

in 4 days will be sworn in as Prince of Wales by Queen Elizabeth II -
His son will kneel & promise to become "Your Liege Man of life & limb & earthly
worship" - Bound to give service & allegiance - loyalty & faithfulness -

THE LIFE OF SURRENDER

Romans 12:1-2

Sunday, June 29, 69 AM ✓
10:45 AM ✓

I ask you to turn to this chapter in Romans - "I beg you therefore, brethren, through these mercies God has shown you to make a decisive dedication of your bodies as a living sacrifice, devoted and well pleasing to God which is your reasonable service. The second verse reads - "stop living in accordance with the customs of this world but by the new ideals that mold your mind, continue to transform yourself so as to find and follow God's will. That is, what is good, well-pleasing to him, and perfect."

E. M. Bounds in his little book "Power Through Prayer" has stated that what God wants today is not so much new methods as new men. Now we might even go further by saying that what God wants today is not just saved men or men with their names on the church roll, but surrendered men.

There is a great gap between the time a man trusts Jesus Christ as his Saviour and the moment when he truly surrenders his spirit and comes under the Lordship of Christ. Before we can preach that message, we must have to live that message. Hence, the question is, are you a surrendered man. The life of surrender is not cheap, it is not easy, and it is not some concept that somebody may pick up in the dime store.

We must come to this doctrinal, as well as practical basis for the facts of everyday living. Now this is the divine order. Simply the great facts of our faith furnish us the foundation of a Christian life. Now in the light of this truth, we cut away the roots of the tree if we say that surrender is unimportant. For Paul said being justified therefore by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. In the 8th Chapter, there is therefore no condemnation in them that are in Christ. And then in this 12th Chapter he comes to say, therefore, brethren, and this is the "therefore" of service. The Christian's relationship to God. This is the heart center of the normal Christian experience. It is the main drive shaft that makes all the machinery of life go. When we are not right here, all of our relationships in life will be effected.

Now the Prophets used to say come now, let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet.

Jesus comes and says, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden.

But now he comes through his ambassador, Paul, and we find God pleading with men instead of just giving an ordinary challenge. We must think of what God has done and what God is doing and what God can do. That God does not desire to force men into the mold of his will -- rather, he pleads, why will ye die? Now when we get these great truths, then we have the truth. I beseech you, therefore, now if you do not know these truths - then you need to go back and study the first eleven chapters of the book of Romans. Because the divine plea is here based upon a logical standard.

What is God then asking the believer, who has received his divine mercy to do? Now remember, the church holds up a high standard to its congregation. But God's standard is much higher. Never be satisfied with a lone state of spiritual attainment. It is easy for us to sit back and rest but God says something about the Christian conduct.

Now there are three or four things that I would like to say to you in reference to this text. First of all, the divine obligation to Sunday. Now this is the first thing. In verse 1, I beseech you, therefore. Paul traces the divine obligation to surrender to two great truths - one of which is the revelation of God's love. I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God. And mercy is God's love in action. It is God's love coming down to the misery of man. Redeeming man and lifting him up. Through the first eight chapters Paul has described the sinner. Condemned before God, without hope, and then he describes God and his mercy as setting up liberty. Justifying him. Sanctifying him. And then in Chapter 8 he says, there is no condemnation, and nothing shall separate him. And then he says by the mercies of God, I want to call on you to yield your bodies.

Here is a revelation of God's love. Now, I beseech you, which is your reasonable service. That is your spiritual mode of response in worship. The revelation of God's love must be matched by the expectation of God's love. Now this is a beautiful thing.

Let me quote it for you - "I cannot appreciate the love of God, without a compulsion to reciprocate the love of God."

Now this would be the point at which we might well ask ourselves another important question. Have I ever knelt at Calvary and looked into the face of the man who hung there? Have you ever said, love so amazing so divine. This is the hour of a commitment that he shall have my soul, my life, and my all.

There are lots of people who wonder why does the preacher bear down on the message of commitment today. What is the problem. I know it by intuition. Those men and those women and youth who have accepted the meaning of Calvary but they have never seen it through the heart of God, and they have never realized that when God broke into History, through Jesus Christ he shared his precious blood. He did it to win your response and mine. So the first point of emphasis here is the divine obligation to surrender. Now this is not the Preacher calling upon you -- this is not even the church calling upon you. This is not a committee calling upon you. This is God calling upon you that you would come with a decisive dedication.

Divine order of surrender

II. But the body is the Lord. It belongs to God, the Father, because he created it.

And one day it is to be immortal. Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost - I Cor. 6:19.

When I speak to you about giving of your body, I'm talking to you about a total response, spirit, soul, and body. Let me warn you by saying that what we do with our bodies now will determine our reward or loss in a day as we come to the Judgement. The Believer will stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ and he will be judged by the things done in his body. Whether they be good or whether they be bad. Now your body is either gold, silver, precious stone, wood, hay, or a stubble - or a wasted life! Now this is the heart of the pursuasion here and the exhortation of the Scripture and the Spirit. It is to be the presentation of your body. This is to be done by the mercies of God. You know what makes a sacrifice. Or what it means, it is the giving up of something, that may be definitely precious to you. And in Old Testament times,

men knew what a sacrifice was because they were familiar with the sacrifices that were presented in the temple. The bullock and the lamb in the Tabernacle. And they brought their sacrifices and they presented them to the Priest. And they placed them in the hands of the priest. And they were at his disposal. It was the giving up of these sacrifices.

Now in like manner, you are to come and present your body to God, a living sacrifice, and make this a total presentation. Now I am not speaking to you of the idea of lent, which is a negative type of thing, in which you refrain from doing something. But I am speaking to you about a positive side in which you present your bodies, your souls, unto God.

Believers today are apt to overlook the body in this world because the way the body is being publicized. It is being advertised, in magazines, in newspapers, on the billboards the human body is exposed. And the human body is being exploited. Now this is to appeal to masses of people and some of this is being done in the name of art, for art sake. But I am fully persuaded that most of this is for the sake of the flesh. The body is being prostituted for a price, people pay, and they abuse this body. And as a young woman boasted about how much whiskey she could drink, so the body is subjected today to these things and it is coming to pass as in the days of Noah, when they ate, they drank, they married, and they were given in marriage. And Noah entered the ark and the flood closed that great age in history. Now if Paul had to write today and rewrite what he has put here in Romans 12:1 -- I tell you that I believe Paul would say some great things. For if in his own day he says I tell you even weeping, their God is their belly. Now what would he say of us today. How many of you live for the master of the body, the appetite, the lust, and you are slaves to the nature of your body. Practically everything that you do revolves around the satisfaction of your body.

It is not time that we Christians should profit by the Christian view of the body. Isn't it? This earthly thing which today we discover that groans within us, and waits for the redemption of our bodies. We are early to present them as a living sacrifice.

And as the great apostle said this is to be a holy sacrifice. Without holiness, no man can see God. Every sacrifice presented to him must be without blemish. And this is why you need to consider this. And why do you need to consider this? One reason is, it is reasonable. He wants your spiritual reasonable service. You have been giving your body over to the carnal things long enough. I gave my life for Thee. My precious blood I shed. That Thou might ransom be and quicken from the dead. I gave my life for Thee, what hath thou given for me. Now the hymn writer has a challenge in that.

Just what will this mean, to do this? Well, it would be good news for the body if we could Christianize the body. The mania of gadding about all night and stuffing and attending to sports and entertainments and things that do our bodies hurt. Salvation is for the whole life. It is not for the little corner in the field but it is the whole area. Too long we folks have thought that salvation was in a little compartment when we approach the church on Sunday morning and that settled it. But Christianity must impress us to take in the whole life.

The historians tell us that St. Paul's cathedral that existed - the present one in London built by Sir Christopher then was located in the heart of the city. And it was regarded almost as a city thoroughfare. Men walked up and down through this cathedral talking about the news of the day. In the midst of it stood the Pulpit. From it the preacher would try to compete with the market place but his message was drown out by the noisy throng passing to and fro.

Now old St. Paul's resemble some of our lives. The building stands for the body, the pulpit stands for the soul. We are perfectly willing to let God occupy the Pulpit but we reserve the floor space for our bodies. And in this world today, we have so many ambitions and so many things that are unsatisfied in the flesh.

God knows, as you know, that if he has your body - he has you. But if God does not have your body, he doesn't really have you.

There is an interesting story told by Dr. Calvert who went to visit a member of his church. A little girl was playing on the floor with her doll. The doll was ragged and soiled. The child loved it. But during his visit, the little child walked over and said I'll give you my dolly. He said I took the gift in my hand and went on talking to the parents. And when I was leaving he says, forgetting about the doll as he walked toward the door. He noticed the little girl pulling at his coat. And he said what's the trouble. And there were tears coming down her face, she said, I want my dolly. I did not mean for you to keep it. My friends, is that the way we yield to God. Is that the way that you yielded your life. When you gave yourself to him, make that transaction final. We often sing, take my life and let it be concentrated Lord to Thee, take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold.

If God wants your body he is inviting you. Today, Uncle Sam, is calling for the bodies of young men. He says to thousands of young men, give me your body. And they are doing it. And Uncle Sam is not saying, will you - he is saying there is no alternative - I want your body. It may be a living sacrifice. It may mean life or it may mean death. Now God is asking us to be reasonable. And he is asking us to present our bodies unto him. Like the High Priest in God's service. Which would take the sacrifice from the individual. You remember the high priest had his right ear, his right thumb, and his right toe anointed with oil. It was all of the man or none of the man.

The act of surrender is not only to be totally offered but to be worthily offered. As you lay your life on the altar it is supposed to be a living sacrifice. Now what does this mean? It means that it is to be alive. I must know what I am doing when I present my offering. Let me ask you, have you intelligently brought your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know what it really means to surrender that life of yours?

God insists that our offering be spiritually alive. Paul says we reckon ourselves indeed dead unto sin but alive unto God. Rom. 6:11. It is more than just regeneration. Jesus not only died for me but I died with him when he died on Calvary. He nailed not only my sins to the cross, he nailed me to the cross. And by faith I affirm this.

And that's why I reckon that I am dead unto sin. Then why should I qualify the yielding of my body as a sacrifice. We must be taught to yield our lives unto him.

W. E. Vine points out that his great treatment of this passage is that it means it is continuously alive. Having laid that sacrifice upon the altar, I don't take it off. It is there forever. Doesn't that thrill you?

In Old Testament times the priest would take the animal to the North side of the altar, cut it up, and put the pieces on the brazen altar. The whole thing was to be consumed and it was laid on there and he dare not leave it. So often the big sacrifice had a tendency to slip off, of the brazen altar, and they had an instrument called flesh-hook. Now this flesh-hook was the thing that disciplined and kept the sacrifice on the altar. When I layed my life as a young man on the altar of God's acceptance, I didn't do it because I desired to do it, I did it because I was determined to do it. And determination is the thing that controls our destiny. It isn't because I wanted to be a Preacher, but I yielded because the desire was there to yield. And I have not remained a Preacher without the determination to stick there. We shall never be yielded men and women until we are held by discipline, the flesh-hook, we must be on the rock. Not 80% - we must be 100%. And the reason people crumble at this point is that they do not meet with God regularly, they do not open their Bibles for the message for their hearts, and they do not know the message of light. And they do not discipline themselves in prayer and in the habits of their hearts. And in the church, through the whole manner of life, it has never been totally put on the altar, the altar of surrender.

God knows how often we are tempted with temptation. And it comes to me and it comes to you. Take it easy. Slip down off the altar. The same thing came to Jesus Christ. If you be the son of God, come down from the cross. Matt. 27:40. Now these are the same cries that are cast out to the Preacher today and to the Christian today. These are the same things that are cast out to the young people today.

You might say this business of surrender and consecration just doesn't work. Why I go to a meeting, I sing I Surrender All, And Take My Life And Let It Be Consecrated

Lord to Thee. But you know, it is not very long before I am back where I started. Now if you understand this in the first place, you never really surrendered your life to the Lord. Oh, you say but I have. But you haven't. Because there must be honesty. Because I want to say to you this - that when you lay your life and surrender it in the way that Paul is talking about it, acceptable unto God, you don't do it for a week, you don't do it for a month, you don't do it for a day or a year -- but this is something that you do forever. Now what are you doing coming off the altar.

When Paul commands I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, he is talking about a sacrifice that is intelligently and spiritually, and continually alive, and totally offered to God.

But it is more than that, my friend, it is more than that. The apostle goes on to speak of a holy sacrifice. Not only do I yield my life as an initial act, but I yield my life as a continual attitude, a holy sacrifice. Because David came to the place in 2 Sam. 24:24 when he said I cannot offer God a sacrifice that costs me nothing. And in Mal. 1:7-8, that is the same idea. They were offering lame sacrifices. And that is what a lot of Christians are doing today. They are offering God rubbish.

This sacrifice is to be pleasing, acceptable, and when I say it is to be pleasing -- I mean that it is to be pleasing unto God behind closed doors, in the public, and there was only one supreme sacrifice made. And that was Jesus. And he made it before the world. And he stood on the banks of Jordan and his mission was identified. And God spoke and said this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

This was repeated on the Mount of Transfiguration. Friends and foes alike heard the voice from the clouds saying this is my beloved son. It has to be real and sincere. If I surrender, it is to be real. So I bring my spirit, body, and soul as a sacrifice. Totally put it on the altar. Now I discipline it, I may be tempted to slip off the altar now and then, so did the great sacrifice. But there were the flesh-hooks to put it back in the center of the flame and to keep it in the proper place.

Uncle Sam says you must - the spirit of God says I beseech you. I beseech brethren by the mercies of God. And this is a stirring modivation for consecration and for surrender. What wonderful mercies we have. These undeserved things as sinners. And you did he make alive who was dead in trespasses and in sin. Where as you walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince and the power of the air, and now the spirit that worketh in the sons of disobedience. And God in his richness. Now if these mercies of God fail to move you to surrender, then there is nothing in this world that will. If this great love fails, what will succeed. As the psalmist said he saw me plunge in deep despair and flew to my release, for me he bore the shameful cross, and carried all my grief.

III. The divine object in surrender.

Now I have spent time on the obligation which we have and the order of the V.2 surrender, but in closing I would like to point you to the matter of the object. And that is found in Verse 2. And be not conformed but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Here are two things. First of all the transformation of character. Be ye not conformed - you are not to be conformed to the world. As Phillip puts it, don't let the world squeeze you into it's mold.

We will never make an impact upon the world until we have a distinctive mark of God upon us. This business of conforming to the world to win the world is the biggest lie the Devil ever hatched up. There are so many Christians that change like a little lizard. In the tropical areas it changes their color. He is called a chameleons. If he is on something white, he will turn white. On green or brown the same. Now this is the most daring thing in the church today that we have so many of these spiritual pikes -- they can be one thing today, something else at a cocktail party, and something else somewhere else. They are letting the world squeeze them into a mold. Now if that is the negative aspect, then what is the positive. Here it is, for he says, be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That is the other side. From inside to outside. As a man thinketh in his heart, so doth he sowth. Prov. 23:7.

Now this is where we are failing and falling out today. The age of religion in the denominations and in the world - we have got to be aware that unless we have the priorities of God and become far more interested in these than what we do in this world, we'll not amount to a hill of beans, unless it pleases Him. What we do will stand for nothing. I want to tell you that God is interested in one thing. And that one thing is in populating Heaven with men and women who are like Jesus Christ. Now, have you been conformed to his image. What is your spiritual service then. The word spiritual is that it is logical. That you are to manifest to the Lord. Have you ever ministered to the Lord. That's what the Levites did. They ministered not unto men but unto Jehovah. And the greatest thing the Christian can do is to present his body a living sacrifice and begin a real service among men. We will not do much for men until we learn the secret of ministering unto the Lord. Is this not the reason that so much of our service falls flat. Now this is reasonable. And it comes because we are believers in Christ. And we ought not let the conformity, the art of fashion of this world, or the external appearance of the scheme of things and the custom of things in the world today become our standard. We need to be transformed. And this is like the picture of a butterfly emerging from a little house that it has constructed as an ugly caterpillar.

The power in the process of transformation of the believer by the Holy Spirit renews mind and is acceptable and perfect in the will of God. This is the will of God for you. What the world wants is Jesus.

Only as I am conformed to the image of my beloved Lord, only as I am Christlike, has my message the right to be heard. If I am not a man of God, then I should quit the Pulpit. The transformation of character only comes by bowing down at the foot of Calvary with the open book and letting the Holy Spirit stamp the image of Jesus Christ. And the transformation of this is the regulation of our character. That ye may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect in the will of God. Now this is the only safe place in all the universe, in the center of God's will for you. Jesus said

my deed is to do the will of Him that sent me to finish that work.

We never need to fear the consequences of obeying God. The will of God is good, it is wonderful. And it will bless and do your life good. It is not only good, it is pleasing. It is never erksome or grieveous. It is the sweet will of God. I never heard a man lose his temper when he was doing the will of God. It is not only pleasing but it is perfect. To achieve the place that he ought to have. He needs to be central regardless of your vocation in life, this is God's will.

How can I be in the will of God. How can I know the regulation of my conduct. How can I know the transformation of character. The object is surrender based upon the order given. It must be living holy, acceptable as a sacrifice unto God. Now when I have come to that point, when the mercies of God have broken my heart, and I kneel at Calvary's cross, I can say where the whole realm of nature mine, that was far too small - love so amazing so divine, yes, shall have my soul, my life, my all!

This of the possibilities of such a life. Then your body becomes a mighty means of reaching the unredeemed all about you. Christ's body was a bridge to span the gulf between God and lost men. When you come to this surrender, your body becomes a bridge between Christ and the unsaved -- that he died to save. It is like many years ago when King George of England was broadcasting. Someone tripped on a wire in the broadcasting room of CBS. For a moment the King's message went off the air. Hal Vivian, the radio engineer, literally spliced it together.

Prince Charles -