

Daily Sacrifice
By Stephen Coakley

“O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is” (Psalm 63:1).

Devotion can be defined as “love, loyalty, or enthusiasm for a person, activity, or cause.” Where does our devotion lie? In everyday life, we often find ourselves devoted to something or someone. Our love, loyalty, and affection are constantly going somewhere. Often, what we seek first drives us. We wake up and check our “likes” on Instagram. We put our affection into what we want affection from. But what does that say about how we live? Imagine waking up early in the morning and, before doing anything else, having a prayer meeting in a council of two: God and you. How much more could we accomplish?

We only have life to gain by devoting ourselves to God who created us. As John pointed out at the beginning of his Gospel, to know His Word is to know Him. “In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

It’s no mistake that the word we use for our daily study of the Bible is defined as it is. Our daily Bible devotion should be a banner marking our literal devotion to God. What we spend time in, where our focus is, and how our heart is inclined, reveal the objects of our devotion.

If we aren’t focused on our daily devotion to God, our devotion will be directed elsewhere. For a student, it might be grades—a place I find myself too often; for the athlete, her sport; for a father, his job to provide for the family. So often, whatever our lifestyle, we find ourselves devoted to various aspects of our lives rather than the giver of life. Our positions devour our thoughts and attention while our daily devotion to God falls back into the depths of our minds. We constantly need reminded that we should “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

But devotion is more than just taking time to read. Paul wrote that we are to “Study to show thyself approved unto God” (II Timothy 2:15). The Greek translated “study” means to be diligent and zealous. Early we should seek Him and His Word. He should be the One we constantly long for. It may take extra time to seek His face. We may miss that extra credit assignment. We may not get that promotion when we want, but the sacrifice is necessary. Paul stated plainly in his letter to the Romans, “I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).