

Eyes, Ears, and Tongue

#0136

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—November 7, 1975

Our text this evening is Romans the 12th chapter and the 1st verse:

“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.

You see that Paul is borrowing from the imagery of the ancient sanctuary service. The children of Israel brought their offerings, the lambs, the bullocks, and other sacrificial animals, and presented them at the tabernacle. Those animals were slain in sacrifice. Paul says God wants you to present your bodies a *living* sacrifice. He’s asking you to witness for Him; not as martyrs, but as demonstrations of the beauty and the joy of His way of life.

Let’s turn over to Leviticus the first chapter and see the type from which Paul is borrowing. We’ll pick up an interesting lesson. Leviticus, the first chapter deals with the law of the whole burnt offering:

“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”
Leviticus 1:3.

The man that presents his body a living sacrifice must likewise offer it of his own voluntary will. Nobody can force you to give yourself to God. Nobody can make you be a servant of the Lord. This must come of your own choice, of your own voluntary will.

“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 1:4.

The animal was accepted for him. The animal represented him. What happened to the animal was to happen to him. In this case, after the slaying of the sacrifice:

“And the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar... And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar” Leviticus 1:8, 12.

Full directions are given as to how they were to prepare each part and lay it upon the

altar. All was done according to a certain schedule. The directions must be followed. And in this whole burnt offering, the animal was not just thrown on there carelessly or in one piece. But rather, piece by piece, item by item was prepared and put upon the altar.

And so, back to our original text:

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

I would like to have us think of presenting our bodies to God part by part, organ by organ, system by system. There are three special parts of the body that I would like to study with you tonight. The first is the eye, and the second is the ear. We'll come to the other a bit later.

Turn, please, to Proverbs the 20th chapter and the 12th verse:

"The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them" Proverbs 20:12.

What's the ear for? To hear. And the eye? To see. And the Lord made them.

If we carry out our text, we're going to give our eyes to whom? To the Lord, and our ears to the Lord. I wonder if that would help on the TV problem. Most people use their eyes and ears, both, when the TV is on. That's not my subject tonight. My subject is the eye and the ear, and presenting these organs a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. How do I happen to have eyes? God gave them to me; He made them. How do I happen to have an ear? God made it; He gave it to me. And He has a plan as to how I'm to use it. It's a wonderful thing when we can use our eyes and ears for what God gave them. What do you say?

We were just listening to a description of the glories of the sunrise and the beauties of the autumn leaves. Aren't we thankful for eyes that see? And both by day and by night, "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." (Psalm 19:1) Then we have this written Word. How thankful we are for eyes that see the message God has given us in this book. What do you say?

I suppose that if a special delivery airmail letter would come, to any of us, I suppose that we would stop and open the envelope and read the message from some loved one. Here is a special delivery letter from our best friend, Jesus. How glad He is when we read the message that He's given us. But, in order to appreciate God's message, we must have our eyes focused. And some of us need help in seeing.

Turn to the 119th Psalm, the 18th verse. What's the first word?

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law" Psalm 119:18.

Does this text suggest that there is more in this law, more in this word, than some people see? Oh, yes. Wonderful things. So, the consecrated heart prays, “Lord, open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.”

Now that’s one side of the coin. Let’s look at the other side of the same coin, the 37th verse. What’s the first word here? Turn.

“Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken
Thou me in Thy way” Psalm 119:37.

What is vanity? Anything that is not of special value. Anything that’s empty, valueless, void, trivial, idle. Anything like that around today? Yes. Some of you might want to notice the first letter of the first word and the first letter of the seventh word. What have you got? TV. This is the best TV text that I know.

“Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.” Now that’s more than a play on letters, friends. That’s just something to help you to remember it. The next time you are tempted to keep on with something that you know is vanity, remember this prayer. “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.” If you’re where you can’t control the TV, ask God to turn your eyes away, and He’ll answer that prayer by helping you to remember that you have 600 muscles, several of which can help you in getting your head and your eyes turned away. Right? Yes.

There are a lot of other things besides TV today—so much on the billboards, on the magazine covers and inside them, so many thousands of books. And I might go on with many things that the consecrated life has no time for; the dedicated eye has no look for. “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.” “Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” God grant us that kind of consecration of our eyes. What do you say?

Now, let’s turn to the 85th Psalm. Let’s think about this ear. What did we find the ear is for? Hearing. God made it. David says:

“I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for He will speak peace
unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to
folly” Psalm 85:8.

We’ve turned away from the vanity, from the folly, the foolishness, the pride, the sin. And we’re looking to Jesus, in what He’s made and in what He has written in His Book. And we’re listening, listening to His voice in the sounds of nature, in the music of His Word, and in those sweet whispers in which the Holy Spirit communicates with us personally. And my dear friends, I doubt if He often will raise His voice to be heard above the din and confusion of this earth’s loud music. Did I say music? You know what I’m talking about. If we are to hear the Spirit’s whisper, we’ll remember that text in the 46th Psalm:

“Be still, and know that I am God...” Psalm 46:10.

“When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart”
The Desire of Ages, page 363.

Oh, I’m so glad that God is willing to commune with us personally. What do you say? So, the seeing eye and the hearing ear, the Lord has made both. And as we stand at the altar of sacrifice, we’re thinking of placing ourselves, item by item, organ by organ, on that altar. Not to be consumed in the fire, but to be used in the service of the King.

Now turn to the 50th of Isaiah. And here we shall read of one of the greatest opportunities for using this hearing ear:

“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned” Isaiah 50:4.

All of us woke up this morning, sometime between last night and tonight we woke up. How do I know? You’re here. How did we happen to wake up? God woke us. This says so. What did He wake us for? To hear. What do you have to do to hear? Listen. Listen. Listen. Listen.

Did you ever have the experience of somebody saying something and you missed it because you weren’t attentive enough? Perhaps preoccupied? Did you ever have the disconcerting experience of two voices speaking at the same time, and you had to decide whether you listen to this one or this one? But it can be done, can’t it? Did you ever sit in a Sabbath School in a certain position, where if you listen, you could hear this teacher, and if you tuned out that one in your mind, and listened to that one over there, you could hear that one? Did you? God is inviting us to *tune in* and *listen* to Him. And *He especially* wants us to listen in the early morning. And it is for that purpose that He wakes us.

We have a beautiful comment on this:

“Christ was continually receiving from the Father that He might communicate to us. ‘The word which ye hear,’ He said, ‘is not Mine, but the Father’s which sent Me.’ John 14:24. ‘The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister.’ Matthew 20:28. Not for Himself, but for others, He lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day, the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed”

Isn't that beautiful? Morning by morning, the Father awakens Jesus. See Him as He ministers all day to the sick and the sinning, the sad. Finally, the last sufferer is relieved, the last wanderer encouraged and Jesus goes to sleep. Maybe under the olive trees; maybe in the hospitable home of some friend; somewhere, Jesus is asleep. There He rests. But finally, the Father awakens Him. What for? Oh, He has some new blessing to give His Son, some fresh anointing to pour upon Him, some word to put into His mind that He's going to need at 10:00 as he meets some needy soul. In the afternoon, another—in the evening, somebody else. The Father is looking ahead, and all day long, He sees Jesus communicating, sharing. So now, in this early morning, the Father is sharing with Him, the Son, that which the Son will share with others through the day.

That's Heaven's plan. That's what the ear is for. To hear. We hear Him speak through His Word. We hear Him speak through the sounds of nature. But oh, we hear Him speak in that inner voice, the Holy Spirit.

And this leads me to that third organ that I wish to study with you. To place upon the altar the tongue, the mouth, the lips, the organs of speech. Keep this same text, Isaiah 50:4. Will you read it with me now, all together:

"The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned" Isaiah 50:4.

What's another word for learned? Educated. Are you educated? Jesus was educated. True, the people up at Jerusalem said, "How can this man teach when He's never learned?" That's a question they raised. But Jesus had been taught of God, and God intends that every one of His children shall be educated today in the school of Christ. But it takes a daily education. God has made no arrangements to get it all in a year or three years or five years or ten years. This is a lifelong experience, and comes fresh every day.

"The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary" Isaiah 50:4.

What does in season mean? At the right time. As the wise man says, a word in season, how good it is—to say the right word at the right time. And notice that it doesn't say a book, an encyclopedia. It doesn't even say a chapter. It says a what? A word. There are times when *one word*, spoken in love, performs the mission that Heaven has planned and is worth more than a whole sermon, my friend. And *you* can be the one who speaks that loving word of sympathy, that word of courage, that word of instruction, that word of counsel, that word of friendship. *You* can be that one.

Will you place your tongue upon the altar? Will you give your lips to God? He made your mouth as He made your ears and your eyes. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies,” piece by piece, item by item, organ by organ, “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Thank God that this breath which He gives us can be used in giving sound to His truth, speaking for Him.

Turn over to James the third chapter, and let’s get a picture here of the problem we face in this matter. Some of us have tried it, and we know we are up against something when it comes to giving the tongue to God.

“For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body” James 3:2.

You can control your tongue, God says everything else will come right into line. James says, “we put bits in the horses’ mouths,” and *they* obey us.

The fourth verse, the ships go here and there as the man at the helm directs. But ah, there is something harder than controlling a horse or a mule or a ship.

The fifth verse, “the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter,” that is, how big a forest, “a little fire kindleth!”

“And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame...” James 3:6–8.

Well then, why does God invite us to give our tongues to Him? For this very reason, friends, we can’t handle it. Did you ever try to handle your tongue and find you were disappointed? Did you ever look forward to some test and say, “Now, the one thing, I’m going to keep my mouth shut.” And low and behold, it came open. [Laughter] You know why? The tongue wanted to get out. The tongue can no man tame.

But God hasn’t put this here in the book of James to discourage us. He’s put it in here to keep us from fooling ourselves and thinking we can handle it. One of the big reasons we need to give our tongues to God is so He can control them. True, He’ll use our wills to do it. He won’t do it apart from us, but we can’t do it apart from Him.

“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.

Shall we give Him our eyes tonight? Shall we give Him our ears tonight? Shall we give Him our tongues tonight? Oh, thank God our eyes, our ears and our tongues are all devoted to Jesus.

I wonder what He'll do with them, friends? He'll speak to us and let us speak to Him and for Him. He'll use us in His service. We're told that our morning prayers should be, "Take me, Oh Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee." (See *Steps to Christ*, page 71.)

Oh, how thankful I am that we can make that full consecration, that full dedication. What do you say?

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