

Romans 12:1

#0601
1982

Study given by W.D. Frazee—March 6,

“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”
Romans 12:1.

Who is speaking? Paul. He was the apostle that met Jesus on the Damascus road at the prime of his life. God turned him around and put him on the highway to heaven. He made Paul a minister of righteousness to turn many to the glad tidings of Jesus as the Messiah.

What does beseech mean? Beg. Urge. Implore. But before he tells us what he is beseeching he tells us for what reason. By the mercies of God. What is mercy? Mercy is treating people better than they deserve. Did you ever get treated better than you deserved? Ah, the mercies of God.

The Pharisee paraded his good deeds before the Lord, but got no blessing. The publican with bowed head and humble heart said, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Did he get a blessing? Yes. God loves to be merciful. He delights in mercy. He loves to take advantage of opportunities to treat us better than we deserve.

Many of us can think of many opportunities we have given God to treat us better than we deserve. But these mercies put us under some obligations. If we had been in debt, and some kind friend had the funds to pay off the debt, and the next day asked us to help him on the road with some problem, don't you think we would feel glad to do it? Yes. God is not seeking to buy our response, but He is seeking to inspire our response. There is a difference.

What is it we are being urged to do? “That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” In the sanctuary service animals were brought. Perhaps a goat or a lamb. Perhaps a bullock or a turtle dove. In that offering, the one who brought it saw himself. The animal was his proxy.

“If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him” Leviticus 1:3-4.

So I am to present my body not as a sacrifice to die, but to live. Thank God for the privilege of living for Jesus. Fifty million martyrs died for Jesus at the stake

and on the rack. They became witnesses for Jesus by giving up their lives. God wants our dedication and response to be just as wholehearted and complete as that. But instead of dying for Him, He wants us to live for Him a living sacrifice. We usually think of a sacrifice as something dying. But thank God, we have the joy of living for Jesus.

What does present mean? It means a present. Give yourself to God. The man who brought his lamb or bullock was to be his own voluntary will. Jesus will never accept a forced offering. That is why it is improper for us to try to make a person religious by law. He can't do it in the first place. In the second place, if he were successful, God wouldn't accept it. You cannot make love respond. Only by love is love awakened. That's why Paul says that by the mercies of God you give yourselves to Him. And when He has given so much for us, don't we want to give ourselves to Him?

How much did Jesus give? He gave everything. How much does He want us to give. Everything. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Is it reasonable for me to give myself to God? Yes, it is the most reasonable thing in the world. In the matter of common sense a man had better link up with God. God is on the winning side in the controversy between Christ and Satan. We had better be on the winning side if we want to be winners.

Think of the rewards at the end. A glorious home in the city of God. Music. Travel. Most any place people travel today they run the risk of running into a riot or war before they get home. But there in the universe we explore we will be so happy. There will be a welcoming committee on every planet. They will be glad to see us. We are told to let our imagination to picture the home of the saved. We are told that it will be brighter than our fondest imagination can picture.

I have imagined that every planet we go to all through the universe there will be a different kind of fruit there than we have ever had. Why do I think that? Because God is a God of variety. Any part of the planet you go to in this world there are different fruits and vegetables, aren't there? Yes. We don't grow any mangos around here. We don't even grow bananas. But we can import some of them. Scattered over this little planet are many different kinds of flowers and birds and animals. And that is a little introduction to the vast, unlimited variety of the universe.

So as we go with Jesus from star to star and world to world there will be something interesting that we have never seen before. There will be people to meet. Have you ever sit down with someone you have never met before? You talk awhile and it looks like you are on the same wave length. I have met men that it seems that we have known each other for years. That will be the way it will be when we go out into the universe. We will meet kindred spirits, hearts that respond. Oh, I don't want to miss it. I could miss it, couldn't I? How would I miss it? Be refusing to give myself to Jesus. Not that He is arbitrary. But the only way I can get ready to those trips is to yield myself to His working.

I need shaping up. I am not ready for that trip yet. If I were, God would have everything ready for me. It isn't that my mansion is not ready that His coming is

delayed. We are not ready. But thank God He is getting ready those who will let Him. So I beseech you, Paul says, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living service. It is a reasonable service.

There is another reason we ought to consider. It is the fearful consequences of the wrong way. Think of lung cancer. There is many a man and woman dying of lung cancer who are saying in their hearts, I wish I had known this before I took my first cigarette. There is many a man who suffers a heart attack that wishes he had been aware of the need for exercise and carefulness in diet. And none of these are arbitrary acts on the part of God. The wages of sin is death because it is the consequences. If I take a knife and cut my finger off, God does not work a miracle to cause it to die. He would have to work a miracle to cause it to live. So the consequences of separation from God urges us to consider how important it is to link up with God.

God is the life giver. And only through contact and cooperation with Him can we receive and maintain that eternal life which will be ours to enjoy forever and forever.

These are some of the mercies of God by which Paul beseeches us to present our bodies to Him, which is reasonable. But there is something else that towers above all we have looked on as Mount Everest does on all the mountains of the earth. It is a wonderful thing to think of the rewards that await those who link up with Jesus. It is a stimulating thing to think of the consequences of wrong things we can get away from by walking with Him. But what is this great mountain peak that so urges us. It is God's love.

While the fear of punishment and the hope of reward can stimulate us to come near to God, somewhere along the line, if we yield ourselves and get acquainted with Him, we get a love for Him which is far greater than any hope of reward or fear of punishment. This is what drove the martyrs. This is what impelled them to go to the stake and the rack, and any other form of torture and death. They had a love for Jesus in their hearts that motivated them. They would rather have died with Jesus even if they had never had eternal life. They would rather not disappoint the One who loved them and gave Himself for them.

If you have been born again you know something of that love. It is a wonderful thing to know Jesus in such a way that you would rather die with Him than live without Him. That is a reasonable service to yield to the One who gave everything for us. Jesus took the punishment that He didn't deserve. He left all that glory and took our pain and our suffering and our death so that we may have it all. So it becomes a very reasonable thing to yield everything to Jesus.

There is another reason why it is reasonable. Jesus knows the way better than I do. Any of you who have lived very long have demonstrated that you don't always know what you really want. The way of man is not in himself. Did you ever find your hand doing something it shouldn't do, and you were surprised? I remember when my brother and I were growing up we sometimes got into fights as boys will. I found that hand hitting my brother. It is a sad thing when a human hand hits another human being, isn't it? Especially your brother. The fact that it is common doesn't

make it nice. Oh, I wish I could live life over again and never use that hand to hit my brother.

But I have found by experience both on the giving and receiving that there is something that hurts worse than a hand. It is something that comes out of the mouth—that sword that speaks words of pain and hurt and injury. I have received them many times, and I have given them too often. I am sorry. Dear friends, what is the answer? There is only one answer. It is to present my body to Jesus. He can control that hand. I have demonstrated that I can't. He can control that tongue. I have demonstrated that I can't. Why not give God our tongue and let Him control it. Why not give Him our hands, and all the rest of our bodies. Isn't it a reasonable thing? Yes, a reasonable thing.

“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”
Romans 12:1.

It is reasonable that it is a service. It is an unselfish response to a loving heart. I am so glad that God has made arrangements for us to respond to this appeal every day of the week, and every hour of the day. How can I do that in my home, my business, in the sanitarium or on the farm? Ah, friends. The One who invites us came down and showed us how to do it. Jesus, the Son of God, came and tabernacled in our humanity, and lived the life that He wants us to live.

Would you like to be able to work miracles like Jesus did? His miracle working was about three years. He lived thirty years before He worked miracles. If we will learn the lesson of the thirty years, we may someday enter into the glories of the three years. Let's enter into God's program of life at Nazareth before we covet the power to work the mighty miracles of Christ.

What did Jesus do at Nazareth? Was He studying the Bible all the time? No. Was He going to church all the time? No. What was He doing? He spent more of His time in the carpenter shop than He spent in study or prayer. He did home missionary work while He was at Nazareth, but He spent more time in the home and the carpenter shop than He ever did in the community to help other people. Why? Because He knew that most of us would have the problems of living the life of God in the common duties of life. So in the carpenter shop Jesus gave an example of patient toil. As a boy and youth and young man He showed that it was possible to serve God in daily work, and to do it joyously.

Sometimes Jesus' companions began to complain. That is human, you know. Maybe the day is too hot. Maybe the wood we are working with is knurled and knotty. Whatever, human relationships may not always be most pleasant. But what would Jesus do? He would begin to sing. Sometimes His companions, hearing Him sing a song of praise, would join in the song and forget their complainings. Oh, what a sweet and precious example. I want to learn more and more how to take the circumstances of daily life and use them as the means by which to serve my Lord instead of wishing that I could go halfway around the world to some mission field. Of course, some people need to go. But if I were the dear Lord, I wouldn't send

someone halfway around the world to a mission field who hadn't already learned how to do what we are studying this morning. Missionaries are not made by steamships or airplanes. The light that shines the farthest shines the brightest nearest home.

If your hands are full, there is no place for the Devil to get you bothered or worried or diverted. People say, I am sorry I can't do that. I have my hands full. Let's keep our hands full for Jesus.

Copyright 2019. All rights reserved.

W.D. Frazee Sermons
P.O. Box 129, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org