

# **THE CHRISTIAN ALTAR AND SACRIFICE**

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### **Definition of Terms**

**Christian** is one who has been called to the Lord's body (church of Christ) after hearing the gospel, believe, confess Christ as Saviour and Son of God and undergo baptism through immersion thereby becoming a new creature ready to surrender his/her past sinful life to live a new life in Christ.

**Altar** – The advance learner dictionary defined Altar as a raised platform or structure on which gifts or sacrifices to God or Deity are offered. In a sense it a place where sacrifices are offered to a god or deity.

**Sacrifice** – the definition that is in line with our discussion is the act of killing (an animal or person) in order to propitiate a deity. It is a kind of religious rituals; for ablutions.

### **Introduction**

In our world of today, Christendom have continue to promote the old order that the physical altar is still relevant in Christian worship. They refer to their pulpit or podium as altar where sacrifice can be offered to God. Going by the definition of aforementioned definition of sacrifice, then they still need to offer blood for this belief to be proper and real.

Now, religious pluralism all over the world have not helped matter as different religious and beliefs have led many astray. In India, we have Buddhism that have also spread to so many other part of the world, like China. The Shint worship in Japan and Korea and even Judaism that so many Jews still practice till date. Coming back home we have the Igbe religious common with the Urhobos, the Egbejugbele with the Itsekiris, Ogun with the Yorubas to mention but a few.

Man in his search for protection and guidance have continue to reject the Almighty and even turn those lower creatures that God at inception gave him authority to dominate to their gods/deity and continue to maintain altars for their worship and sacrifice.

Our main focus however is on Christendom and pure Christianity. The self professed Christian religious charlatan and rabble rousers of today have continue

to promote heretic gospels to hoodwink their gullible followers – **Romans 16:17-18.** <sup>17</sup> Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. <sup>18</sup> For those who are such do not serve our Lord <sup>[a]</sup>Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Now, pure Christianity is not a religion but a way of life suitable and pleasing unto the Almighty. Christ the harbinger and progenitor of Christianity said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.* Christ is not a religious person but the supreme deity the author of life.

God has never left mankind empty on how His covenanted people should worship Him or offer sacrifices. Hence in the ancient time of Israel God commanded them to build altars for;

1. Sacrifices
2. Worship and atonement
3. For memorial to His name – **Exodus 30:1-10, 31:1-10, Leviticus 16:18-20, Joshua 22:26-27.**

The new testament is the constitution of the Christian faith in this age – **Romans 15:4,** *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the <sup>[a]</sup>patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

Therefore, the old testament altars were abolished through Christ and we are no longer under them – **1 Peter 2:1-10.**

**Hebrews 9:15-16** - <sup>15</sup> *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

**Galatians 3:24** - *Therefore the law was our <sup>[a]</sup>tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* But after faith has come we are no longer under the tutor – **Hebrews 8:1-10.**

## ATTRIBUTE OF THE ALTAR

The attribute of the altar is that it must be holy. Exo. 29:37, 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

The fire must burn perpetually Lev. 6:13, Heb. 1:7.

Now, to drive home this admonition true Christians are today's Altar of God, for HE declared in Heb. 8:6-10. <sup>6</sup> But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. <sup>7</sup> For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. <sup>8</sup> Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are

coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— <sup>9</sup> not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. <sup>10</sup> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

Today, we are the temple and altar of God as declared in 1 Cor. 6:19-20 <sup>19</sup> *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?* <sup>20</sup> *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body <sup>[a]</sup> and in your spirit, which are God's.*

## THE CHRISTIAN SACRIFICE

Now to maintain ourselves as the temple and altar of God, our reasonable sacrifice is to maintain and follow the footprints of Christ by living the new life. We must keep the fire of the gospel in us as altar burning always thus becoming a pathfinder to the lost souls.

**Rom 12:1** I beseech<sup>[a]</sup> you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your <sup>[b]</sup>reasonable service.* <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

## CONCLUSION

Brethren, the topic for our admonition this morning is “The Altar and Sacrifice”. In recapping some of the points raised we have gleaned through the old testament to see how God commanded Altars to be built for worship and sacrifice unto HIM.

We have said that today's altar are the true Christians and our sacrifice is absolute obedience to HIS will by living a sinless life, by following the footprints of Jesus.