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A SERMON

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I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.—Rom. 12 chap. 1 v.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, or your rational service, or, as the American revisors have suggested, which is your spiritual service. Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your spiritual or rational service or worship.

Now, let us look at this appeal, and then at the grounds on which it is made. The appeal is to beseech you to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. The words used here are sacrificial terms, and would be understood by those to whom Paul was writing, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. Those who read this Epistle were familiar with sacrifices. The Old Testament Scriptures are full of legislation with regard to sacrifices; and we know that the altars of the heathen nations reeked with the blood of their victims. It is a remarkable fact, and one to which reference has been frequently made by writers, that there were no such things as human sacrifices among the Jews; but among other nations the anger of the heathen deities were thought to be appeased by the offering up of the life of one dear to the worshipper; and it is not so long ago that in British India we find the Hindoo mother flinging her babe into the Ganges; or the widow burning herself upon the funeral pyre; men torturing themselves for weeks and months, or living in some constrained position; men flinging themselves under the wheels of Juggernaut's car. All these were sacrifices for sins—living sacrifices, in a very striking way—sacrifices involving loss of life. Now it is nothing of this kind that St. Paul means by living sacrifices. But an element in common with those sacrifices we have referred to, those mistaken sacrifices, is the sacrifice which Paul calls upon Christians to make, that is devotion to what is supposed to be the will of God; that which is opposed to self-indulgence and forgetfulness of God, with which we are so familiar in our own day, and even amongst those who call themselves Christians. This is the mistaken devotion of mind and ignorant worshippers, who think they please God by offering such sacrifices, rather than by the loving, simple offering of self, which characterizes many in our own time. But we come back again to the question of what it is that Paul means by the living sacrifice, when he calls on his readers to present their bodies a living sacrifice; he answers the question in the rest of the chapter. He tells his readers to be members one of another, and to do good to one another to be kindly affectioned; rejoicing in hope, rendering no man evil for evil; but to repay evil with good; for in so doing they would heap coals of fire upon the heads of their enemies. Again he tells his readers to be no more angry, but to love one another, for love is the fulfilling of the Law. Now I say that this is the kind of service Paul has in view when he writes, "present your bodies a living sacrifice." Hence the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "To do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifice, God is well pleased. You have heard the spirit of the word 'sacrifice.' And have we not the very language of Paul to define what he means, when he says, 'to do good and to communicate, forget not'—doing good in the homeliest and most trifling things, as well as on the grandest scale. These are the sacrifices with which God is well pleased. We are to present, Paul says, our bodies—our bodies; that is to say, our sacrifices are to take external form; not to be displayed in mere sentiment, as may be noticed in some quarters, in our own day, which delights in certain states of feeling, because they are pleasant and indulgent. Now Paul says that we are to present our bodies a living sacrifice; he does not say that there is to be any feeling of heart; not that there is to be any thought in the mind. This is implied in the next phrase, where Paul writes, 'be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God; for I say through the grace given me, to every one that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought.' Unless there is a renewing of the mind there will not be a presenting of the body; but what we want to make sure of is, that our bodies which are the organs with which our spirits work, with which our thoughts and purposes are carried into effect, are presented to God, to render Him pleasing service. We are to use ourselves as

instruments of righteousness. What do we mean by presenting our bodies, by offering our members as instruments of righteousness? Let us think of it. I am more and more convinced that Christian people and writers are inclined to take certain phrases as characteristic of Christian life, of Christian experience. We must present our hands, so that they shall touch no unclean thing, always be ready to stretch forth to help the needy, ready for every good work to which God calls us. It does not mean simply that we should be ready for what is called Christian work, such as church organization, Sabbath Schools, and so forth. This is but a small fraction of the Christian man's work. The commonest manual labor, as well as the greatest triumphs of artistic skill, are to be offered to the Lord as offerings to His honor. All our work is to be done, that it may be fit for God's eye to see; that there shall be no shame, no cheating your neighbor by half doing our work, however commonplace it be. Then our feet, our eyes and our ears must be presented to the Lord, not looking at foolishness, but seeing the beauty of God's works, and listening to the voice of God, speaking as it is speaking to us every day, in Heaven and earth, as well as in His word.

Presenting our bodies involves the presenting of our tongues as living sacrifices, so that they shall thereby be organs of God's praise; for it is written in one of the psalms, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." The presentation of our tongues means, that the power of speech is to be devoted to God. It does not necessarily mean that we are to be always speaking about God, any more than the loving child, who delights in doing what pleases father and mother, is expected to be always talking about them. No more are we expected to be always having the name of God upon our lips. Still less are we expected to be talking continually of ecclesiastical matters, about church cabals and strifes. On the other hand it may be the most emphatically religious conversation to be talking about business or politics, about the things which we are called upon to do in our household offices; and it may be and ought to be daily manifested in talking about the commonest things in a religious spirit, and not as if we had a right to do these things apart from God, on worldly principles, as we believe too many men think they have a right to do; for in words and works all ought to be done as in presence of God, the search of hearts, to whom we are responsible for every word, even when speaking of the commonest relations of life, as well as for every act we perform; for we are not told that for every idle word we must give an account. The presenting of our bodies implies that every power, every sense is to be devoted to God, that they may become temples in God's spiritual dwelling. Such offerings are holy and well pleasing to God in the sense that the offering of lambs could never be; for they are part of man himself—the offering of his words, his acts and his life to God. That I say is eventually a higher service than the offering of animals. This true devotion is called rational, spiritual, worship, or service, as distinguished from the irrational worship of idols—men bowing down to things which their own hands have made, in the vain imagination that these things can hear or help them. Spiritual devotion bears the stamp of the likeness of the Father of the spirit of all flesh, as distinguished from the irrational worship of idols and on the other hand from the worship of mere outward forms, such as the ritualistic form, which attaches too much importance to the external. We should offer pure worship and undefiled. Here is the Apostle James' definition of pure worship "to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." To have a care for the fallen, a care for the ignorant, to engage in the different branches of charitable work, of which this is a specimen, to visit the fatherless and the widows, and to keep himself unspotted from the world; to do his daily business, to go on with his daily tasks, to enter into all the relations with his fellow men, in which he stands from day to day in the spirit of purity uncontaminated by sin. This is James' definition of pure and undefiled worship. But some may say, are we to have no public worship? I answer that such devotion is suitable to the end for which it was instituted, as a means of making a general confession of our obligation to God in public. And yet, my friends, this service offered week by week and day by day will be of very little use, will fail of its really intended result, if it do not help us to offer every hour a pure and undefiled worship, if it do not help us to live a life of love and purity in our homes.

Now the sacrifice of which Paul speaks here involves self-denial. The word sacrifice is associated in our minds with self-denial, and rightly so. We are, however, to remember that we are not called

to extreme self-denial for its own sake. We are not called on to offer our right hands to show how much pain we can bear. We are not called on to go fasting forty days, that men may gaze and wonder, and read of us in the newspapers. There is no Christianity in that sort of self-denial—nothing, but absurd human egotism; but we are called on to exercise self-denial for the sake of principle. Now, the question is, what is the end to be secured by self-denial? You would not put your hand into the fire to save some perishing toy from destruction; but I hope there is not one of you who would not put his right hand into the fire to save a neighbor's child, though that child should be maimed. Life. The question is, what is to be accomplished by self-denial? How are we to serve God by denying ourselves? And here we come upon the great model of sacrifices, that of our Lord Jesus Christ; and it is very striking how insignificant the sacrifices are that we are called on to offer, compared with that great sacrifice of love. In the epistle to the Philippians we have one magnificent statement of the incarnation, where we are told of Him, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, emptied himself of his glory, of the glory that was with Him, and took the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; humbled himself, and became obedient to death, and that death of the cross! Look back at the beginning of the passage and you will find the magnificent statement of the incarnation of Christ is given in order to enforce humility, namely, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," the self-denying mind instead of the proud mind, the lowly mind instead of the proud mind. And you will see continually in the New Testament, in verse after verse, concerning Christ's offering of himself, where statements are made, as to how we are to imitate, though it be far off, the spirit and essence of the sacrifice. "Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Thus we have the exhortation given to every disciple—"Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." The Son of Man offered himself a living sacrifice. That one great sacrifice is the centre of our hope, the ground of our assurance of forgiveness, and our hope of everlasting life. We need the strength of His grace to be imitators of Him, in the little acts of self-denial, which God calls upon us to perform, in our daily life. There are many things in it which we cannot understand; but it is not because the love, which is at the heart of it, passes knowledge, that we have so little knowledge of it; and it is not because that the more we enter into fellowship with that love which led the Lord "to come from heaven to earth, and to minister." Thus we have the meaning of that spontaneous sacrifice? Such, then, is Paul's apostle—"I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Now, then, in a word or two, let me call your attention to the ground on which Paul bases this appeal. "By the mercies of God." The words are connected with the previous chapters. We should read the three preceding chapters. Paul speaks of the temporary rejection of the Jews in order that the Gentiles might be gathered in; and by and by, through the mercy shown to the Gentiles, the Jews might obtain mercy; for God hath shut them all up together in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. And then Paul exclaims, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways are past finding out." And this impresses us with the sense of that marvellous wisdom which God has shown in his wondrous plan of redemption. We are beguiled by the mercies of God; constrained by this marvellous, this unsearchable, this incomprehensible love. Now we know that we are appealed to in the Word of God by the sense of His mercy and grace. Terror is a weapon to be sparingly used; but it is used, and it is right to use it. Even the fear of pain, the fear of loss, the fear of hell, may be the means of stirring up men; and yet no soul was ever saved by being held in imagination over the brink of hell. No soul was ever saved merely by the fear of the consequences of sin; and yet while the fear of retribution has its place in stirring men from their indifference and carelessness, there must come, in addition to that, the other great moving power, the power of love, in response to God's love. To give Him our hearts is the great demand which God makes of us—our heart's love, our heart's devotion. Said a poor scholar to a philosopher, "I have nothing but myself to give you," and the answer of the philosopher was, "I will endeavor to give thee back better than I received from thee." And so we, in our poverty, our blindness, our want of life, go to the Lord, saying, we have nothing but ourselves to give; and he in His great love and tender com-

passion says, I will give thee back better than I received from thee; for the sense of the love of God constrains us, day by day, to yield ourselves freely, fully and unreservedly to him; and we enter more and more into the idea of his love. Love is the great moving power. Even within the range of our own observation, our imperfect earthly human love is simply tremendous. Have we not seen it again and again—that love, which seems to have been wasted by father, or mother, or both, on the wandering child, on the prodigal son—that love by-and-by rewarded; and that if we train up a child in the way that he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it. There will come a moment when the father's and mother's love will come back upon him as a strong power, to make him think of the hatefulness of his present course, and turn him back upon the comparative innocence and peace of his childhood. If there be this great power in the imperfect man, or woman, to love those that are lost, are we not ready to ascribe to the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, the mightiest influence in lifting up the fallen and saving the lost. And is not this very fatherly, motherly love, an emblem of the everlasting foundation of love in the living God, which has been manifested to us above all; for God commanded His love to us; in that he gave His only begotten Son, a ransom for us. And now the basis of our Christian life is this love of Christ, which constrains us to live no longer to ourselves, but to Him who died for us.

THE GREAT EASTERN SUFFERING—DAMENROW'S ACCIDENT.—Among all the privations of your Arctic sojourn which seemed to be felt the most? "I think we were more worried and depressed by the sameness and dreariness of the scene—the utter solitude—than anything else. To go upon deck every day and look upon the same vast, endless waste of ice—it was that which appeared to feel the most. The utter monotony and dreariness, after awhile, affected the spirits of some, and they would go aside, so as not to infect the others with their momentary depression. When the Indian came one day, and announced, 'Me found a two man house,' the excitement caused by the novelty of the anticipation was something tremendous.

And how did this depressing life affect the appearance of the men—did it blacken their hair, reduce their flesh, or were its effects otherwise perceptible? "Collins' hair turned very gray before the retreat, but DeLong, strange to say, grew very stout; Collins also became stouter for a time, I think. "Was everybody weighed?" "Yes, every month, and also physically examined by the doctor. In the second winter everybody's weight ran down very much. Collins and Melville were the two heaviest men, weighing about two hundred pounds each."

The biggest diamond in the world, if indeed it be a diamond, is the Braganza, which forms part of the Portuguese crown jewels. It weighs 1,880 carats. However, not a little doubt exists of its being a diamond, as the government has never allowed it to be tested. It was found in Brazil in 1741. The largest tested but uncut diamond is the Mattan, belonging to the Rajah of Mattan, in Borneo. It is of pure water, weighs 367 carats and is of a pear shape, indented at the thick end. It was found about 1760 at Landak, in Borneo. It has been the cause of a sanguinary war. Before it was cut the Kokonoor, which is one of the English crown jewels, was the largest tested diamond. It then weighed 793 carats. When in the possession of the Emperor Aurungebe it was reduced by unskillful cutting to 186 carats. During the Sikh mutiny it was captured by British troops and presented to Queen Victoria. It is re-cut and now weighs 106 1-16 carats.

The greatest river in the world is the Amazon. It rises in the Peruvian Andes, about sixty miles from the Pacific Ocean, and flows, including its windings, a distance of 4,000 miles to the Atlantic, which it enters under the Equator in Brazil. The average velocity of the current is three miles an hour. It is navigable for large ships 2,900 miles from its mouth. The area drained by the Amazon and its tributaries is estimated at 2,000,000 square miles. The Amazon enters the sea through an estuary about 150 miles wide. So great are the volume and impetus of the river that its fresh water is carried unmingled into the sea about 200 miles. If the Missouri and Lower Mississippi were combined, they would not equal the length of the Amazon by about 400 miles. The length of the Mississippi from Itaska Lake to the Gulf of Mexico is about 3,160 miles.

"I guess the goose has the advantage of you," said a lady to an inept boarder who was carrying. "Guess it has, mum, in age," was the retort.

Fish Cannery.

A correspondent of the Toronto Globe writing from Burrard Inlet, says—It is a chilly morning when we take boat from one of the landing-places and are rowed across the Fraser River. From the river Westminster looks well, and would make a very pretty picture. Dotted along the bank the houses of the wealthier citizens present a most elegant appearance, and the few church towers stand out prominently against the background of dark forest. The river at this spot is three quarters of a mile wide. Down the stream are many boats, the Indian crews occupied in casting or hauling in nets. We pull to a large wharf. This has two floors—that where we land is level with the river. From the platform which forms the roof ships could be laden. There are many boats here filled with

FISH STILL ALIVE.

By a rope and pulley a great box is lowered, filled, hauled up. The fish are thrown into a heap, the numbers first being checked. With a spear or gaff just thrust into the gills, they are tossed on to a large bench. Two Chinamen "boos" this proceeding. With two strokes of the enormous knives they use, off go the heads and tails of the fish. Another stroke and they are disembowelled, and thrown into a tank of fresh water. By other Chinamen the bodies are then hauled out, scaled and scrubbed; then into another tank on wheels, and passed along to the cutting machine, which contains 20 knives. One revolution, and the fish is cut into lengths the exact size of the cans. The average is six to eight pounds, some I see here are 14 pounds in weight, and my *déjeuner* tells me that one has been taken this year weighing 68 pounds. The redness of the flesh is remarkable, but I am told this is because they have just come from the salt water. Next, the pieces of fish are put into a tank of slight brine for a few minutes—this removes any slime which might yet adhere—when the fish is placed in a box-wagon working on a tramway, and run into the main building, a vast shed. We enter this. Long rows of benches, piles of cans empty and full, fish everywhere, Chinamen and India women packing the tins. It is a simple operation. There are the cans, with a slight sprinkling of salt at the bottom of each; the pieces of fish of the exact length are examined into these; all that has to be done now is to solder them down and cook them.

THE CANS.

are manufactured at every cannery out of sheet tin imported from England, and block tin from Australia; the latter used for the solder. As they are required a number of wooden frames or trays are filled, each containing four dozen, the contents of a "case." This just passed under a perforated board, through which salt drips, leaving a pinch or two in each can. They are then filled, the lids put on, the trays loaded again and taken to a machine. They are put into this at the top, as into a winnow. They drop into a revolving wheel, which presses the lids tightly to the can, and then run down a grooved bed with their lower edges in a stream of molten solder. They are cooled by the time they have reached the bottom, and are packed into the trays again, which are taken to the testing vat, and one tray lowered after another.

The foreman stands by the side of the vat as the trays disappear under the boiling water; the least bubble on the top of a can shows that it is leaky, and it is immediately taken out and thrown on one side. Then the trays, after the soundness of the cans has thus been thoroughly tested, are hoisted, and swung by chains and pulleys to another great vat, where thousands of cans are

BOILED TOGETHER FOR AN HOUR.

This being done, as the cans are removed a hole is punched in each to let out the gases, but this is soldered up at once. But the cooking is not finished yet. The trays are piled on little tram-cars and run into two great retorts, where they are baked or boiled for two hours. They are then brought out, left to cool, and are then piled on reversible frames, labelled and piled up ready for packing. But before placing in the cases there is one last operation. A foreman with a little hammer strikes each can—tunes it, as it were. His trained ear detects anything which is not quite sound, and it is at once discarded. The fish itself is only handled thrice from the moment it leaves the boat, but the cans themselves are handled thirty-five times. It is altogether a most simple, easy, cleanly, and expeditious process. In less than ten minutes after the fish is alive in the boats it is canned down and in process of cooking.

Hard Hitting.—Col. Old Style—"This is indeed a pleasure. I never see your ladyship but I feel I am ten years younger!" Lady New Style (who hasn't been to the house for nothing)—"Indeed, Colonel, then you should avoid me. A meeting or two more and you will reach your second childhood!"

A Curious way of Courting.

LOVE-MAKING AND MARRIAGE AMONG THE CHOCTAWA.

The 2,000 Choctawa still living in their ancestral home in Mississippi, retain in their primitive vigor many of the usages of their ancestors. Among these are the methods employed in conducting a courtship and the marriage ceremony. When a young Choctaw, of Kemper, or Neshoba county, sees a maiden who pleases his fancy, he watches his opportunity until he finds her alone. He then approaches within a few yards of her, and gently casts a pebble towards her, so that it may fall at her feet. He may have to do this three or four times before he attracts the maiden's attention. If this pebble throwing is agreeable, she soon makes it manifest; if otherwise, a scornful look and a decided "okwaw" indicates that his suit is in vain.

When a marriage is agreed upon the lovers appoint a time and place for the ceremony. On the marriage day the friends and relatives of the prospective couple meet at their respective houses or villages, and then march towards each other. When they arrive near the marriage ground—generally intermediate space between the two villages—they halt within about a hundred yards of each other. The brothers of the woman then go across to the opposite party and bring forward the man and set him down on a blanket spread upon the marriage ground. The man's sisters then do likewise by going over and bringing forward the woman and setting her by the side of the man. Sometimes, to furnish a little merriment for the occasion, the woman is expected to break loose and run. Of course she is pursued, captured, and brought back.

All parties assemble around the expectant couple. A bag of bread is brought forward by the woman's relatives and deposited near her. In like manner the man's relatives bring forward a bag of meat and deposit it near him. The man's relatives and friends now begin to throw presents on the head and shoulders of the woman. These presents are of a kind that the donors wish to give, as articles of clothing, money, trinkets, ribbons, etc. As soon as the presents are thrown they are quickly matched off by the woman's relatives and distributed among themselves. During all this time the couple sit very quietly and demurely, not a word spoken by either. When all the presents have been thrown and distributed, the couple, now man and wife, arise, the provisions from the bag are spread, and just as in civilized life, the ceremony is rounded off with a festival. The festival over, the company disperses, and the gallant groom conducts his bride to his home, where they enter upon the toils and responsibilities of the future.

The greatest cataract in the world is that of Niagara. The Horseshoe Fall on the Canadian side has a perpendicular descent of 168 feet. The height of the American fall is 167 feet. The Horseshoe Fall, which carries a larger volume of water than the American fall, is about 600 yards wide, and extends from the Canadian shore to Goat Island. Geologists are agreed that the cataract was once six miles nearer to Lake Ontario than at present. Although Niagara is the greatest cataract it is by no means the highest. The Yosemite fall in California surpasses all other cataracts on the globe in height. It is formed by Yosemite Creek, which is an affluent of the Merced River. The average width of the stream in summer is about twenty feet and its depth about two feet. From the edge of the cliff from which the water plunges, to the bottom of the valley the vertical distance is about 2,550 feet; but the fall is not in one perpendicular sheet.

"Porter," said a passenger from Albany, on the New York Central Railroad, as he stepped into his sleeping berth, "call me at Lyons sure." "All right, sah." Late next morning he called him, "Only twenty minutes from Buffalo, sah." "Why, didn't you call me at Lyons?" "Fore goodness, sah, it's you did say Lyons, for saah, boss, and I done thought 'obey de whole circus, an' hope to die if I could ketch onto any animal higher than Buffalo! I'll remember de cage next time, boss."

A lady whose love of flowers and whose success in cultivating them are far in advance of her own culture, called to one of her family the other day, "Mary, go and show Mrs. Johnston my bed of double spitoonias, that grow double and double every day; and then she added, "and when my salivas bloom out you must be sure to come round to see them."

The Journal Des Debats says: "Great Britain is right in desiring to act alone in Egypt. We firmly believe that France will afford her no assistance. The control of the Suez Canal belongs by right to England and will belong to her de facto. It is for her a question of life or death."