

# Altar of Sacrifice

## *Bound to the Altar*

#0721

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—July 10, 1965

Psalms 118 verse 27:

“God is the LORD, which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar”  
Psalms 118:27.

“...Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar” Psalms 118:27.

A few questions: What is the altar? What is sacrifice? What are the cords?

What do you think the sacrifice is? Let me ask you that first. What do you think the sacrifice is? Anybody an idea? “Self,” somebody said.

Any of the rest of you think that’s what the sacrifice is? I see some heads nodding.

Well, we won’t have to guess at it. You can put down in your notes Romans 12:1, and you will remember it. And so, I simply call your attention:

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

Yes, you and I are the sacrifice upon the altar. Well, I wonder what the altar is. I wonder what the altar is. For 4,000 years, there were altars in this world. Now, there aren’t any more altars, are there? Not like that.

What did every one of those altars, from the altar that Adam and Eve and Abel had there at the gate of the garden and on down, what did they all typify? What did they all point forward to? What? The cross. That’s right. They all pointed forward to the cross.

What was put on those altars back there in the Old Testament times? Sacrifices. Is that what an altar is for? Oh, yes, yes.

And finally, the one that all those sacrifices represented came. And where was He sacrificed? On the cross. The cross is the Christian altar. The cross is the Christian altar.

“Well,” one says, “I think Jesus is the One, then, that’s on the altar.”

Yes. But you remember Paul's statement in Galatians 2:20:

"I am crucified with Christ..." Galatians 2:20.

Oh, yes. So, the cross is not only where He dies for me, the cross is where I die with Him. Is that right? The cross is where He gave everything for me, and the cross is where I give everything for Him. And that was represented in all those altars, the altars of stone that the patriarchs built, the brazen altar that was there in the court of the sanctuary and the temple. Those altars represented the cross, and as such, they speak to us.

So, the altar is the place of what? Sacrifice. And the sacrifice is who? It's you and me.

Now, our text says, do what with that sacrifice? Bind the what? The sacrifice with what? With cords. To what? To the horns of the altar. How many horns on the altar? Four.

And so the figure is, "Here is a sacrifice, and it is to be bound, tied to the horns of the altar."

I've been trying to visualize that, and I don't know (of course, I never was there), I don't know whether they actually did any binding of sacrifices to those horns or not. I question it. A dead slain lamb or bullock wouldn't need to be tied on there, would he? No.

But I want to ask you something, friends. Was there ever a binding of a sacrifice? Do you remember it? What was it? Isaac, yes.

I was reading it over again in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 152:

"At the appointed place they built the altar..." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 152.

Abraham and Isaac.

"...and laid the wood upon it. Then with trembling voice, Abraham unfolded to his son the divine message. It was with terror and amazement that Isaac learned his fate, but he offered no resistance. He could have escaped his doom, had he chosen to do so; the grief-stricken old man, exhausted with the struggle of those three terrible days, could not have opposed the will of the vigorous youth"  
*Ibid.*

Do you know how old Abraham was at this time? A hundred and twenty. Do you know how old Isaac was? Twenty years old.

“But Isaac had been trained from childhood to ready,  
trusting obedience...” *Ibid.*

May I say one of the biggest problems that we have is that hardly anybody has yet learned that lesson? Some of the struggles that you dear young people are having in your teens and twenties, some of the struggles that we older ones are having in the 30s and 40s and 50s and on up as far as you want to go, is that we never learned before we were seven, before we were three, this simple but wonderful lesson of ready, trusting obedience.

And so, when the great test comes, and we're asked, like Isaac, to go on the altar, it's hard to go on, friend, and it's hard to stay.

“But Isaac had been trained from childhood to ready,  
trusting obedience, and as the purpose of God was  
opened before him, he yielded a willing submission. He  
was a sharer in Abraham's faith, and he felt that he was  
honored in being called to give his life as an offering to  
God. He tenderly seeks to lighten the father's grief, and  
encourages his nerveless hands to bind the cords that  
confine him to the altar” *Ibid.*

Oh friends, what a picture. And I look at it, and I say, “Why was he bound?”

Lest in the hour of sacrifice his reflexes should get the better of him and he should jump away from the decision that his voluntary choice had already made, my friends. And to every one of us tonight, God sends the suggestion:

“...Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of  
the altar” Psalm 118:27.

“Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?”  
“Is Your All on the Altar,” by E. A. Hoffman, refrain (partial).

“But you cannot have rest, or be perfectly blest,  
Until all on the altar is laid.”  
*Ibid.*, first stanza (partial).

Well, we sing about it, friends, and we read about it. But the great struggle of life is to experience it. I say “the great struggle of life.” Perhaps I *ought* to say that the settling of this question is what cuts short the struggle.

Now, let me read that for you, *Messages to Young People*, page 30:

“The surrender of all our powers to God greatly simplifies  
the problem of life. It weakens and cuts short a thousand  
struggles with the passions of the natural heart”  
*Messages to Young People*, page 30.

This is it, my dear friends.

“The surrender of all our powers to God greatly simplifies the problem of life. It weakens and cuts short a thousand struggles with the passions of the natural heart” *Ibid.*

Why dear one, if you and I can settle this question tonight, there are a thousand problems that are already solved. There are a thousand struggles that are already cut short. That’s right, that’s right.

You know, I’ve been thinking about it. Some of you know that troubles are getting more intense over there halfway around the world, and the president is every few days telling the country that things are going to get what? Worse before they get better. And so, he’s increasing the draft calls and increasing the number of men that he’s sending over.

Now, suppose that one of those soldier boys, he reads all that.

He says, “My, they’re about to call my name, probably to go over there. I wonder if I can’t get out of the army. I’m afraid it might be dangerous over there. Probably wouldn’t be very good for my health out there in those jungles. I wonder if I couldn’t get out of the army, or at least couldn’t ask to be given a clerical job in Washington, D. C., or one of these army bases here in this country, because my health is the most important thing, and it might be very dangerous for me over there in the jungles.”

Is there anything wrong with what I said? No, nothing wrong with any of it, but it’ll never win a war, will it? No. And there are a lot of things that young people and older ones are saying today, friends, there’s nothing wrong with it at all, but it’ll never get this work finished. It’ll never bring the coming of Jesus. It’ll never bring success to the work that He gave us to do.

And I’d like to have us think about it a little. Where are you? Are you on the altar, or are you running around free?

“Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?”

Now, I know that this is a parable. I know that none of us are physically tied down to an altar. Therein, my dear friends, lies the danger. We cannot look at others and see whether they’re on the altar or not. Some people obviously aren’t. They don’t even pretend to be.

But nobody but God and your own heart knows whether you’re really tied down to that altar. God knows and you can know if you want to find out. That’s right. You can find out.

And let me say, what looks like the most dangerous place in the world to be is the safest place. And what looks like the hardest place in all the world is the happiest place. That’s right.

We're told that some people take such good care of themselves that the Lord doesn't do much for them. They take pretty good care of themselves. They're always watching to see that they're looked after.

Dear friends, if we'll go to the altar with Jesus, we'll be crucified with Him. We'll give up our way and ourselves and our plans to Him. As we take on God's problems, He takes on our problems. I know that this is so, friend—no question in my mind about it. And oh, I wish that everybody could get the joy of it that I know is in this matter.

Well now, let's see what the cords are, *Counsels on Health*, page 381:

"We must bind ourselves upon the altar with the strong cords of faith and love" *Counsels on Health*, page 381.

What are the cords? Faith and love. What are we to do with those cords? Bind ourselves upon the altar. Now, can you get the picture, friends? Here's somebody gets up on the altar, but they're not bound there. They're not tied up. And the knife begins to cut ever so slightly. What is the danger? They'd jump off. That's right. They'd jump off. And they're rather wary about getting back on again.

And some people, bless their dear hearts, don't know any better than to tell them, "Well, brother, sister, get back on, and maybe nobody will cut you this time. Maybe you won't get hurt this time when you get back on the altar. Come and get back on, and we'll all try to see that nothing happens."

Well, my dear friends, what's an altar for? What *is* an altar for anyway? What is it? Sacrifice, isn't it? Isn't it? Oh, yes. What a strange thing it would be when Jesus says:

"...If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" Matthew 16:24.

That I, as one of Jesus' assistants, whisper in the ear of the man sitting next to me, "Don't be afraid. Go ahead and take the cross. Nothing will happen to you."

Did Jesus give me that message?

"Oh well, that's a good way to get a lot of people to take the cross, isn't it?"

But when they get to Calvary and find that it means business, then what?

Ah, my dear friends, the thieves wrestled with their executioners. But their crosses are not our crosses. Jesus voluntarily laid down His life upon the cross, right? And it's *volunteers* that Jesus is asking for. There are no draftees in this army. There are no people that are caught and wrestled with and held down.

If you ever go to this altar and stay there, it will be—mark it—because, like Isaac, you assist the Father in binding you to the altar with the cords of faith and love.

And dear ones, if we are bound there, we will not be so easily moved by the fear of problems on the one side, or the hope of finding something more comfortable and convenient on the other.

Why, bless your hearts, friends, it ought to be an easy thing to help a man to move off an altar by offering him something more comfortable. Wouldn't you think so? It ought to be a simple thing to find a more comfortable place than a cross. Wouldn't you think so?

It's nothing strange, then, if somebody comes along and offers you something different, something easier, something more comfortable. But you may well have a doubt as to whether it's the One who said:

“...If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” Luke 9:23.

“...Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar” Psalm 118:27.

Let me ask you something, friends. How long does the sacrifice stay on the altar? Till it's consumed. That's what *Volume 1* and *Early Writings* say:

“I saw that a sacrifice did not increase, but it decreased and was consumed” *Early Writings*, page 57.

Ah, friend.

But somebody says, “But shouldn't we guard our health, and shouldn't we think about our families, and shouldn't we think about a reasonable amount of income? And if a man doesn't provide for his own house, isn't he worse than an infidel, and doesn't the home come first, and doesn't my health come first?”

Listen, friends, I want to read you something. Or rather, I want you to read it. Turn to the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew. You know, there's about a grain of wheat and a bushel of chaff in what I just said. It's all right to get the grain of wheat, but don't get the bushel of chaff along with it.

Now, here's a statement of Jesus in Matthew the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter and the 29<sup>th</sup> verse. Here's the altar:

“And every one that hath...” Matthew 19:29.

What's the next word? “Forsaken.”

“And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life” Matthew 19:29.

Now, what was that word I asked you about? “Forsaken.” Forsaken what? “Houses.” Well, all right. Or “brethren,” that’s a little harder, “brethren and sisters.” “Father or mother,” that’s harder yet. “Wife or children,” that’s still harder, isn’t it?

“I wonder what in the world he was talking about. He surely didn’t mean that. I know he didn’t mean that.”

Oh, didn’t he? Didn’t mean that?

Let’s see, *Historical Sketches*, page 128, listen to the comment of the Lord’s messenger:

“Christ meant something when He said, ‘And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.’ He intended to impress upon us the fact that we must make eternal things of first importance, and so relate ourselves to the cause and work of God that we shall not be hindered by things of a temporal nature” *Historical Sketches*, page 128.

“Not be hindered” in what? “In the work of God.”

How did Jesus put it in the Sermon on the Mount?

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness...” Matthew 6:33.

“He intended to impress upon us the fact that we must make eternal things of first importance, and so relate ourselves to the cause and work of God that we shall not be hindered by things of a temporal nature. Everything of this character must come in secondary. The armor of God, once put on, is not to be laid off for slight excuses. What we need is untiring energy and perseverance so we will not be broken off from the work by difficulties and home perplexities. If we do allow our interest to be thus separated, the enemy will understand it, and he will make trouble right in our families to draw us away from the work” *Historical Sketches*, page 128.

Who will? The Devil. Where will he make trouble? Right in our families.

Suppose all the soldiers over there in Viet Nam were volunteers. And suppose (this is, of course, pure supposition), but suppose they could leave any time they wanted.

If you were the enemy and had the opportunity to get at their families at home, what would you try to do? Wouldn’t you try to make all kinds of situations at home

that a cable would come over there to Vietnam, "Harry, we're sorry" (they might not even write, 'We're sorry') "but things at home are such we just have to have you. We need you. And Uncle Sam, he's got a million others he can use. But we've got to have *you*. And Harry, nobody but you'll do. So Harry, you'll have to come home."

I say, if you were the enemy and could thus get a man out of the army, wouldn't you do it, friend? Well, wouldn't you do it for George, as well as Harry? Wouldn't you do it for John and James? Wouldn't you? Wouldn't you go right on down the list?

How many devils has the great enemy? How many has he got, anyway? Has he got several million? Oh, yes. Is there one of them that has no other job but to get you out of this army? Well, if there's any difference, friends, it's two or three that have no other job. That's right. No other job than to get you out of this army. That's all—to get you off the altar. That's right. That's their job. And they'll work anything.

And remember, you're a volunteer. You were when you came in. Every day you're in it, you're a volunteer. Can you get off that altar? Yes, any time, any time. It's a wonder Jesus ever gets anybody, isn't it?

It is a wonder, friend. The wonder is what we need to see in order to be held there, the wonder of His love. It was love that led Him to the cross. And we're told that He even longed for His baptism of blood in order that He might accomplish the redemption of His children.

And as He hung there on the cross, could He have left anytime? Could He? Anytime.

And did somebody slip up to Him and say, "Jesus, we hear you're just about ready to get down, and we'll make things a little easier so You'll stay."

Did they? Not one. Not one devil said that to Him, and not one angel from heaven.

Did things get easier? No. They got harder, all the way through, till finally, He died in agony for you and me. What held *Him* there? Faith and love. And those are the cords that'll hold us there.

And what we need, my dear friends, is not the spirit to go and lash ourselves or to lie on cold stone. What we need is the spirit to go to Jesus and ask Him to inspire our hearts with that love that led Him to the cross and held Him there.

And if we get that love, all these temptations, these allurements, these invitations, these suggestions that there's an easier way to do it, they won't have any effect upon us whatsoever, my dear friends, not at all.

You remember Jesus had a dear friend. Look at the 16<sup>th</sup> of Matthew verse 21, and you'll see what I mean. Jesus was talking to His disciples and telling them about this cross that He was going to, this very cross. But Jesus had a dear friend



that was trying to make it easier for Him. What was his name? Peter. But who was behind Peter? Satan.

Twenty-second verse:

“Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying,  
Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee”  
Matthew 16:22.

And I want to tell you something, friends. Peter was not a heathen, no. And he wasn't a hypocrite. He was a well-meaning, misguided friend of Jesus, one of the officers of the church.

And some well-meaning, misguided friend of *yours* may come to you and say, “Oh, dear friend, surely God doesn't require you to make such a sacrifice as you're making, or are about to make. There is an easier way, a way that doesn't require so many problems for you, and for your wife, and for your children. There is a way that'll be easier on your health. This is a rather dangerous road. There's a way that'll be easier on your pocketbook. There's a way that'll be easier on your reputation.”

I wonder, my dear friend, what we ought to say. What did Jesus say? What did He say to Peter, well-meaning Peter? What did He say?

“...Get thee behind Me, Satan...” Matthew 16:23.

Oh, can it be, friends, that He would say that to one of His best friends? Yes, He did. He said that very thing. He said:

“...Get thee behind Me, Satan...” Matthew 16:23.

And Peter doubtless wondered what in the world was the matter with Jesus, that He would say anything like that, but that's what He said.

Oh, that God may help us to say that.

Well, I have many other things along this line, but I'm going to close right now. Perhaps another time, the Lord willing, we'll go further in this. But I think that it's better to take a reasonable amount and chew it well than it would be to take so much that we'd have indigestion.

[Recoding ended in progress.]

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W. D. Frazee Sermons  
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757  
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755  
[www.WDFsermons.org](http://www.WDFsermons.org)  
[support@WDFsermons.org](mailto:support@WDFsermons.org)