

HE CARRIES THE LAMBS IN HIS BOSOM.

A sweet golden head had forgotten life's way, Asleep on its pillow of roses, Wee hands shutting close as it tried to play, Like buds which the summer discloses.

There is never a lamb from love's sorrowful fold But wanders in fields that are weald, And never a bird hid away from the cold But blooms in the summer eternal.

Select Sermon.

THE LIVING SACRIFICE.

ROMANS 12: 1.

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In this familiar verse we have a duty in its matter, manner, and motives.

I. The matter of it. That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice. Under the previous dispensation, sacrifices were presented in atonement for human guilt, in acknowledgement of divine mercy, and in anticipation of the one great sacrifice which in the fullness of time was to be presented on the altar of Calvary.

The "It is finished" of the Divine Victim of Calvary rung the knell of Jewish Ritualism, and ushered in a new and nobler system in which visible altars and animal victims were all done away. And yet "we have an altar," and "ye are a royal priesthood," expected to offer up spiritual sacrifices.

Bought with a price, "ye are bound to glorify God with your bodies; to yield yourselves unto God with your members as instruments of righteousness.

The eyes for Jesus, to see the glories of his world, and to pour over the treasures of his word—looking unto Jesus, his cross and crown.

The ears for Jesus, eager to drink in each commission that comes from the throne—each Macedonian cry that is wafted on the breeze.

The lips for Jesus, breathing filial Abbas into our Father's open ear, and speaking words in season to him that is weary.

The hands for Jesus, ready to distribute willing to communicate.

The feet for Jesus, treading the paths of pleasantness and peace—joying when it is said "Let us go to the house of the Lord;" visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and drawing from the lips of sorrow and of sin the exclamation: "How beautiful!"

The mind for Jesus thinking of him. The heart for Jesus, loving him; its desires going out after him; its affections like the clinging tendrils clasping him.

The time for Jesus; the talents for Jesus; the money for Jesus; the influence for Jesus; the all for Jesus.

Under the shadow of the cross, sitting down to watch him, then as we catch the glance of his melting eyes, and a grasp of his nail-pierced hands, the emotions welling up within our ravished heart will thus find vent:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life my all."

II. The manner of it.

1. Personal: "ye," "your." It is your bodies.

There is an intense individuality about the gospel. To every man his work. Our Captain expects every man to do his duty; another cannot repent for you, believe for you, love for you, live for you, die for you, stand before the bar for you. Nor can another labor for you. You can do what no other can do for you. As with the members of the body, no one can say to the other: "I have no need of thee." The ass of Balaam, the raven of Elijah, the cock of Peter, the colt on which the Master rode, all had their uses. We have no right to plead off. However insignificant and obscure, the Lord hath need of us. The waste material in the Church must be utilized. The power buried in the pews must have a resurrection. The proxy system has been the Church's bane. Many are weak and sickly amongst us, and sleep—who are in the Church as the patients in the wards of an hospital. They require constant nursing. Could they but get rid of their miserable self-consciousness and exercise them-

selves, unto godliness, how much healthier and happier they would be!

Was the Good Samaritan contented with heaving a sigh or shedding a tear, and passing by on the other side? Did caste or country dam up his sympathies? Was he satisfied with a liberal subscription to the Strangers' Aid Society at Jerico? No! it was personal service he rendered. That is what the Lord requires of us.

2. Voluntary—"That ye present." The very word indicates that it must not be of constraint, but willingly. The victim not dragged or driven to the altar, but drawing nigh of its own accord. "Then will I go to the altar of God."

Too much of our duty, of our devotion, of our liberality is not free.

We go to Christian work like the slave with a clog on his step and a cloud on his spirit. In prayer the wheels of the inner man "drive heavily," instead of being like "the chorist of Amminadab."

Our giving is too spasmodic. Under the pressure of some stirring appeal, we dole out our dollars—often with niggard hand and grudging heart.

It is like the driving up of the water into Eastern gardens by a force-pump. How infinitely better the natural rise, like the waters of the Nile!

3. Earnest. That ye "present your bodies a living sacrifice."

We have wide-awakeness everywhere—on change, in market, amongst the merchants, our "servants," our statesmen.

Why should men only be "at ease in Zion"? Is a generous enthusiasm to be enlisted in behalf of every enterprise save that which most richly deserves it? Should it not be matter of surprise if about our own business we are "not slothful," while "the King's business," which "requireth haste," is done after a slovenly fashion—a surprise like that which underlies his own first recorded utterance: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Let the epithets "fool" "idiot" be bandied about, or the slander of Hosea's day—"the spiritual man is mad"—be reproduced; accept the ridicule which is your glory, as did he who said, "I am not mad," or, allowing it to be granted, declared: "Whether we be beside ourselves it is to God."

III. The motives.

1. The I. "I beseech you."

The pleader here has a right. With him it was never "go," but "come." From the moment when outside the gate of Damascus, he was apprehended of Christ Jesus, down to the moment when outside the gate of Rome the axe of the headsmen released that heroic soul from that frail body, through that marvellous circumnavigation of charity, his was pre-eminently a "living sacrifice."

Using his apostolic authority, he might command us, but for love's sake he rather "beseeches us." Paul the aged on his knees! What a motive is here!

2. Like his Master, he is not ashamed to call us brethren. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren." He comes down to a level with the humblest member of the household of faith. What an attractive power in the tight and tender cords of love that bind the whole family in heaven and earth!

A PARABLE.

A certain tyrant sent for one of his subjects and said to him: "What is your employment?" He said: "I am a blacksmith." "Go home," said he, "and make me a chain of such a length." He went home; it occupied him several months, and he had no wages all the time he was making it. Then he brought it to the monarch, and he said: "Go and make it twice as long." He gave him nothing to do it with, but sent him away. Again he worked on, and made it twice as long. He brought it up again, and the monarch said: "Go and make it longer still." Each time he brought it, there was nothing but the command to make it longer still. And when he brought it up at last, the monarch said: "Take it, bind him hand and foot with it, and cast him into a furnace of fire." These were his wages for making the chain.

Here is a meditation for you, ye servants of the devil! Your master, the devil, is telling you to make a chain. Some of you have been fifty years winding the links of the chain, and he says: "Go and make it longer still." Next Sabbath morning you will open that shop of yours, and put another link on; next Sabbath you will be drunk and put another link on; next Monday you will do a dishonest action; and so you will keep on making fresh links to this chain; and when you have lived twenty more years, the devil will say: "More links on still." And then, at last, it will be: "Take him and bind hand and foot, and cast him into a furnace of fire." "For the wages of sin is death." There is a subject for your meditation. I do not think it will be sweet; but if God makes it profitable, it will do you good. You must have strong medicine sometimes when the disease is bad. God apply it to your hearts.—C.H. Spurgeon.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PULPIT.

Dr. Edward Payson, himself remarkably gifted in public prayer, has left the following thoughts on the subject:

In the first place, I conceive that our devotional performances are too often the language of the understanding rather than of the heart. It has been observed that they should be the echo of a fervently pious heart, guided by an enlightened understanding to the voice of God. They too often consist almost entirely of passages of Scripture, not always judiciously chosen or well arranged, and common-place phrases which have been transmitted for ages from one generation of ministers to another, selected and put together just as we would compose a sermon or essay, while the heart is allowed no share in the performance, so that we may more properly be said to make a prayer than to pray. The consequence is that our devotional performances are too often cold and spiritless; as the heart did not assist in composing, it disdains to aid in uttering them. They have almost as much of a form as if we made use of a Liturgy, while the peculiar excellences of a Liturgy are wanting. Our hearers soon became familiarized to our expressions, and not infrequently anticipate them; and though they may possibly be instructed, their devotional feelings are not excited.

That public prayer may produce its proper and designed effects on their hearts it should be, if I may so express it, a kind of devout poetry. As in poetry so in prayer, the whole subject-matter should be furnished by the heart, and the understanding should be allowed only to shape and arrange the effusions of the heart in the manner best adapted to answer the end designed. From the fullness of a heart overflowing with holy affections, as from a copious fountain, we should pour forth a torrent of pious, humble, and ardently affectionate feelings, while our understandings only shape the channel, and teach the gushing streams of devotion where to flow and where to stop. In such a prayer every pious heart among our hearers will join. They will hear a voice and utterance given to their own feelings. They will hear their own desires and emotions expressed more fully and perspicuously than they could express them themselves. Their hearts will spring forward to meet and unite with the heart of the speaker.

Leading the devotions of our people in this manner will preserve us from another fault, less important, indeed, but not less common, than that which has just been mentioned, and which in part is occasioned by it. It consists in uttering the different parts of prayer in the same tone. When our prayers are the language of the understanding only, this will always be done; but not so when they flow from the heart. No person need be informed that in their intercourse with each other a different modulation of the voice is employed to express every different emotion of the heart. No one would expect to hear a condemned malefactor plead for his life and return thanks for pardon in the same tone. And why is it not equally unnatural for sinful beings, condemned to eternal death, to plead for pardon and return thanks for its bestowal in the same tone? Yet how often is this done! How often do we hear prayers flow on, from the commencement to the close in the same uniform tone, with scarcely a perceptible inflection of the voice!

Another fault sometimes found in devotional performances, which are otherwise unexceptional, is the want of sufficient particularity. Indeed, most of our public prayers are too general. They bring so much into view that nothing is seen distinctly. It is well known that, if we expect sublime and terrible objects, nothing affects the mind, unless it be clearly and distinctly perceived. If the most admired descriptive poems, and those which produce the greatest effect on our feelings, be carefully examined, it will be found that they derive their power to affect us almost entirely from a minute and striking description of a few judiciously selected particulars.

It is the same with our devotional performances. We praise God, or confess sin, or pray for mercy, or return for divine favor, in a general way, without being ourselves affected, and without exciting the affections of our hearers. But when we descend to particulars the effect is different. The mind receives drop after drop till it is full. We should, therefore, aim at as great a degree of particularity as the time allotted us, and the variety of topics on which we must touch will allow. Especially is it important that we enter deeply and particularly into every part of Christian experience, and lay on all the minute ramifications and almost imperceptible workings of the pious heart in its various situations, and thus show our hearers to themselves in every point of view. In a word, our public prayers should resemble, as nearly as propriety will allow, the breathings of an humble, judicious, and fervently pious Christian in his private devotions. The prayer of the pulpit differs too much—it should differ as little as possible—from the prayer of the closet. A neglect in this

particular, often renders our performances uninteresting and unacceptable to those whom we should most desire to gratify.

FAITHFULNESS TO EMPLOYERS.

There is no greater mistake a young man can commit than that of being indifferent to the interests of his employer. It is true there are circumstances under which it seems almost impossible to feel an interest in an employer's business; but for all that it is worth a trial. Be faithful in small things; be attentive to your duties; shirk no employment that is not dishonorable; feel that your employer is fairly entitled to every minute of the time which you have agreed to give him for a stipulated remuneration. The wages may be small—too small; but if you have contracted to work for a dollar a week when your work is worth ten, stick to your bargain like a man, until your term of service has expired. It may seem very hard, but it will instill the great principle of being true to your word.

And, besides, you will gain a reputation for faithfulness and integrity and diligence which is worth more to a young person than thousands of silver and gold.

The good friend, who taught a boy the tanner's trade, when he was about to finish his apprenticeship promised to give him a present worth more than a thousand dollars. He carried the young man home and said: "I will give thy present to thy father." And then he turned to the father and said: "He is the best boy that ever I had."

That was the Friend's present, and the father confessed that it was "worth more than a thousand dollars" for a boy to have and to deserve so good a name as that.

A good name is a fortune in itself; a good trade is another. If you earn but little, try to learn a great deal. Your learning may be worth more to you than your earnings. Out of the hundred persons committed to the State's prisons, only three have learned good honest trades. Ninety-seven persons without trades go to State's prisons, where three persons with trades go there.

So wherever you are, try to master your business; determine to know something; attend to what you are taught; and do thoroughly what you do at all. Finish what you begin. Put things back where you find them. Avoid dirt, disorder, and dissipation; resist the devil and submit to God; and, blessed and saved, you shall serve him both now and for ever.—The Christian.

THE ART OF MAKING MONEY.

One great cause of the poverty of the present day, is the failure of many people to appreciate small things. They say if they cannot save large sums, they will not save anything. They do not realize how a daily addition, be it ever so small, will make a large pile. If the young men and women of to-day will only begin, and begin now, to save a little from their earnings, and invest it in some savings bank, and weekly or monthly add to their mite, they will wear a happy smile of content and independence when they reach middle life. Not only the pile itself will increase, but the ability and desire to increase it will soon grow. Let the clerk and tradesman, the laborer and artisan, make now a beginning. Store up some of your force and vigor for future contingency. Let parents teach their children to begin early to save. Begin at the fountain-head to control the stream of extravagance, and then the work will be easy to choose between poverty and riches. Let our youth go in the way of extravagance for fifteen years to come, as they have for fifteen years past, and we shall have a nation of beggars, with a monied aristocracy. Let a generation of such as save small sums be reared, and we shall be free from want. Do not be ambitious for extravagant fortunes, but seek that which is the duty of every man to obtain— independence and a comfortable home. Wealth in sufficient abundance is within the reach of all. It can only be had by one process— saving!—N. J. Mechanic.

THY PRAYERS AND THINE ALMS.

A farmer, whose cribs are full of corn was accustomed to pray that the wants of the needy might be supplied, but when anyone in needy circumstances asked for a little corn he said he had none to spare. One day, after hearing his father pray for the poor and needy, his little son said to him:

"Father, I wish I had your corn."

"Why, my son, what could you do with it?" asked the father.

The child replied, "I would answer your prayers." We can answer our prayers oftener than we think. With regard to the poor, Jesus says, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whosoever ye will ye may do them good." How many answers to prayers depend on our willingness to do good!

"I'M TOO BUSY."

A merchant sat at his office-desk. Various letters were spread before him. His whole being was absorbed in the intricacies of his business.

A zealous friend of religion entered the office.

"I want to interest you a little in a new office for the cause of Christ," said the good man.

"Sir, you must excuse me," replied the merchant. "I'm too busy to attend to that subject now."

"But, sir, iniquity is on the increase among us," said his friend.

"It is? I'm sorry; but I'm too busy at present to do any thing."

"When shall I call again, sir?"

"I cannot tell. I'm very busy. I'm busy every day. Excuse me, sir; I wish you a good morning."

Then, bowing the intruder out of the office, he resumed the study of his papers.

The merchant had frequently repuffed the friends of humanity in this manner. No matter what the object, he was always too busy to listen to their claims. He had even told his minister that he was too busy for any thing but to make money.

But one morning, a disagreeable stranger stepp'd very softly to his side, laying a cold, moist hand upon his brow, and saying:

"Go home with me!"

The merchant laid down his pen; his head grew dizzy; his stomach felt faint and sick; he left the counting-room, went home, and retired to his bed-chamber.

His unwelcome visitor had followed him, and now took his place by the bedside, whispering, ever and anon:

"You must go with me."

A cold chill settled on the merchant's heart; spectres of ships, notes, houses, and lands, flitted before his excited mind. Still his pulse beat slower, his heart heaved heavily, thick films gathered over his eyes, his tongue refused to speak. Then the merchant knew that the name of his visitor was Death!

All other claimants on his attention, except the friends of Mammon, had always found a quick dismissal in the magic phrase; "I am too busy."

Humanity, mercy, and religion had alike begged his influence, means, and attention, in vain; but when death came, the excuse was powerless; he was compelled to have leisure to die.

Let us beware how we make ourselves too busy to secure life's great end. When the excuse rises to our lips, and we are about to say we are too busy to do good, let us remember we cannot be too busy to die.

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.

The strength of the Church has always largely been in its women—from the time when they lovingly ministered to the Saviour, in life and at death, met with the apostles for prayer, prior to the Pentecostal baptism, and were the comforters and helpers of Paul in his missionary labors, down to the present day. They have so lived and worshipped, have so exemplified the virtues of the wife and mother, have so illustrated the beauty of holiness, have so trained for the Church its noblest men, that they have compelled the admiration of the worldling and the sceptic. Many a man has found that the last link which still bound his unbelieving mind to some intellectual faith in Christianity was, the remembrance of his mother's piety, or the daily vision of the purity of his wife. The eulogy of Libanus, pronounced upon the Christian women of the primitive Churches, has lost none of its meaning in this nineteenth century. In chasteness of morals, general intelligence, social culture, self-denying benevolence, and unaffected piety, our Christian women are the glory of the age; and it is at once the honour and the triumph of this missionary work—that is, it is rapidly raising the converted women of heathen lands to a similar level.—Selected.

HOW TO START A PRAYER MEETING.

Let the few hearts that feel the need of warmth gather together, having first, each one, sought the Lord in private. If a regular service cannot be maintained at the church or vestry, let neighbors meet in each others houses. No matter how small the number, let the joint pleading continue. Seize and hold the promise. Pray for that which lies nearest to you first. Let judgement begin at the house of God. Do not be so anxious to follow a particular bill of fare that you shall ignore your most conscious needs. Expect a blessing when you pray. Take it when it comes, and use it for Christ.

Although men are accused for not knowing their own weakness, yet perhaps as few know their own strength. It is in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner knows not of.—Swift.