

My Loved Ones:

Psalms 40:6 says, "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire; / My ears You have opened. / Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require."

Ps 40:1-5 has David recounting God's blessings on him, and this makes him dedicate himself to the Lord even more. When we recognize God's blessings and benefits on our lives, it should make us dedicate ourselves to the Lord even more. After such deliverances that God has delivered us from, what could we offer, but our whole hearts and lives? Real worship always results in surrender to the Lord. The result of true thankfulness is devotion and dedication. Commitment comes from contemplating on God and His blessings to us. Are you committed? If not, then you're probably not contemplating as you should.

It starts by saying that God doesn't desire or require the Old Testament sacrifices. Wait a minute! Isn't that what Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy are about?! Yes, God has a standard in which He wants those sacrifices brought to Him. So why this contradiction in Scripture? Well, this isn't a contradiction. Key words are found in "desire" and "require." God desired requirement is something far greater than a mere sacrifice brought to Him. How do we reconcile these statements? These acts of sacrifice are completely meaningless unless they are done with the right heart motives and attitude. Today, we make rituals of going to church, giving money, and taking the Lord's supper. These activities are just as empty if our reasons for doing them are selfish. God doesn't want sacrifice and offering without an attitude of heart of devotion to Him. 1 Sa 15:22 - "To obey is better than sacrifice." God wants our heart. This is seen in Psalm 50, 51, Isaiah 1 and the entire book of Malachi as well as much of the OT. Give God your heart and obedience, not just merely the outward actions. In other words, we can do the right action, but if our inward attitude isn't right, God disqualifies it. At the same time, we can have a good heart, but not do the right thing; God disqualifies that, too. God requires both. Many times we think that as long as we do the right thing, even if we get angry, hateful, bitter, vindictive, apathetic, or have words or actions that are cutting to others, but turn up in church, that everything is fine. God says, "no." He wants our hearts.

Part of that heart response is David thanking God that God has given him the ability to hear and obey God's Word. Have you ever stopped to think about that aspect? Often we think that we are ultimately the ones in control of our trusting Jesus. But there is that other side: God opened your ears to actually listen and hear the Word of God and tenderize your heart. Have you stopped to thank the Lord for that?

Another thing about these sacrifices. They cannot save: only Jesus can. Hebrews 10:5 applies Ps 40:6 especially to David's greater King: King Jesus. Opening my ear to obey God, leads Jesus to give His back to the smiters and His beard to those who pull it out. Is 50:4, 5ff. May we follow with a heart for the Lord and sacrificing ourselves.

We love you and are praying for you today, loved ones.