

"A LIVING SACRIFICE"

Romans 12:1

Paul puts before us the image of an altar. Not familiar to you and me today.

Every Roman understood what an altar was, there were altars to pagan shrines and temples.

There was the altar in Jerusalem where the sacrifices were made -- the priest made sacrifices on the altar -- the atonement for sin took place here. They understood this. It was everyday life for them.

I. GOD'S CALL FOR A PRESENTATION - V. 1.

Academy Awards program on T. V. is watched by millions. One of the most important performers on this show is the presenter. He announces the nominees in a particular category of competition and then presents the person the award.

This format is followed across this land. Programs for presenting awards to bowlers, little league, etc.

Today we have another presentation of far greater importance. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice.

Word present means -- to place along side. It carries the idea of worship and

refers to the proper placement of the sacrifice.

The verb -- means a definite, deliberate, decisive act of commitment.

Worship and giving are inseparably related. Psa. 96:8 - "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts."

Mal. 3:10 - "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse."

If a Christian is unwilling to give to the Lord in his house through his church, he probably is having trouble giving all of life to him in everyday living.

The burnt offering in the Old Testament meant "that which ascends". One idea was that whatever went up never came back.

When one presents himself to God in worship, he must not try to take himself back.

First, I beseech you. This is an appeal to you to consecration.

Second, therefore - Paul has indicated what Christians ought to believe, and now how they ought to live.

Paul says your life should be based on this doctrine.

Third, mercies of God - Paul points back to justification by faith.

All resentment in us disappears to this appeal to Christian duty, which touches character, conduct, believing and behaving.

The Father of all mercies calls for this presentation.

We do not serve God to win his favor, we serve in gratitude and love, due to his mercies.

Fourth, present your bodies - term for offering a sacrifice.

What does a Christian present?

There were two views: one, memorialized and idolized the body. It was glorified in sculpture. The features of the physical human body could be seen in stone on every side.

The second view considered the body to be evil because it was matter and matter was always evil. The body was considered a prison house of the soul.

The Christian view of the body stood in bold contrast to Greek philosophy.

The incarnation demonstrated the importance of the body. John 1:14. "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace

and truth."

The high and holy God was in the body of Jesus.

The resurrection of Jesus also attested to the significance of the body, which in his case did not see corruption.

In creation the first part of man to be made was the body.

It is also to be noted that the body is the last to be redeemed.

God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul.

The total person was brought into view.

Jesus Christ was God in the flesh. I Tim.3:16.

The body of the Christian is crucial. What happens in the body affects the Spirit and the soul.

A problem in the body is often the results from a problem in the spirit and the soul.

That is why one tenth of the Christians income and one seventh of his time falls far short of using all to God's glory.

Fifth, Living sacrifice - how does the Christian present? He is to present

his body a living sacrifice.

This is in contrast with the levitical sacrifices of slain animals.

This is to be a sacrifice -- one that is alive. The ancient sacrifice -- the life was taken before being placed on the altar.

The Christian is not to wait until he is old, sick, and ready to die. He is to present the body a living sacrifice.

This means in simple every day terms and I hope even a child in this service can understand. Living sacrifice means:

1. Dedicated ears. *you have 2 EARS, one Tongue, one ear may be for the Telephone But one ear should listen to God*
Mark 4:24. "Take heed what ye hear. Rev. 2:29. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit has to say to the churches. Mark 9:7. This is my beloved son, hear ye him.

We will be judged according to the way we respond to his call.

The dedicated ear will hear the cries of the man on the road to Jericho.

The dedicated ear will hear the appeal of the man of Macedonia with his urgent request for help.

2. Dedicated feet. Often Jesus said "follow me". He spoke to two fishermen and they followed. He went about doing good. We need to travel going about to do good.

3. Dedicated tongue. There is too much profanity on the tongues of church folks. Psa. 107:2 "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." The Lord is in need of witnesses. Those who will speak the truth.

In contrast the dead lamb on the altar could not speak and further more it was an unwilling sacrifice. But, God wants you to offer your speech willingly and dedicate your voice to him.

4. Dedicated eyes. Rev. 3:18 - speaks of anointing the eyes to aid the vision.

Many people have eye trouble that needs correcting.

Some are near-sighted and will not be able to see beyond their small circle.

Some eyes are color blind and fail to see Christ is for the nations.

Some are far-sighted and have problems seeing the need in their own lives. They can see what the other person may need. But the beam is blocking their vision of dedicated eyes.

5. Dedicated hands. James 4:8 - We are instructed to cleanse our hands and dedicate them unto Christ and his service.

After the resurrection, Jesus showed the Disciples his hands with the nail prints as proof they were dedicated to God. Thomas did not doubt after witnessing dedicated hands.

Ecc. 9:10 - Our hands should be busy doing his work. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

Jesus laid his hands on the sick, the blind, and afflicted.

Psa. 24:3-4 - "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place, he that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

There is the story of a little boy, who had dirty hands and he came into the house. His father said, "Son, go wash your hands." He returned, the father said your hands are not clean, go wash them again. He was commanded the third time and he pleaded -- "I cannot get them clean by myself. You will have to wash them for me." We must present our hands to the Heavenly Father for cleansing.

Dedicated hands mean so much. Our Home Mission Magazine told of a young woman in an emergency home in New Orleans, La. She came as a patient and testified concerning one of the missionary nurses. "She held my hand, and I knew that she would be there when I woke up." Dedicated hands bring comfort. Often by a hand shake, we give assurance and courage.

Sixth, dedicated heart. Proverbs 23:26. My son, give me thine heart. Mark. 12:30.

John 14 - "Let not your heart be troubled."

II. HAVE YOU MADE THIS PRESENTATION?

"Which is your reasonable - this word is based on the logos, the term John used of the Christ. "In the beginning was the word -- logos, Christ. It means "the best logic" is in Christ.

Another way -- which is your "spiritual service".

We will not do much for the Lord until we begin here. This is the most logical, reasonable thing a redeemed person can do.

It is the fitting outcome of our position as believers in Christ.

Think of the possibilities of such a life.

*Lady presented Body to Science at Death.
Before " " " Jesus!*

Then your body becomes a mighty means for reaching the unredeemed all about you.

Christ's body became a bridge that spanned the gulf between God and lost men.

Now He wants your body to become a bridge between Christ and those he died to save.

A living sacrifice is the law of all true progress in the Kingdom.

There must be a Gethsemane, a cross, before victory.

The grain of wheat falls into the ground must die -- be sacrificed -- before it brings forth much fruit.

Had the widow refused to feed the hungry prophet Elijah -- the handful of meal in the barrel and the little vessel of oil would have lasted but one day!

I close with this story. When King George of England was broadcasting to the world, someone tripped over the wires in the broadcasting room of the Columbia Broadcasting System and for a moment the King's message went off the air.

Harold Vivian, the radio engineer, taking in the situation, literally spliced with his body the broken link and made it possible for the King's message to come through.

He grasped the wires with his hands and held on for twenty minutes until new wires could be connected.

He literally presented his body a living sacrifice that the King's message might get through.

What we do with our bodies will determine whether God's message will get through to our community sinking in a sea of sin.

A Bridge & into ice in The Potomac River,
One Man jumped into the water to pull a
woman out, she could not hold the rescue
Ring to the life line "

One Middle Age man gave the life line thrown
to him, to other people, He did this each time,
for 5 times, 5 others were rescued.

A Paramedic said, "I've never seen anybody
with that commitment - He gave the ultimate"

The Helicopter returned for this man
who might have been first -
He had slipped beneath the ice -

The Paramedic said "The tears came, he
was very deserving"

The Man had sacrificed his life to save
Others!

"When the body, purchased
With Christ's ransom price.
Is to God presented
Living sacrifice,
Then the tide of gladness
Rises high and strong;
Then the heart rejoicing
Sings the glad new song."

God blesses the living sacrifice --

I can't improve on Paul's invitation and challenge to you. "I beseech you
therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living
sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service."

Today, now, here, all of us -- the call is to give a live, living sacrifice to
God. Many of you should act upon this call without further delay.