

Surrender

by Mary Peckham

The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering one's life to God, presenting one's body as a living sacrifice, and yielding to His mercy and love.

Duration: 47:36

Scripture: Romans 11:33, Romans 12:1-2, Romans 12:10-11, Romans 12:15, Romans 12:20

Topics: "Surrender"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the boldness of the appeal to present one's body to God. He urges individuals to come to God in light of His great mercy and make a personal presentation of everything they have been bought with. The preacher highlights the importance of sincerity in worship, cautioning against singing empty words without true meaning. He also emphasizes the significance of maintaining right relationships with others, as seen in the commandments. The basis of the appeal is rooted in the depth and length of God's love demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The preacher shares a powerful testimony of a missionary who was deeply moved by a choir singing 'I surrender all' while he was struggling on the mission field. The appeal to present one's body as a living sacrifice to God is both bold and reasonable, calling for a complete surrender of body, soul, and spirit.

Transcript

We turn together to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans. Epistle of Paul to the Romans and chapter 11, verse 25. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in.

And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, they shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes.

But as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father's sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief.

Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. Oh, 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, who hath been his counselor, or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again.

For of him, and through him, and to him are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen.

I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies, our living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say through the grace given unto me to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one member is one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy let us prophesy according to the proposal of faith, or ministry let us wait on our ministering, or he that teacheth on teaching, or he that exhorteth on exhortation, he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity, he that ruleth with diligence, he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation.

Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor, preferring one another, not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. We'll end at verse 11 of chapter 12, and may God bless to us this reading from his word.

Shall we unite our hearts again in prayer? Our Father, we do thank thee for this prayer advance, and we pray, Lord, that truly it may be an advance, and that the enemy might be routed. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ be exalted, as thou dost bring us each one to that place where thou dost want us to be. We know, Lord, that the enemy, as a roaring lion, seeketh whom he may devour.

We know, heavenly Father, that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places. But we pray thee, Lord, that as we shelter beneath the blood of the cross, that thou wilt give to us the victory, and help us, Lord, to walk in that victory, and lead us on just that bit further tonight, as we close in with thee, and as thou dost close in with us, for thou hast said, draw near unto me, and I will draw nigh unto you. So, Father, we commit ourselves to thee, speaker and hearer alike, and we pray thee that the name that is above every name may be honored in our meditation.

We ask it for Jesus' sake. Amen. Now, I want us to come this evening to Romans chapter 12 and verse 1, well known, I'm sure, to us all, where the apostle is pleading with the Romans and saying to them, I beseech you, therefore, brethren or sisters, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

A wonderful verse, preceded by the exposition of the word concerning the Israelites and what God has done in them, and how God has judged them in order that he might bring in the Gentiles. And then, at the end of that chapter, he seems to cry out, O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, in his dealings with his own, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. Now, the question that comes to my mind when I read the first verse of Romans chapter 12 is this.

He is speaking to the Lord's people. The question that comes to me is this, why does he have to plead with them? Why does he have to beseech them? Is he not saying in effect to us that at least some of these Roman Christians were not yielded to God? If he says, I beseech you that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service, am I wrong in concluding that he is saying in effect they haven't done that? They haven't come to that point where they have yielded themselves unreservedly to God. If that is not true, then why did he plead? Why did he say, I beseech you therefore, brethren? I plead with you therefore, brethren.

Oh, what a question is that. Why was it that the Roman Christians were holding back? And how can we, the people of God, in the light of the mercies of God, how can I hold back anything from them? After all, I'm not my own. I've been bought.

But isn't he saying in effect that, yes, they have been bought, but they haven't recognized that. And so they haven't yielded themselves unto God. They have understood that Christ died for them and they have been saved, but they haven't understood what it means to be identified with Christ and to die with him, to hand over the reins to the Lord.

Now I want us to consider, first of all, the basis of his appeal to the Roman Christians. It's very simple. The basis of his appeal is the mercy of God.

He says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies. That is the plea, that is the basis of his appeal, the mercies of God. Let us consider the mercy of God.

Let us consider, first of all, that man's greatest need is that God should have mercy upon him. That is man's greatest need, that God should have mercy upon him. Because as he is by nature, he's a rebel against God.

He's at enmity with God. He's fighting God. By nature, he's in darkness.

He's a child of darkness. By nature, he is cut off from God. By nature, he is anti-God.

He might think he isn't, but he is anti-God, because the God of this world hath blinded the minds of those that believe not the gospel of Christ. Man's greatest need, the greatest need of America today, of Scotland today, is that God should have mercy upon them. We sing, will thou not in mercy turn, turn and be our life again? That thy people's hearts might be turned to thee again.

And was that not what the publican cried when he came into the presence of God? He said, God, be merciful to me, the sinner. God, have pity upon me. God, have mercy upon me.

And the Lord said he went down to his house justified more than the Pharisee who came. The Pharisee lifted up his eyes and he says, I thank thee, O God, that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, and so on. I fast twice in the week.

I give tithes of all that I possess, and it is I, I, I all the way. But the publican, he would not as much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but he smote upon his breast and he said, God, be merciful to me, the sinner. So he went to his home justified.

Man's greatest need is that God should have mercy upon him. And then we look at this, that God's great demonstration of mercy was a costly, all so costly demonstration, the mercy of God in Christ. Because

God in his mercy prepared a sacrifice, made a way in order that man should have mercy, in order that they might have this great gift of God.

God gave his only Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. He is the only bridge to God. He is the only way to God.

I am the way, he said, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. The great CH Spurgeon used to say that he built his study on Mount Calvary.

In other words, he lived under the shadow of the cross. He never wanted to forget what the cross meant to him and how through the cross he was saved, through the mercy of God. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercy of God, all the mercy of God, under an eastern sky a man went forth to die for me.

Thorn crowned his blessed head, blood stained his every tread. Cross laden, on he sped for me. He was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. The justice meant of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed. I recall the prayer of a 16-year-old boy during the revival in the Hebrides.

As he prayed, he broke down and he cried out. As he viewed the cross, he said, oh my God, I hear the thud, thud, thud of the nails as they are hammered into his hands and into his feet. And oh my God, he cried, it was my hand that held the hammer.

It was my hand that held the hammer. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, the mercy of God in Christ, that ye present your bodies. Here is the basis of the appeal.

Here is the reason for the appeal. Here is the presentation of the depth and length and height of the love of God in Christ. Here is the place from which the apostle is speaking under the shadow of the cross where Christ stained the creation of his hands with his blood in order that a bridge might be built between my soul and God.

The basis of the appeal. What about the boldness of the appeal? He says, I beseech you that you present your body. That you present it.

Have you done that? That you come to God in the light of all that he has done for you, in the light of God's great mercy to you in Christ. That you come, you yourself, as an individual, come and make a presentation to God of that which he has bought. In other words, that you come and give to him everything.

Oh, we sing it, don't we? Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love. Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for thee. Sometimes we sing lies to God because we don't even mean what we're singing.

I remember being at the Prairie Bible Institute, speaking at their spring conference in 1965, and a missionary testified, and I'll never forget how that missionary testified. He was home on furlough, but his furlough was long, long overdue, and he told how one day he was sitting, listening to a radio program from America, out there on the mission field. He was weary and he was tired, and his furlough, as I said, was overdue, but there was no one to take his place.

And then over the air came the music, the choir singing, I surrender all, I surrender all, all to thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all. And the missionary said that he went to the radio and he turned it off and

he burst into tears as he thought of all these young people, these lovely young people in that choir way back in America, singing, I surrender all, comfortably, wherever they were singing from. And here he was, shattered on the mission field, and no one to take his place.

I've never forgotten that testimony. It was most moving. I beseech you that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice to God.

The boldness of the appeal, but it's a reasonable appeal, as he says later on, is saying in effect, come and yield yourselves, body, soul, and spirit, give it right to yourself and hand it over unconditionally to God. Maybe you're not at that place yet. Maybe you've never come to the realization of what it costs the Holy One to bear away your sin.

And maybe you need to go back again to these portions of scripture where we read the story of the cross, where we read of him in Gethsemane with a sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling from his brow. Maybe you need to go again to read how he emerged from the garden, how his disciples pursued him, how he stood alone in Pilate's judgment hall, how they took the scourge and lacerated his back, how they took the crown of thorns that they had woven, and how they put it not gently, but how they pulled it down over his brow, and how the blood flowed, and how he turned to Peter, turned his eyes upon him, Peter who had denied him, how he struggled up the Via Dolorosa, bowed and bent under the awful weight of the cross on his already lacerated back, and how he set his face steadfastly, and all for me, and all for him, how he was laid out upon that cross, and how the nails, not neat nails as we know nails, but rough nails were put into his hands and his feet, he was naked on the cross, and how the cross was lifted up and plunged into that hole that was made for it, and the weight of his body pulled on these nails, how the Son of God cried out and said, I thirst, how he cried out on the cross in Psalm 22, it speaks of him roaring, roaring with the pain and the agony of his sufferings, and not only his sufferings physically, but his suffering in his soul, how the Son was blotted out, how the earth, the creation of his hands quaked, how the soldiers cried and said he saved others, himself he cannot save, how they mocked him, how they railed on him, and how finally he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, crying out, it is finished, tetelepsi, one word in Greek, tetelepsi, it is finished, finished, it is done, every jot and every tittle has been fulfilled, the blood has been shed, the lamb which was slain from the foundation of the world, is it a big thing that he asks you and I to do, to come and present our bodies to him, to present every member of our body to him, to be at his disposal, oh the boldness of the appeal, present your bodies, a living sacrifice, it's so easy to give to God dead sacrifices, isn't it?

We can give our money, we can give gifts of all kinds, and we seek to pam, pam him off as it were, with things, things, things, that's not what he wants, though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burnt and have not charity, I am nothing, absolutely nothing, though I have all faiths so that I could remove mountains and have not charity, and this yielding of myself, the motive behind it is, it's an expression of love, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, and my all, what an inestimable privilege to give over to God, my hands, my feet, my will, my love, my poor, at thy feet it's treasure store, take myself, and I will be ever only all for thee, a living sacrifice, not a dead one, but a living one.

When a farmer goes to sow seed in his field, he doesn't sow chaff, he doesn't sow rotten seed, he takes the best of the seed, and he takes it out to the field, and he sows it there in expectation of a harvest.

When I was a youngster, we used to plant potatoes on my grandfather's plot, each one in the village had about six acres, there was no modern machinery at all, and you had to dig every furrow of that field with an instrument that we used to dig up the potatoes, and I used to complain to grandpa and say, oh grandpa, my back is so sore, and he would say to me, he had a great sense of humor, he would say to me, well don't straighten it, Mary, till you come out at the other end of the furrow, and by that time you weren't able hardly to straighten it. But when I was saved, and I was digging in these furrows, I remember one day the tears rolling down my cheek as God spoke to me, and as I dug up that beautiful nest of potatoes, and found in the middle of that nest, you know what, just a wrinkled old skin of the potato that had been planted there. Its life had escaped, it had died, yes, but fruit is life given away, and so there was the fruit, but it was gone, and Jesus said, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

So the living seed is planted, and it is covered, and it is out of sight, and it is forgotten, until the glorious harvest comes, revealing the fruit of that life that has escaped, and that has been given away. Present your bodies to God a living sacrifice. The commonplace word in the church today is not sacrifice, but compromise, and sacrifice has fled from the vocabulary of the normal Christian.

The missionary said sacrifice is the ecstasy of giving the best you have to the one you love the most. We think of sacrifice as being something painful. We think of it as being something costly.

I remember one time in my Christian experience, and I was now out in the work of God for quite some time, and I had a friendship, and I thought this was a friendship in the plan and purpose of God for me, because this young man was going into the ministry, and I thought that he was all that I could wish for, but God was dealing in my life in strange ways. Oh, I had given my all to God. I had held back nothing, but this has come now into my life, and I was going to be diverted from my original call, yes, but it was all the Lord's service, and it was all the Lord's work, and one morning at four o'clock, I remember it well, four o'clock in the morning, God woke me up, and he put his finger on this in my life, and he said, I want you now to put your affections on the altar.

You know, that is the hardest thing to ask. All other things, yes, that's all right, but when it comes to the seat of the affections, it's a difficult, difficult thing to put them on the altar. I knew what God was saying to me.

He was saying to me, in effect, Mary, this is not it. I had set my heart on it, but he was saying to me, no, no, Mary, this is not it, but why? I've been in thy work, and I've given everything, and then I said, it's very hard. It's difficult.

It's costly, and it seemed as if the Lord brought before me a vision, not a vision as I see you there, but in my mind, I saw Abraham with Isaac going up the mount, and the question God asked me was this, did Abraham explain to Isaac what he was going to do? I knew what God meant. I said no, and then the scene seemed to change, and instead of Abraham and Isaac and that altar, I saw the Lord Jesus Christ on the altar, on the cross, and the tears flowed. My pillow was wet with my tears, and I cried out in my heart, oh God, forgive me, forgive me for thinking that this is a costly thing to do, and I remember later on in the morning, you know, you remember these incidents, and you never forget the places where God speaks to you.

I was sitting at the breakfast table, and I still remember that little boiled egg that was sitting in front of me, and when I bowed my head, I said, oh God, you can have every bit that there is of Mary Moss, every bit. I

beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present a living sacrifice, a living sacrifice, a sacrifice that is alive and conscious and knows what it's all about, consciously aware of the cost, if you like, of what it involves for you. You present your bodies a living sacrifice, and then he says, hold.

Didn't Jesus say, when you come to the altar, and they remember us, that thy brother hath aught against thee, or thy sister. Go and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift at the altar. In other words, you're not right with your brother, you're not right with your sister.

I can't accept you. I can't accept your sacrifice. Why? Because he is a holy God.

And listen, friends, you cannot be right with God and wrong with somebody else. Now, take that to heart. You cannot be right with God and in a wrong relationship to somebody else.

You can see that in the commandments. The first four have to do with our relationship with God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image. Honor thy father and thy mother. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

The last four, the last six, have to do with our relationship to others. And the Lord brought them all together, and he says, love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. It's as simple as that.

Right with God, right with your neighbor. So if you come to the altar to bring your sacrifice to God, and there you remember, now it doesn't say that you've got something against your brother or your sister. It says that they have something against you, that they may have seen some inconsistency in your life through your behavior.

Then you must go and be reconciled. I remember in that season of revival in the island of North Uist, one night there was a bit of commotion in the aisle after the service was over, and we looked to see what the commotion was all about. And there were these two women, they were blocking the aisle.

They were standing with their arms around one another. The one was saying, it was all my fault, and the other one was saying, no, but it was all my fault. These two were sisters-in-law.

They were living over the wall from each other and had been spoken to each other for 15 years. And in a moment, God met with them, and there they were making right with one another and realizing you cannot, oh, you cannot be right with God and wrong with others. And so he says, a living sacrifice, holy, not blemished, not blemished, but holy.

Oh, you've got to put things right with God before you come with your gift to the altar, because he cannot, he cannot accept a defiled sacrifice. There must be cleansing, first of all, holy and because holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. Oh, don't insult God with an unholy sacrifice.

The children of Israel, you remember that they brought the animals that were blemished to God. Just give them to God. They're not much use to us, so give them to God.

No, the very best, without blemish, without spot, as Jesus was, and I am without blemish and without spot. So the sacrifices in the Old Testament had to be without blemish and without spot, and they had to be

holy. And so in this appeal from the apostle to the Romans, he's saying, he says, present your bodies, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

It's not unreasonable. It's not something big that God is asking. The basis of the appeal, the mercy of God, the boldness of the appeal, a complete sacrifice.

And we may add the bait of the appeal. What is the bait? That ye might prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God. You know, some people are afraid of the will of God.

They're afraid of what God will do with their lives if they give their lives over to God, because after all, they've got plans and schemes of their own as to what should happen with their lives, their careers, their education, their marriage, and their family, and there's all sorts of things to consider. And well, what is God going to do if I hand over the reins to Him? He says, the will of God that you've got to prove is good, and it's the best for you. It is just tailor-made for your life.

It is tailor-made for you. It is good, and it is perfect. There's no deficiency in it in any ways, whether really, and yes, sometimes He leads you in the pathway of suffering, and even that is good.

Sometimes He leads you in an uphill way, and that is perfect. And the amazing thing is that when you are totally and fully yielded to God, the will of God becomes acceptable. You can say yes to it with all your heart, because it is the will of God.

The will of God is good, and it's perfect, and it is acceptable, and it's the safest place in all the world for you to be, because it is dangerous to be out of the will of God, and it is dangerous to be out of step with God. 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. And He says, be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

I sometimes think, you know, this means that God is going to reprogram our mind using modern technology, or terminology, I should say. He reprograms our mind. We don't see things the same as we did before we presented ourselves to God.

The mind, oh the mind, the mind can be a dangerous object, but the mind needs to be renewed. By the renewing of your mind, God reprograms us to a place where we accept His will and accept it with all our hearts. And we prove it from day to day, from moment to moment, and wherever we go.

I remember once, oh it's many years ago, the jets fly a bit higher than not today, but the jet was flying out to South Africa, 37,000 feet, I remember it well because of the announcement of the pilot. And I was sitting there, and I was going on my own, it was before I was married, and I was going out to South Africa by invitation to speak at some meetings. I can't remember the occasion.

But sitting there in the jet, suddenly the Word of God came to me. I don't know whether there was any sort of hesitancy in me, or what it was, or query, or questioning, or apprehension as to what I was going to. But suddenly the Word of the Lord came, I will be with you, whithersoever thou goest.

Wow. Whithersoever thou goest. And I cannot tell you the joy that flooded my heart, and the relief that came to me in the knowledge that here I was, up there in the sky, 37,000 feet, flying out to this mission, and burdened for this mission.

But suddenly I will be with you, and all is well. Fourteen years ago we were leaving South Africa to come to Britain, Colin, by invitation to be principal of the Faith, Wisdom, and Bible College in Edinburgh. And as we were leaving our last farewell meeting in South Africa, a lady put a little card in my hand, it's still here in my Bible.

I'm not going to, there it is. This little thing is over 14 years old, and I cannot tell you how many times I've come back to consult this. I won't read it to you because it is in Afrikaans.

But the text again is, be not afraid, for I am with thee. With thee whithersoever thou goest, Emmanuel, God with us. Who wouldn't walk in the will of God, if one was assured of the presence of God? And if one was assured of the blessing of God? Who would not yield to him, and let him take the steering wheel, as it were, of your life? Could I withhold anything from God in the light of the cross? Let me close with the text again, I beseech you.

I plead with you that you yield yourself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. Let's bow our heads in his presence in prayer. God has been speaking throughout this conference.

I know because many of you have spoken to me. God has been speaking not because I'm here, or because of what I've said, but God has brought you here, and he has brought you here for the purpose of speaking to you. And I want to challenge you this evening, and ask you if you have come to that point where, without reserve, you are willing to hand yourself over unreservedly, unconditionally, in the light of what God has done for you, hand yourself over to God.

The scripture says, yield yourselves unto God. Before I close in prayer, I'm going to ask that if God has spoken to any in this meeting in that regard, that you just quietly raise your hand and take it down again when I say it. Yes, many of you, what an impact that will make on your church, your community, your family, if you are totally and all together yielded to God.

Thank God for those who have come to that place. There are others of you, and maybe you haven't arrived there yet. There are others of you who have done it long ago, and who have experienced and known the joy of living in the will of God, and the thrill of seeing that God is with you in the path that he has chosen for you.

Is there anybody else? And you haven't put up your hand yet? Yes, quite a number. Our Heavenly Father, thou hast been speaking to us in these days. We realize that we are living in difficult days, dark days, and we're here, Lord, in this prayer advance, to prepare our hearts to be thine instruments, to pray right through into thy presence, through Jesus Christ, a praise in the air.

We ask thee, Lord, for all those who have raised their hands, and those who might have liked to, but didn't have the courage. We pray tonight, Lord, that thou will clinch this matter between them and thyself, and grant, Lord, that their lives may impact their homes, their congregations, their communities, and that others looking on will see that truly they have been with Jesus at this conference. We ask it in his name and for his sake.

Amen.

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