

Friday Breakfast with our Master's Men

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies (compassions) of God, to present (sacredly offer) your bodies as a living sacrifice (the new Passover), holy and acceptable to God (remember Able), which is your spiritual (logical) worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed through the renewing of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- A. In Romans 12 we come to one of scriptures key texts: we explore the nature of true worship
1. By Jacob's well in Samaria Jesus had disclosed that
 - a) Authentic worship was no longer a location
 - b) The seeker was/is God
 - (1) The goal is those who worship in spirit (Spirit)
 - (2) The location is everywhere
 2. Now we come to holy scriptures' detailed description of that worship
 - a) Paul has brought us in *Romans* through a detailed description:
 - (1) Of the failure of the Old Covenant
 - (2) Of the inability of the flesh (physical) to meet God's requirement
 - (3) To an actual description of the spiritual life (**Romans 8**)
 3. Now he calls us to a life of worship
 - a) This is a call into the very mind of God
 - b) Paul concludes the first chapters in a Doxology:

Romans 11:33- *O how beyond explanation and discernment is the depth of the wealth of God's wisdom and knowledge - how impossible to comprehend are his decisions and ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?*

II. Beyond Our Corruption

A. What we are about is LIFE

1. Paul's appeal is to more than a decisive act
 - a) This is where we begin
 - b) But the call is to an ongoing life
2. Paul exhorts (partakalo - **Παρακαλῶ**) us through God's compassion
 - a) Literally "by means of God's mercy"

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles so that we may be able to comfort those experiencing any trouble with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

3. That we present ourselves - in the plural in the ancient tongue
 - a) Paul chose liturgical language here
 - b) This word was used of an ancient priest in the sacrificial act of worship
 - (1) Present in the writings of Josephus as he describes the Jerusalem Temple rites
 - (2) Rarely used in the New Testament - but is used by Luke for the presentation of Jesus in the Temple by his parents
4. Paul makes a call for us to bring our sacrifice to God
5. If we are not careful this will be about church
 - a) Or religion
 - b) Or the community
 - c) Or ministry
6. The issue here is life and its Creator
 - a) Here we are called to think beyond a service of worship
 - b) To see spirituality as God sees it

Isaiah 55:8-9 *My thoughts are not your thoughts; your ways my ways, says the LORD; as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

B. Yet how shall we know God? How are we to grasp him?

1. This calls for revelation
2. God must disclose himself

John 1:18 *No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is in the Father's bosom, who has made him known.*

2 Corinthians 5:19 *God was in Christ reconciling the world (cosmos) to himself, not holding men's trespasses against them,*

D. Scripture says God has made himself known:

1. Colossians 1:15 *He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation;*

1. Here it is
 - a) God was in Christ reconciling
 - b) And presenting life
2. Jesus claimed this revelation in himself

John 5:37-40 *The Father who sent me has testified about me. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent. You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. Yet you refuse to come to me to have life.*

F. The issue is life itself

1. Life that originated in God
2. And is defined by God
 - a) **This is the life we are now called to offer to him**
 - b) In Christ God gave his life for us - we are now to give ours to him
 - c) He died for us = We die while remaining to live
 - (a) This is a reciprocal surrender of self
 - (b) To meet in a mutual crucifixion

II. BEYOND THE MOMENTARY

A. Let's trace briefly what Paul has said in this message to believers of Rome

1. God has summed up all humanity as disobedient:
 - a) All have sinned
 - b) All are gone from the right
2. Life is not the way it is supposed to be!

Romans 1:21 *Though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened.*

- a) We did not glorify God as God
- b) Nor were we thankful
3. We became less than we were intended to be
 - a) Originally created in the image of God
 - b) We now lived in the image of Adam as animals

B. We lived to the momentary - in the NOW

1. Life was lived centered in preservation of self - as a natural or animal man
2. **The Gospel is a call to live in Doxology** - beyond the momentary
3. Beyond our-self - in the power of God we can live

Philippians 2:5-11 *Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, though existing in the Divine nature did not regard unity with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the nature of a slave to be born in human likeness. Being found in human nature, he submitted himself in obedience to the point of death-- even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*