# The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. E. McLEOD,] "THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST." Peter. [Editor and Proprietor.

Vol. XII.—No. 14. SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 1865. Whole No. 586.


## The Intelligencer.

### LIVING SACRIFICES.

SERMON BY H. GRATTAN GUINNESS.

"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."—Rom. xii. 1.

I have one request to make, before I proceed to address you on the words which I have chosen for this morning's meditation. The request is, that that those of you who are in the habit of lifting up your hearts in prayer to the Lord, will, this morning, while I speak for God to you, speak for yourselves to God; and you may depend upon it, that if, in spirit and in truth, you ask of God those blessings which you need, those blessings you shall receive, "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

God always must be served, and that by all. Did angels refuse to serve Him in heaven? He straightway cast them down to hell. Did man refuse to serve Him, by obedience, in Eden? At the flaming point of the seraphim's sword, He drove him from the garden of Paradise. Now, we are placed in this position with respect to God. God demands that we, as reasonable beings, should render to Him a certain reasonable service; and there are four courses lying open to us. We may refuse to render to God the reasonable service He demands, and attempt to oppose and overcome Him; we may refuse to render Him this service, and attempt to flee from and escape Him; we may refuse to render Him this service, and attempt to endure His wrath; or, lastly, we may submit to Him, and serve Him as we ought. Which of these four courses shall we take? We cannot succeed in the first—we cannot overcome God. What can weakness do before strength? What can such weakness as ours do before such strength as His? We cannot succeed in the second—we cannot escape God. Were we to take the wings of the morning, and flee to the uttermost parts of the earth, or of the sea, behold, we should find God there: were we to climb the ladder Jacob saw in dreams, to heaven, we should find God there: or, were we to descend to the lowest depths of hell, and make our beds amid the blackness of darkness, we should find God there. He besets us behind and before. He compasses us on every side. He knows our rising up, and our lying down. He knows our eating, our drinking, our smiling, our weeping, our laboring, our resting, our living, and our dying; we could as soon escape from ourselves as escape from God. Whether we are saints or sinners, in God we live, move, and have our being; and whether we go to heaven, or to hell, in God we shall live, move, and have our being throughout eternity. Seeing, then, that we cannot succeed in the second thing, can we in the third? Can we endure the wrath of God? Ah, my friends! who among us can lie down in devouring fire? Who among us is prepared to dwell in everlasting torments? Ah! there is nothing left for us but to submit to God. The only course now left us—the only right course—and the only course which a reasonable man with his eyes open would take, is this—to submit, to yield to God, and attempt to perform the reasonable service which He requires at our hands.

Now, what is this reasonable service which God requires? What saith the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of Paul, in the text? These are the words, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that your present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service."

Alas! that I should have to speak to you as I do, dear friends. How different the spirit of the few opening sentences I have just uttered, seems from the spirit of the sweet and tender words of my text! I hardly know what to say about it. If I have spoken thus, I have spoken to those of you who are ungodly, and careless about spiritual things; and I have spoken thus, that I might shew you how God has hedged you in completely and forever, and shew you that the only course which you can possibly take, with advantage to yourselves, is the course pointed out by the Apostle Paul in the text. But having done so—having, I trust, gained your serious attention—having shewn you that it is of unspeakable and infinite importance, that you should act rightly in this matter, I would now fill my mouth with the gentle and persuasive arguments of the blessed apostle, and *beseech you by the mercies of God*, to present your bodies "*a living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

In speaking to you upon the text, then, I will first try to shew you, affectionately and plainly, what your reasonable service is—"Present your bodies a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God;" and after doing so, I will try to persuade you to render God this reasonable service, using as my plea God's mercies to you, beseeching you, "by the mercies of God," to present yourselves living sacrifices to God.

First, then: In dwelling upon the words "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, "I have to point out these two things—the *sacrifice* to be offered, and the *manner* of offering it; and may we all be enlightened from on high to understand these things aright. Now, what is the sacrifice to be offered? It is the *holy living* sacrifice of our *bodies*. Our bodies must be presented to God, and they must be presented holy sacrifices, and living sacrifices. But, ah! how can we do this? How can we present our unholy bodies as holy sacrifices? Are they not unclean? Do they not contain deep, dark fountains of sin and uncleanness? Have they not within them evil hearts, from which flow continually the streams of lust, and pride, and selfishness, and envy, and deceit, and hatred, and all iniquity? And if this is the case, if these bodies, which were created to be temples of God, have been converted into dens of thieves, and habitations of devils, and have become deeply stained and dyed with all manner of guilt and degradation, oh, how can we present them as holy sacrifices to God? How can we dare to lay any such sacrifices upon His altar? And if we dared to do it, how could He accept them? Let me ask you to turn aside for a moment, and see how the priests of old used to act when they brought sacrifices to God's altar to offer them up. Having killed and flayed the animal, they cut it open, and took out all that was unclean and corrupt within; and then, having washed it with pure water, they laid it on the wood upon the altar, and consumed it with fire before the Lord. Brethren, Jesus, our great High Priest, would treat us thus. He would first wash us externally from the dark guilt of all our past transgressions, in His own most precious blood, and then, laying us open, would cut away and remove all that is corrupt within us—all I say, that is corrupt within us—taking away the very heart and entrails of indwelling sin, and purging and purifying us within by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, that thus, being cleansed without and within, we may be laid as holy sacrifices upon the altar, and consumed before the Lord. Before I leave this part of my subject, I would humbly ask you, Have you been thus cleansed by the blood of Christ, and by the Spirit of God; and if so, are you presenting your bodies as holy sacrifices to God? and if not, will you do so from henceforth? Oh, my brethren! the very first thing you should all seek is this sanctification of which I speak. Are you made holy? Oh! are you sanctified by the blood and Spirit of God? What is the use of all your religion if you have not this? There is no salvation without this. I solemnly ask, Are you justified by Christ's blood, and sanctified by God's Spirit? I mean, are your sins forgiven, and your hearts changed? If so, we can proceed together with the text; but if not, we must stop at once, and part here. You cannot advance a step in this way of holiness until you are pardoned and renewed. Oh, come to Jesus! Believe on Him! Remember, it is through the wicket-gate of faith that you must go to the cross. What a gospel I have to preach you! Oh, how free to the very poorest and vilest! I preach to you the gospel, or the glad tidings of the grace, or of the goodness, and love, and mercy of God! The gate I point you to, and bid you take, is the gate of grace! The cross I point you to and bid you seek, is the cross of grace! Oh come empty, and buy, without money, and without price, the wine and milk of the kingdom of God!

"Ho! ye needy, come and welcome!
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief, and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh,
Without money,
Come to Jesus Christ and buy."

And if any of you have come, and have been pardoned and renewed do not let anything I have said about the necessity that this sacrifice should be a holy one, hinder you from freely presenting yourselves to the Lord. Do not mistake my meaning. I have not said that you may not offer yourselves to God unless you are without spot and blameless; for you will, I am persuaded, never be able to offer yourselves like Christ, without spot unto God, until your are freed from your mortal bodies, completely and forever; but this rather, that having been pardoned and renewed, though not perfected in holiness, you should reckoning yourselves "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord," present your bodies a holy sacrifice unto God, which is your reasonable service.

But, besides being holy, the sacrifice must be *entire*. It must be the sacrifice of "*your bodies*." I believe that, by the expression "your bodies," Paul just means *yourselves*. When the lamb was brought to the altar, the body of that lamb was brought, and all that it contained. So, when you bring your bodies to God, you bring your souls and spirits too. Your bodies are like precious caskets containing still more precious jewels. God desires that you bring those caskets, so "fearfully and wonderfully made," with the bright and precious jewels they contain, into the treasury of His temple, and lay them at His feet. Oh, come then, and bring yourselves to God! Come, like the poor widow that Christ commended, and cast your mites into the treasury! your body and your soul! and bring all you *have* as well as all you *are*. Bring all your possessions, bring all your talents, and knowledge, and wealth, and strength, and health, and time, and life—all, all you have, and cast in all. Oh, I do beseech you, keep back nothing? What, can you have become Christians, without learning that ye are not your own? Can ye have felt the preciousness of the blood of Jesus, without learning that ye are bought with a price? Can ye have become followers of Jesus, without learning that ye are God's own? If then ye are not your own, but are bought with a price, and are now God's own, "glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, *which are God's*."

If you want examples of that which I am urging upon you, read the Bible; yea, read just one chapter of it, read the eleventh of Hebrews, and you find them in abundance. Or, look at a poor sinner, a man of like passions with yourself, one who had been a persecutor and injurious, and who considered himself the chief of sinners—look at that man, devoting himself after his conversion, body, soul, and spirit, health and strength, time, life, and all to the service of the adorable Saviour! Look at Paul the apostle presenting himself every day, in the midst of every temptation the flesh, the world, and Satan could bring to bear upon him to hinder him from doing so—presenting himself every day a holy sacrifice to God, and that, from year to year throughout a long life of unspeakable self denial and suffering; and, at last, having fought the wondrous fight against the mighty and dark host of deadly enemies upon every side—having struggled with and overcome Satan, the world, and himself, his three strongest, most watchful and most deadly enemies, and having finished, in presence of the cloud of witnesses, the course which God has set before him, declaring himself "*ready to be offered!*" Oh, riches of the grace of God? Oh, what cannot God's free grace do for the vilest sinner!—"*ready to be offered*," on the block or at the stake—a bleeding martyr, or a burning sacrifice to God! Or, nobler far! look at Jesus! But here my tongue fails me. No human lips can properly describe the offering of this sacrifice. Ah! brethren, here we are overwhelmed. Here is the only *real* sacrifice which has ever been offered up to God! Oh! these words, "*who gave Himself for us*," no man, no angel, can ever fully expound or even comprehend them! "who gave Himself for us!"—you ask for an example; well, then, here it is! "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps,"—"who His own self bare our sins, in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness!" Oh, that through His death, being dead unto sin, by His life, and following his example, we may live unto righteousness, presenting our bodies holy, living, and acceptable sacrifices to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

II. Having shewn you the sacrifice to be offered, I would now say a few words about the *manner* of offering it. I gather two things from the text about this: the first is, that you are to offer yourselves *freely*, and the second, that you are to offer yourselves *daily*. "I beseech you," says the apostle, "that ye *present*" yourselves. Do not wait to be obliged to come to God's altar, but come of your own accord, and lay yourselves upon it—"present" yourselves. Now, the principle of all this is that of love. If you love God as you should, you will present yourselves to God. Oh, when will you see it? He wants you to give yourselves freely to Him, *freely* to do it. Do you not understand the difference between giving freely and giving grudgingly? Suppose you have a friend who is poor, and that friend comes to you to ask for a small sum of money, and you have the means of giving it. If you love your money better than you love your friend, and act upon that feeling, you will keep your money and let your friend want. If you love your money as much as you love your friend, you will, most likely, halt and waver doubtfully for a while, and if at last you give the money, you will give it grudgingly. But, if you love your friend better than you love your money, far better than you love it, and act under the influence of that love, you will give the money freely—you will neither refuse nor grudge the gift. Now, we beseech you, by the mercies of God, that ye neither refuse to give yourselves to God nor grudge to give yourselves to God, but give yourselves freely in the fulness of affection to the Lord, to be laid as sacrifices upon His altar. You remember how the apostle says elsewhere, "*Yield yourselves* to God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." And you remember, too, how the Lord Jesus rejoiced to give up His body, His soul, His will, and His life to the Father, saying, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O God!" My dear friends, all you want to enable you to do this, is to have the love of God shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is freely given to all believers. It was Christ's love, His love that passes knowledge, which made Him delight to do God's will in this, and in all things. And only love can lead you to follow His example.

"Love makes our willing feet
In swift obedience move;
And new supplies each hour we meet
While pressing on to God."

Besides offering yourselves freely, offer yourselves *daily*. Mark, the Apostle Paul does not say, "I beseech you to present yourselves a dead sacrifice," but "a *living* sacrifice." Now, what is this but the *daily* offering ourselves up to God? Our entire history as Christians should be one of self-sacrifice. Oh, how shall I speak to you about this! Selfishness and self-sacrifice! What two things more unlike each other, and more opposed to each other? Selfishness! why it is the very soul of sin! Self-sacrifice, love! why this the very soul of righteousness! Why, what is pride but self-esteem? What are sloth and lust but self-indulgence? and so on through the long catalogue of our crimes. Yea, selfishness is the very soul of misery as well as of sin. It is the soul of discord, and strife, and envy, and hatred, and all uncharitableness; whereas, love is the soul of peace, and rest, and fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore! My dear friends, the more I think of all this, the more I am amazed and confounded at myself and the world. Why, we have all been acting as if the very opposite of this were the case. What do we mean? are we in our senses? I am almost struck dumb with amazement and grief at my own conduct, and the conduct of all, without exception, around me. Oh, the depths of the deceitfulness of Satan! and oh, the greater depths of the deceitfulness of all our hearts! They deceive us—we are befooled, and misled, and destroyed by them. O world! world! and O Christians! Christians! and O my heart! my heart! What mean ye? There is the broad road of self-seeking, self-dependence, self-righteousness, self-esteem, and self-indulgence! Down that road go innumerable multitudes; but peace is not there—happiness is not there—life is not there—honor is not there—glory is not there. And there is the narrow path of self-denial, self-renunciation, self-forgetfulness, and self-sacrifice, and few there be that find it; but peace and happiness, life and honour, glory and immortality, have all found it and are there! and why are we not there with them? Oh, the Lord have mercy upon and help us! Look, I beseech you, look at the example of Christ! Was selfishness in Him? Selfishness! I know not whether to laugh or to weep at the thought of such a question! *Selfishness in Him!* Is THERE DARKNESS IN GOD? Selfishness in Him? What say His humiliations, and temptations, and pains, and persecutions, and death in answer? Selfishness in Him? Did He ever weep a tear for Himself? or breathe a repining sigh over His own sorrows? Were not His tears and His sighs for others? Did He not weep when others wept, and rejoice to wipe away the tears of others rather than His own? Selfishness in Him! Were not the wants and miseries of others the burden of His prayers? Did He not devote all He had, all, all down to His dying prayers, His last breath, to others? Was not His great life-motto this, "It is more blessed to give than to receive?" Selfishness in Him! Bethlehem, and Nazareth, and Olivet, and Gethsemane, and Calvary, all, all deny it! He was a living sacrifice. He was a whole burnt-offering. He was consumed for man upon the altar of God. Did you ever consider how completely Christ was given up to God during his life? *His words* were not His own. He spoke His Father's words as He said, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me;" and again, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." *His works* were not His own. He did His Father's works, as he said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me;" and again, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work;" and again, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." And *His will* was not His own. He did His Father's will, as he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me;" and again, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me," and again, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

Oh, what a history of self-sacrifice his history is! the history of him, who, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich?"—the history of him who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation;"—the history of him who though he was "the brightness" of his Father's "glory," and "the express image of his person," took upon him "the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men;"—"the history of him who, though "all the angels of God" worshipped him, "humbled himself and became obedient unto death,"—the history of him who, though he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," "endured the cross;" and who, though he was "the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," was "made a curse for us," being crucified between two malefactors on Calvary!

Oh, look at him who offered himself a living sacrifice to God—who gave up everything—who kept back nothing; but after pouring out his prayers for the needy, and his tears for the miserable "poured out his soul unto death" for the sinful, and thus "gave himself for us;" and learn, that if any man will be his disciple, he must "*deny himself*, and take up his cross daily, and follow him!" O, dear friends! this it is which the Apostle Paul beseeches us, by the mercies of God, to do. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." Let me try to explain this still further, and press it still more earnestly upon you. When a lamb was brought by the Jews of old to be offered in sacrifice, it was first cleansed, then bound, then burned. Now that you may be *living* sacrifices, it is necessary that you should be *daily cleansed, daily bound*, and *daily burned*. Now, I beseech you, seek to be daily cleansed. Remember that God desires a pure sacrifice, and you are daily being defiled; therefore, daily wash in the fountain always open to you. I know that you were cleansed when you were converted; but I also know that you are not yet "clean every whit;" you were then made new creatures, but not made perfect. Daily, then, go to the mercy seat, and there—oh, how shall I say it!—there allow Christ to wash your very feet, and there present yourselves thus freshly purified to God! And I beseech you seek to be daily bound. Before Abraham lifted the knife to slay Isaac, he bound him; and Isaac was a willing captive, he submitted to be bound, and would have consented to die too, if such had been the will of his father, and of his God. In all this he was but the type of Christ, who submitted to be bound and slain for our sakes. The solemn truth is, you cannot endure the pains of a slow and agonising death upon the altar of God, unless you are held down to that altar by the cords of some mighty constraining influence. Oh, be bound to it by the blessed cords of love! Let the love of Christ constrain you. Judge thus, that "if one died for all, then were all dead; and he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again." And when the sinful desires of the flesh, and the temptations of Satan lead you to struggle to be free—when the flames kindling around you, and consuming the old lusts of your body and spirit, so pain you as almost to prevail with you to flee and leave God's altar empty—then, I say, then think of Christ's words, "*If ye love me*, keep my commandments;" and yielding to the love of Christ, it shall keep you bound amid the flames, until these "light afflictions, which endure but for a moment," being over, you inherit "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Ah, my friends! these are the chains which bound Peter in his dungeon at Jerusalem, and Paul in his prison-house at Rome!—these are the cords which have bound such countless sufferers to the rack, and such innumerable martyrs to the stake! These were not bound in prisons and dungeons, and to racks and stakes, by the cords and chains of men—nay, but by the invisible "cords" of Divine love, and the irresistible "bands" of the God-man, Christ Jesus! "The love of Christ" constrained them, and they counted not their lives dear to them, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry of faith, of suffering, and of love, which they had received of the Lord Jesus. Oh that we too may be daily bound by the love of Christ to the altar! But besides being daily cleansed, and daily bound, we must be *daily burned*. You know what a burnt-offering is; well, we must be burnt-offerings—yea, if possible, like Christ, we must be "whole burnt-offerings." Now let me beseech you, gather all you have, and burn it all in God's service. You have possessions—burn these, pile them up high upon God's altar, and let them flame away. Do not throw them away upon yourself; do not waste them in vanities; but burn them in the Lord's service; you understand me, spend them all for him. You have time—light it, I beseech you, as it sweeps past you, and let it burn like a stream of fire; burn every hour of it, and every minute of it, in the service of God. You have a body—lay it upon the wood; there let its strength and substance gradually consume away to the end of life; burn it, hands, heart, brain and all; burn it in God's service. You have a soul—bring it to the altar; it will burn better and brighter than all the rest put together; there lay it upon the fire God has lighted. And when your possessions have all been consumed, and nought is left of them but worthless ashes—and when your time has burned down to its latest hours, and its last flickering moments are gone out—and when the strength and substance of your body has been consumed, and the feeble glow of its last embers die away—then, from amid the smouldering remains of your burnt sacrifice, like the angel Manoah saw ascending out of the flame of fire, from the altar to heaven, shall your spirit go burning upwards to God, thenceforth to burn with quenchless and eternal glory, upon the high and holy altar of his everlasting temple! Oh, this is to be living sacrifices!—living sacrifices!—living sacrifices!—holy and acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

And now, having shewn you briefly what your reasonable service is, I would in conclusion, "beseech you by the mercies of God"—to perform it. The words of the apostle from which I address you are these—"*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." Here Paul beseeches you in person. Listen to him. He says, "I beseech you." It is as if he had said—"I, who was once a persecutor and injurious—I, who have been washed, and sanctified, and justified, by the blood of Christ and the Spirit of God—I, who have been called to be an apostle of the Lord Jesus—I, who have seen the Son of God—I, who have been caught up to Paradise and have heard there unspeakable words not lawful for men to utter—I, who through grace have labored more abundantly than others, watching for souls night and day with prayers and tears,—I, who through grace have been made a partaker of Christ's sufferings—who through the riches of the grace of God have been shewn what it is to suffer 'great things' for Christ's name sake; who have suffered hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness; who have been in weariness, in painfulness, in watchings and in perils among the heathen, among mine own countrymen, among robbers, among false brethren, in the city, in the sea, in shipwrecks, and in the deep; who have been beaten with rods, imprisoned, scourged, stoned, hated, and counted the filth and offscouring of all things—I, who count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, who have suffered for him whom I love the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win him, and be found in him, and know him, and know the mighty power and the blessed fellowship of his sufferings, death and resurrection—I, who count not my life dear unto me so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord Jesus; who look and long for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who desire to depart, and be with Christ which is far better, and who wait for the blessed hope of Christ's coming, who shall change my vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and shall reunite me to those I have loved and mourned for, who have gone before, and shall change my robe of sackcloth for garments of glory, and my crown of shame and of contempt for a crown of martyrdom, and a crown of righteousness, and a crown of exceeding and eternal joy—I, your brother, your friend, your father, your servant for Christ's sake, who will gladly spend and be spent for you all, who watch for your souls as one who must give an account, who sorrow when you sorrow, who rejoice when you rejoice, who weep when you weep, who love you more than tongue can tell, who pray for you without ceasing, and who count you my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of Jesus Christ;—I, Paul, beseech you, 'by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service!'" O brethren, what an appeal!

It is an appeal from the altar of God—it is an appeal from one who was himself, through the riches of the grace of God, a living sacrifice—it is an appeal from a man of like passions with ourselves, who labored and suffered for Christ, perhaps, more than any other sin-forgiven man ever labored and suffered either before or since; and who addresses us as brethren, as his brethren in the Lord, his flesh and blood in Christ Jesus; and who beseeching, not commanding, not even exhorting, but beseeching us by the mercies of God, prays us to present ourselves a living sacrifice to God. Oh, let me beseech you to listen to this appeal! What! was this man a mad enthusiast! Oh, holy madness! oh, heavenly enthusiasm! would to God we were all such madmen and enthusiasts! Oh, where upon the face of the earth is this high, holy, noble Christianity? Where upon the face of the earth are there to be found such self-denying, self-forgetful, heavenly enthusiasts, at the present day? Brethren, though we may not have met them, I believe the Lord has his seven thousand hid, who have never bowed the knee to Baal! I believe he has his seven thousand hid, who, though in labors and in sufferings less abundant than the blessed Apostle Paul, are, nevertheless, bound to his altar as living sacrifices! May there soon be seven thousand times seven thousand! Yes, and may we be numbered with them! O, dear brethren! it is the voice of God, through Paul his servant, that calls you to this—come, then, let us obey, and let none of us henceforth live to himself, but to the Lord, that whether we live or die we may be the Lord's.

And now, let me ask you, did you ever observe the word "therefore" in the text? Did you ever feel the force of it? Paul might have said, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God," but, instead of this, he says, "I beseech you, *therefore*, brethren, by the mercies of God." Does not that word "therefore" link this verse to the eleventh, tenth, ninth, and eighth chapters, in fact to every one of the first eleven chapters of the Epistle? And are not the mercies of God which he pleads with us, the mercies of which he speaks to us through the whole of the first eleven chapters? First, Paul preaches to us our sin and ruin, and then the grace of God, and our full, and free, and everlasting salvation; and then, by these mercies—these which he proclaims—beseeches us to give ourselves to God.

Let us look back, dear friends, through the Epistle, for the mercies of which he speaks. First, mark how he points out our sin and ruin. "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Destruction and misery are in their ways: and the ways of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." Thus, "every mouth is stopped," and all the world becomes "guilty before God." Read the first, second, and third chapters, and you will see how he lays these things before us in the most solemn manner.

Having done so, he now unfolds the mystery of our salvation through the riches of the grace of God. He shews us that "we are justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus—that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law—that our iniquities are forgiven, or sins covered, and our sins no more imputed to us—that, being justified by Christ's blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him—that, receiving abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, we shall reign in life by Him—that, where our sins abounded, God's grace doth much more abound—that grace reigns in us, through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord—that we are dead unto sin and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord—that sin shall not have dominion over us—that we are servants of righteousness—that there is now no condemnation to us, we being in Christ Jesus—that we are freed from the law of sin and death—that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us—that we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit—that the Spirit of God dwells in us—that Christ is in us—that our bodies are dead because of sin—that our bodies shall yet be quickened by the indwelling Spirit—that we are led by the Spirit of God—that we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father—that the Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God, that we are heirs of God, that we are joint-heirs with Christ, that we shall be glorified with Christ—that our present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with our future glory—that we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God—that the Spirit helps our infirmities—that the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered—that God, who searches the hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for us according to his will—that all things work together for our good—that, having foreknown, and predestinated, and called, and justified us, God will also glorify us—that none can be against us—that, having given Christ for us, God will, with him, freely give us all things—that none shall lay anything to our charge—that—it is God who justifies us—that none shall separate us from the love of Christ—that, amid tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, and slaughter, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us—that neither death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord—that God has made known the riches of his glory on us, the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory—that God calls us beloved—that we are called the children of the living God—and that the "gifts and calling of God are without repentance,"—and then, in an ecstasy of holy and heavenly enthusiasm, filled with the Spirit of the Most High God, uplifted and carried away with wonder and admiration, unable any longer to restrain the swelling flood of love, and joy, and gratitude and adoration, he pours out the mighty utterance—"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: *to whom be* GLORY FOR EVER!"

And now that the Apostle Paul has, as it were, carried you away unto an exceeding high mountain, and shewn you from its summit all the kingdom of grace, and the glory of it—now that he has, as it were, bid you look round upon the entire scene, and said to you—"Behold there in the distance the everlasting hills of this kingdom's decrees and covenants! Behold yonder the unfathomable mines of its deep counsels! Behold here winding through the midst the pure and shining rivers of its peace! Behold there the bright and holy city of this kingdom's inhabitants! Look at all this! Mark the brightness, and the peacefulness, and the holy glory of the broad and everlasting kingdom of the grace of God! Lo! all is yours! and ye are Christ's! and Christ is God's!" Now that he has, as it were, thus spoken, he turns to you, and with a look of earnest tender love, laying his hand gently upon you, and he says, "I have a request to make—I wish to ask you for something—not for myself, but for another—for God; see what God has given you! He has given you *His salvation!* Look at all these! These are *the mercies of God!* and he has given them to you! I beseech you *therefore* brethren, *by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service!*"

Ah, dear brethren, I know not what to add to this. If the sight of God's mercies, and such a sight as that which the Apostle Paul gives you in the first eleven chapters of his Epistle to the Romans—if this will not move you to present yourselves living sacrifices to God, no words of mine, I fear, would be of any avail to lead you to do it. Let me most humbly ask, yea, let me affectionately *beseech* you to look again at the long and glorious pathway of mercies, at the vast and holy temple of mercies, at the broad and shining sea of mercies, at the unmeasured and eternal kingdom of mercies, which he describes in these inspired pages! Look again and again at "the mercies of God!" If you are unwilling to turn just now to the Bible, that you may read of them there in the chapters I refer to, then look to the few which I have mentioned, read over slowly and ponder them—think, oh think, these things are real! are no cunningly devised fables; but are the things of God, and the things which make for your peace; and having considered them, and wondered at them, and loved and thanked God for them, come to the resolve, the solemn prayerful resolve, that from this day, henceforth, until God calls you away to your eternal home, you will strive to be living sacrifices—to be daily, in all things, on to your dying hours, yea, up to the very gates of heaven, living sacrifices, God helping you—living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

If any of you have made the resolve to present yourselves to God as living sacrifices, I would now shew you something in the text which will encourage you to keep that resolve. The text declares that this holy and living sacrifice is "*acceptable to God*." Now, my dear friends, for a moment or two think of the meaning of these words. I believe that many of yet have only looked at one side of the text. You have examined the side that turn towards man; now look at the other side that turns towards God. I believe the view that many of you have of the whole thing is just this. You see the altar, you see the wood upon it. You see the cords for binding the sacrifice. You see the fire for burning it. You see the sacrifice that is to be offered. Yea, you even see the sacrifice laid on the wood; bound with cords, and burned. But that is all you see. Lift up your eyes, then, and look beyond the altar at the temple! The altar of burnt-offerings is but a small part of the temple. It stands in the outside court. Why stand gazing at that altar? Look into the temple! Behold the holy place with its bread, and light, and incense! and look through the torn veil into the most holy place, with its mercy-seat, and great High Priest, and everlasting glory! This is the sanctuary and dwelling place of God! While you stand therefore, offering your sacrifice upon the altar in the outer court, let your thoughts rise to Him who sits upon the mercy-seat, in the most holy place, *accepting it*. And that you may understand what God's thoughts are about your sacrifice, and know how acceptable it is to Him, turn to His own Word, and read what He has said about it. Let us look into His Word and see. Does he bid you offer your body? What says the Bible about that body? It says, it is "bought with a price"—a "member of Christ"—and a "temple of the Holy Ghost." It says the body is "for the Lord," the Lord is "for the body"—and the body is "God's." Offer it, then, a holy sacrifice, and it will be acceptable to God. Does He command you to offer both body and spirit? What says the Bible about this? It would have you cleansed "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit"—"holy both in body and spirit"—and glorifying God "in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"—for it says, "ye are not your own," but "God's." Offer, then, your body and your spirit! Enoch, the seventh from Adam, offered himself thus to God, and obtained this testimony, that "*he pleased God*." Abraham, the father of the faith-