

SACRIFICING THE FUTURE ON THE ALTAR OF THE PRESENT

- I. The **RULE**: NEVER SACRIFICE THE FUTURE ON THE ALTAR OF THE PRESENT!
 - A. The future is what lies ahead. The future is not seen without faith (spiritual) or maturity (natural).
 - B. A sacrifice is something taken and destroyed. Here it is your unseen future and potential blessings.
 - C. The present is now. The present is five senses – sight, smell, feel, hearing, taste – and three lusts.
 - D. The altar is built by immediate convenience. Your senses crave the use of the altar for sacrifice.
 - E. In a blind moment of sensual pleasure, we will make decisions that take and destroy our future.

- II. The **INSTRUCTION**
 - A. Decisions you make today determine your tomorrows, form your habits, and waste your life.
 - B. The wise man exhorts young people to remember their Creator while they are young (Eccl 12:1-8).
 - C. A wise man will consider the way he is going, but fools will deceive themselves (Pro 14:8; 13:15).
 - D. A wise man will consider the house of the wicked and know God will destroy them (Prov 21:12).
 - E. A wise man looks ahead and considers the future of an action and avoids trouble (Pr 22:3; 27:12).
 - F. A wise man looks at the field of the slothful and receives instruction of this rule (Prov 24:30-34).
 - G. Moses in his prayer for Israel exhorted them to wisely consider their latter end (Deut 32:29).
 - H. Even though you think you have gotten away with sin, you are gravely mistaken (Ps 50:18-23).

- III. The **EXAMPLES**
 - A. Moses and Joseph sacrificed the present for future blessings of God (Heb 11:24-26; Gen 39:7-12).
 - B. Esau, Samson, and Saul failed (Gen 25:29-34 cp Heb 12:16-17; Judges 16:15-17; I Sam 13:8-14).
 - C. David and Israel also failed with their choices (II Samuel 11:1-5; 12:7-14; Haggai 1:4-11).

- IV. The **APPLICATION**
 - A. It is better to sacrifice the present on the altar of the future. Make decisions for the right future.
 - B. You are overweight. The future is losing weight you have, but the present is the tempting food.
 - C. You have an assignment. The future is turning it in on time, but the present is a basketball game.
 - D. You are an athlete. The future is a corruptible crown for winners, but the present is sleeping in.
 - E. You have a car. The future is a long lasting engine, but the present is skipping an oil change.
 - F. Remember the old Fram advertisement: You can pay me now . . . or you can pay me later.
 - G. Consider parents. The future is a long and good life, but the present is disrespect or disregard.
 - H. Consider friends. The future is your holiness and reputation, but the present is peer popularity.
 - I. Consider dating. The future is purity in a happy marriage, but the present is short bodily pleasure.
 - J. Consider marriage. The future is joy with a virtuous woman, but the present is beauty and favors.
 - K. Consider television. The future is joy in the Holy Ghost, but the present is passive entertainment.
 - L. Consider drinking. The future is sobriety and safety, but the present is social pressure to be cool.
 - M. Consider driving. The future is life, low insurance, and reputation; but the present is being tough.
 - N. Consider speech. The future is a godly reputation, but the present is venting of emotions.
 - O. Consider diligence. The future is a productive life, but the present is a little extra sleep each day.
 - P. Consider employment. The future is progressive success, but the present is taking it a little easy.
 - Q. Consider children. The future is a godly and righteous family, but the present is peace and ease.
 - R. Consider your soul. The future is fatness and fruit bearing, but the present is carnal slothfulness.

- V. **CONCLUSION**
 - A. We must prove all things and be circumspect in wisdom (I Thess 5:21; Eph 5:15-17; Pr 4:4-13).
 - B. Sin's pleasures are but for a season, and the hypocrite's joy is short (Heb 11:24-26; Job 20:4-5).
 - C. Jesus clearly saw this rule and chose the future joy rather than present deliverance (Heb 12:2).