

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Your Spiritual Service

(Jerry Fite)

The first eleven chapters of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans concentrate upon the wonderful scheme of redemption. Paul points out that both the Gentiles and the Jews are under sin, and in need of salvation. The plan of redemption in Christ was not thought up by man, but was eternal with God, being enjoyed now by those who have obeyed the Gospel.

Being redeemed in Christ, we have a service to offer unto God. Paul builds upon the scheme of redemption that has been revealed in Christ, when he writes, “*I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service*” (Romans 12:1).

Our service is described as a “spiritual” service. This service comes from the inward part of man that can “reason”. Here, the Greek word LOGIKOS is used by Paul. Peter also uses the term when describing the Word that we are to desire and grow thereby: “*...as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation...*” (1 Peter 2:2). The word of the Lord is designed to reach the part of man that can

reason. From our reasoning faculties, instructed by this word, we offer spiritual service unto God.

What is this spiritual service? It is presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice. As Christians, we understand that Christ died for us. So, we must live for Him. Paul writes, “*For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again*” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Living as a Christian is how we live unto God. Paul admonishes Christians by writing, “*Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 6:11).

Our bodies are not to control us, but the spiritual part of man is to present the body in spiritual service. Paul reminds us of what should be our constant focus: “*And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God*” (Romans 12:2). The world in which we live has the power to mold us into ways of thinking and living which are contrary to the will of God, if

we are not constantly vigilant. Our thoughts, centered upon the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and vain glory of life are subtle in gradually molding us into a life that is not authored by God (1 John 2:16).

How do we counter being fashioned by the world? We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. This transformation is to continue all through our lives as we grow in Christ, having Him as our standard (Ephesians 4:13). To be the new man, we must develop a new mind: “*...and that ye being renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth*” (Ephesians 4:23-24).

Are you presenting your body as a living sacrifice, or are you just living life in your body? As Christians, we have more of a purpose for living, than just breathing, and living out our days. We have died to self, and now live for Christ. Understanding we were bought with a price, we are not our own. We belong to the Lord. We live according to the Gospel. Are you proving by the character of your sacrifice “the good and acceptable and perfect will of God”? If living righteously, according to the truth of the Gospel, God approves.