

Romans 12 verses 1-3

Part 1

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Duration	00:22:17
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/gd004/romans-12-verses-1-3

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[00:01:01] We know, O God, that from the earth shall come and live on high to meet a new and golden year.

To meet a new and golden year, a new and golden year, a new and golden year [00:02:12] eternal is thy law, eternal to thy sons of grace, eternal to thy sons of grace, and with thee, O God, lead now, we praise the Red Divine, [00:03:10] the love that shines within, the rich, one love for us made poor, the rich, one love for us made poor, by death to take us free.

We praise, we worship, we adore, [00:04:08] and love thyself within, thy beauty all, thy truth transform, thy beauty all, thy truth transform, thy love without thy fear, God in all praise, our God and Lord, [00:05:05] Christ God, thy Word, thy Word, O will and power of all thy God, O will and power of all thy God, Amen. Let there go.

[00:06:09] Romans 12, and the first three verses.

I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world, but being transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

And I say to the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think more highly than he ought to think, [00:07:04] but to think solely according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

That's all.

These verses are pressing very much on my mind, beloved. I need not say well known.

I'm sure most of you must have heard us speak about these before. But Romans 8 that we looked at this afternoon, well known chapter in Paul's ministry, bringing us from the man up to the flesh, to bring us out more like Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit of God. And I believe in this epistle to the Romans, this chapter 12 is about the top stone of the Pauline appeal to that company to whom he had written these remarkable things in regard to all that Christ had done and God had done, and indeed as we saw that the Spirit was doing on their behalf. [00:08:01] Two words occur to one in this opening again. The first one is dedication.

Words we find scattered throughout the Scriptures in places. Dedication perhaps better understood to us on the term of devotion. But is the Scripture a word? And to them Paul writes, I beseech you therefore, brethren, and the basis of this request and desire were the mercies of God.

You may remember our brother in the reading this afternoon, asked could we outline some of these things of the Spirit. The only reason we don't attend, beloved, is in case we mistake them. But when we come to the mercies of God, perhaps not very distant from that, we may find in this very epistle as we run through it, redemption, reconciliation, and indeed one of them I was going to say, the gift of the Holy Spirit of God. Perhaps the greatest mercy as we've been considering [00:09:03] these last few days, that God has seen our need.

Even though we do belong to him, he's given us a divine person in our souls, capable of accomplishing in every one of us every detail of his holy will, as we pass through this world.

We, some of us who once had no other object in this world, but serve in the world with his interests, helpless slaves of the devil, carry on with himself to a lost eternity, absolutely devoted to his will, so far as time and expense would allow us. But now this change has come in. The mercies of God have reached us, bringing us out of that distant state, that fear of God, setting us at holy liberty and peace, as we saw this afternoon. And in these wonderful mercies that he has bestowed upon us, mercy I understand has imbued our need on the one hand. [00:10:04] Grace seems to have rather imbued God's disposition toward us on the other. But we did need his mercy, because of the distance, the weakness that had grown up, the many things that had found a foundation in our souls that were very difficult to get away from. But as we went on, God in his infinite grace helped us, and led us on step by step. And in an epistle like this, as the apostle, as it were, was summing them up, he says on the basis then of all that God has done, not that we deserved it, but in his mercy toward us meeting our need, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice.

Don't you think this stands in contrast to perhaps the book of Leviticus, where the sacrifices that often we like to read about [00:11:01] were often indicative of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ? Is God looking for sacrifice from me? Beloved, we've heard often in the meeting, Christianity is a sacrificial system. It is based upon sacrifice, the sacrifice of Christ. And I make no apology for saying if you're going to get ahead in the things of God, you'll have to know what sacrifice is, my dear friend. Young or old, whatever it may be, there's cost to be paid to pursue this path, but a cost well worth paying when we pursue it. I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies, not a dead sacrifice, as we've been referring to in Leviticus, a living sacrifice.

Day after day in this hostile world, seeking to please God, seeking to serve God, each with our several abilities, as we later learn about these things, though I don't want to speak too long, I dare not. [00:12:01] But here as of beseeching us that there may be this devotion to the will of God, I think I can still remember the first impression I received when I first heard these verses. It was this.

If God has done all this to secure me, that he thinks I'm worth doing all this work to secure me, that God should want me, a man like me, to serve him in this world. I said, well, God won't have me then, offer my body a living sacrifice. Oh, beloved, it's a step, and some of us have known what it was, in a sacrificial way, to offer ourselves in complete devotion for the service of God. Don't think I'm suggesting that you might give up your work and go out preaching or go to the Congo. These are parts of it. But you, wherever you are, in the town in which you live, in the local county to which you

belong, be prepared, beloved, to devote yourself entirely [00:13:01] to the will of God.

You'll find that some of these young men have been speaking to me during the intervals. If you ever did live to be as old as some of us are getting now, looking back on your life, the only thing that will give you any pleasure at all is acts of service you've done for the Lord. You'll know as well as I know once we've left this world, the only thing that will be of any worth at all is what we have done in the service of Christ. All else is bound to go. Money-making or whatever it may be, it's bound to go.

But what we've done for Him will abide forever. You know that parable, in fact, two parables, that the Lord spoke about service in this world, one of them to the man whose pound had gained ten pounds. He was devoted all right. Well done, thou good and faithful servant. I ask you again tonight when you read that parable, does it occur to your heart, and I hope the Lord will say that to me, [00:14:01] He'll want to say it to you, be sure of this, I'm persuaded nothing will get more delight to the heart of Christ than telling His saints, how much is appreciated, what they've done for Him in this world. You are there in your sphere, I in mine, each one of us, wherever we are, we're devoted to the will of God. Again I say, we're not this way, my dear friend, that if God then has done all this to secure me, then God will have me. I live for His service in this world. A living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.

We were in a reading somewhere recently when speaking about this human body, we pointed out that Scripture never says the body is sinful. The man that's in it is sinful, all right, but the body itself is not sinful. You see, if it was, we couldn't use it in the service of God. But the body's not sinful. No, no, thank God I can use it, [00:15:01] I'm devoted as much to the service of God as I'm devoted to the service of the devil. Holy, acceptable unto God.

And He tells us, which is your reasonable, a word that could be rendered, your intelligent service.

Then have I followed this line of truth as I ought to have done? And as we have been doing in these Bible readings, the word having its rightful effect upon us all to say that God has labored in all that He's done, in what Christ has done, what the Spirit is doing, all with a view to securing you in this hostile world as one quite prepared to represent God, whatever that cost may be. Holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world We've heard, I think, about these prefixes. [00:16:03] This prefix, con, means together with.

Be not together with this world, but trans, which means apart from. Transform, and again we are back to the thought of the spiritual mind by the renewing of your mind.

Not thinking of what I may do in the world now for myself, personal gain or whatever it may be, what can I do in this world for the pleasure of God? And this word transformed only three times used in the New Testament. First with our Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration, here, and in the third chapter of 2 Corinthians, in the ministry of the New Covenant, transformed from glory to glory, even as by the Lord, the Spirit. Why I'm telling you that is this, my beloved friend. There's another word, transformed, the root of which is not the same as this word. This means to be completely changed in person. [00:17:02] There's another word, metaschema, which simply means changed on the face. I'll give you one instance and you'll see the force of it immediately. In the second epistle to the Corinthians, Paul writing in word, warning those people about some that have got inroads into their company, he says they transformed themselves into angels of light. My dear friend, they're only changed on the face, putting on a disguise. Mind you, the word is used about us at the end of the third of Philipians. He transformed these bodies. You see the exterior. But are you only going to present an exterior to this

world? Is that all that God is looking for? Now, my beloved friend, let us bring from an interior in this word, transformation, completely reformed, with a view to come out in a different character, the character of Christ, really, for the service of God in this world. Be not conformed to this world. I can't go on with the world in one hand [00:18:03] and the service of God on the other, one standing in opposition to the other. The world that crucified Christ is the God that raises him and glorified him. How can I go on in the service with the world on the one hand and God on the other? Don't be afraid, my young friend, to cut adrift from this world. You'll never regret it. Give it up, all this long hair and girls in trousers. Let me appeal to your young sisters. Let it go, my dear friend, it's the world. Let them see you belong to God. Transform, springing from within your mind, proving what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. But there's one more word I said, we'll have two in mind in these verses. And the next word is a word again from Scripture, consecration.

For I say through the grace given unto me, to every one that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, [00:19:01] as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. Now, consecration is a word, if you look it up again, pardon me saying again, I think I repeated it once, asking Mr. MacBroom, after listening to the most illuminating address from him, as most of you here, I think, have heard him, where did you get it from? He said, from the Bible. Think of that, my young friend. If there's anything said on this platform while you're here that you can't find in the Bible, don't you ever think of the words. That's what we've come for, to this meeting, to find if we can a little bit more, what does the Bible say about it? It's all there for us. Consecration means the filling of the hand. And what will God fill our hands with? We're back again to what we were reading this afternoon, spiritual things.

Oh, he'll give us the ability, we quote that little phrase once more, run, John, work, the Lord demands, but gives us neither feet nor hands. [00:20:02] The gospel speaks of better things, it bids us fly, but it gives us wings. Be sure of this, my friend, that God is asking you, and he is asking you, to devote yourself to his service, depend upon it, he'll give you everything that you need to carry out that service. Now, I can't give you it, I don't think these Bible readings can give it to you, not in this line.

You go to God and ask God to give it to you, and he certainly will, all that you stand in need of, for his service in this world.

Be not then conformed to this world, but be transformed, I'm sorry, I've got the wrong verse again, to every man that is among you, not to think of themselves more highly than he ought to think, to think soberly, a word that probably could be wisely, according as God hath dealt to every man, or every one it could be, the measure of faith. You, my young brother, you, my young sister, [00:21:01] God has dealt a measure of faith to you, but mark you, he hasn't given you the particular faith he's given me. You've a work to do that I cannot do, I have a work to do that you cannot do, but of this you can be sure, that what you do stand in need of, in your work for God in this world, God will give you everything that you need, to carry out that service for his pleasure. For we beseech you then, that if these meetings have interested you, maybe heard a few things you never heard before, I never come to a meeting with what I hear, something fresh, and I've been coming for fifty years, and I'm still hearing things fresh, our brother as we said, I wrote him some weeks ago, thanks for that, I never noticed that before, and I've read it many a time, but that's how we get on, and God gives us each what we stand in need of, according to the service to which he's called us, and to which he'll devote us, we'll devote ourselves to God, as living sacrifices, make up your mind, [00:22:01] if God has done all this then, to get my service, God is going to have me, I'll serve him in this world, I'll ask God to show me the way, and to give me the power, and the guidance I need, to tread that way.