that time it involved obedience to God’s Word, sacrifice and worship, all in that order.

- **The altar is a place where you encounter the presence of a holy and mighty God! Isaiah – received a glorious experience and a call from God at the altar.**

Isaiah 6:1 - 8 (NKJV) 1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

3 And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!” 4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of

unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar.

7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said: Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.”

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me

- **The altar is a place of humility.** The biggest obstacle for many to getting their breakthrough and deliverance is pride.

1. Psalm 51:17 (NKJV) 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.

2. Isaiah 57:15 (NKJV) 15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

3. 1 Peter 5:6 - 7 (NKJV) 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

You cannot receive from God ALL the glory and goodness He has for you until you take it to the altar and get dirty.

The carnal nature shrinks from the idea of the altar! But your spirit man longs for the altar for it is a place of breakthrough!

God wants to give you miracles and breakthroughs in your life but He can't until you bring it to the altar and truly give it all to Him.

THE ALTAR IS A PLACE OF HUMILITY.

I'm bringing pornography to the altar, I'm bringing alcohol to the altar, I'm bringing those life controlling substances to the altar.

I'm bring that bitterness and unforgiveness that I have towards another brother or sister in Christ to the altar.

I'm bringing that bitterness and unforgiveness I have towards my father who abused me as a child.

I'm bringing my lustful affairs to the altar...

I'm bringing my sickness and infirmities to the altar

I'm bringing my lost loved ones to the altar

I'm bringing my career to the altar...

I'm bringing it all to the altar!

Questions to ponder and actions to take....

1. What do you have that needs to be brought to the altar?
2. What cares do you need to cast at His feet?
3. When you come to the altar The High Priest of Heaven will meet you there to receive your sacrifice and give you mercy, grace, salvation, deliverance, healing, peace, joy,....
4. The first thing you must bring the altar every time is yourself – you need to continually place yourself and all that you are, all that you have and all you want on the altar as a sacrifice to God.