

Title: Present our Bodies
Text: Romans 12: 1-2
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Romans 12: 1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Proposition: Knowing we are saved entirely by the mercy of God, nothing is more reasonable than that we present our bodies a living sacrifice unto God!

Notice, verse 1 begins **“I”**—who is our heavenly Father using to deliver this word to us? The same man who said, *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Tim 1: 15).*

“I beseech you”—I call you to my side, I make this appeal to you. He doesn’t threaten or use scare tactics. He says, *“I beseech you.”* It is *“the goodness of God [that] leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom 2: 4)*

To whom is Paul speaking? **“Brethren.”** This is for the family of God: for you born from above, born of God our Father; for children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ who have experienced God’s mercy.

THE BELIEVER’S MOTIVE

Romans 12: 1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,...

This is the motive that moves a believer from the new heart—*“the mercies of God.”* What have we seen in Romans?

- Romans 3—we saw we are totally depraved. But God by his grace sent his Son to be a propitiation through his blood so that through faith we establish the law
- Romans 4—he showed us how Abraham was saved entirely by grace. Four hundred and thirty years before the law was given Abraham fulfilled it. How? Through faith in Christ who fulfilled it for him.
- Romans 5—“where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”
- Romans 6—we confess in our baptism that we are raised with Christ to walk in newness of life—
- Rom 7—we are married to Christ, our old husband the law has no more claims on us
- Rom 8—there is therefore now no condemnation to them who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh

Paul sums it all up in the last few verses of Romans 11. Speaking of God’s mercy to his elect Jew and Gentile,

Romans 11: 30...32: God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. 33: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34: For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35: Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36: For of him and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen. 12: 1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,...

Brethren, if God has created in us a new heart and shed his love in our hearts showing us the mercy God has shown in saving us from ourselves then it is the love of Christ that constrains us; the motive of mercy that moves us from the heart.

THE REASONABLE RESPONSE

Romans 12: 1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice,...

He calls us to make a complete sacrifice to God—*“our bodies”*—our entire being, bodily members, our spirit, all that we are. What did our Lord Jesus give to save us from our sins and make us righteous?

Ephesians 4: 5: 2...Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us

Matthew 20: 28: The Son of man came not to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many

Our Savior gave his soul an offering for sin, he gave his back to the smiters, his beard to them that plucked out the hair, his body to be broken for us, his blood shed for remission of sins, his entire self to ransom us from the fall. Therefore, it is reasonable to give our entire being to him, to serve in his cause.

2 Corinthians 5:14: For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Giving his entire self, not only our spirit, but our body and its members.

1 Corinthians 6: 19: What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20: For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Romans 6: 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12: Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13: Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

A living sacrifice—not dead works—read the rest of Romans, these are spiritual sacrifices typified by the burnt thank offerings—things we do out of thanks to God for what he has done for us. He is talking about in the house of our Lord as the house of the Lord. The worship of Christ—*not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*. Sending forth his gospel so Christ is exalted and his lost sheep called out. Serving our brethren who are one with Christ. Using the gifts God has given us in the measure he has given us. This is why Christ has saved us and called us!

Under the old covenant, they came to a temple; under the new covenant, Christ has made us living stones and fitly framed us together; we are the temple in whom Christ abides. Under the old covenant, they had to come to the priest; under the new covenant Christ has made us priests unto God. Under the old covenant, they offered up dead sacrifices; under the new covenant, Christ has made us priests to offer up spiritual sacrifices. Spiritual sacrifices such as the calves of our lips in praise to him, our bodily members to serve him and our brethren and using temporal things he has given us for him, such as, our jobs to support the gospel and needy brethren, homes to house brethren, tables to feed them. But he gave it all to us, it is his anyway.

Remember, a sacrifice means things have to be given up, lusts of the flesh denied, reproaches borne, painful things to our sinful flesh. Isaac Watts wrote:

Alas, and did my Savior bleed?
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do.

In another hymn, he wrote:

Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

A holy sacrifice—The Father set us apart and made us holy in electing grace. Christ set us apart and made us holy when he perfected us forever by his blood. The Spirit set us apart and made us holy in regeneration. And God set us apart for God's use alone! We are set apart to set Christ forth, to exalt Christ, to bring sinners to Christ. Being sanctified means everything is for Christ his Son. We do nothing to draw attention to us but all to draw attention to Christ. That is why God set us apart and made us holy.

Acceptable sacrifice—there is only one way we and our sacrifices are acceptable unto God. The apostle Peter said, "*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*" (1 Pet 2: 5) Christ has made us, and everything we do, acceptable to God.

But if we do these things, do not be puffed up, but know it is "reasonable service."

Luke 17: 7: But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? 8: And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? 9: Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. 10: So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

NOT CONFORMED BUT TRANSFORMED

Romans 12: 2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Galatians 5: 25: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26: Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

If we are *not* continually walking in the Spirit, depending on the Spirit, seeking spiritual things, feeding the inward man with the bread from heaven, then all we see in our day-to-day is the carnal. We are not equipped to deal with one another, not equipped to deal with the trials. We will begin to conform to this world without knowing it! We may begin a job with the motive of supporting his gospel and helping our needy brethren. But before long cares and riches and lusts enter in and we will become conformed to this world. Our Master says, *“the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful”* (Mk 4: 19).

1 John 2: 15: Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16: For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

God says, *“but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove”* that we may discern and approve *“what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”* When we hear Christ exalted, when we are reading his word, when we are seeking things above, the Spirit blesses the word within so that our new man is renewed, strengthened. Then we discern and approve and delight in God’s will, in what God would have us to do. Our old man is put off, our flesh mortified by the Holy Spirit.

When we are walking in the Spirit, we look at the temporal things in our life spiritually and handle them as God would have us handle them. But when we set our mind on the boat, the waves, the career, the bills, the offenses then we are ruled by flesh. We desire vain glory. Then we provoke one another and envy one another.

Galatians 5: 15: But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16: *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Here is what God is teaching us. This is the will of God for his people. Our Lord Jesus Christ commands every believer,

Matthew 6: 31: Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32: (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34: Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

Colossians 3: 1: If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2: Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3: For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4: When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Then our heart’s desire will be the same as Francis Havergal who wrote,

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in endless praise.

Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice and let me sing,
Always, only for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
Every pow’r as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

Amen!