

Romans 12:1
Spiritual Worship
for Sunday 14 March 2004

Chapter 12 begins the _____ section of the book.

Beseech, Urge, Appeal: a call to action.

Therefore: Because the foregoing is true, the following is what we must do.

"Ethics must rest upon the foundation of redemptive accomplishment. ...ethics springs from union with Christ and therefore from participation in the virtue belonging to him and exercised by him as the crucified, risen, and ascended Redeemer. Ethics consonant with the high calling of God in Christ is itself part of the application of redemption... it is not as if ethics is distinct from doctrine. For ethics is based on ethical teaching and teaching is doctrine." - *John Murray, Commentary on Romans*

By the mercies of God: Our greatest motivation! "Tender mercies, ...the riches of his compassion."
(Murray) II Cor 5:14-15

Present your bodies as a living sacrifice:

1. Correlates Old Testament with New. Same God, same religion, new era.
2. The first step in worship: _____.
3. Living:
 - a. Alive
 - i. As opposed to the slain animal sacrifices. "*Take your everyday, ordinary life-- your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life--and place it before God as an offering.*" (MSG)
 - ii. As distinguished from the body of sin, which is destroyed, crucified with Christ.
 - b. _____, as opposed to the momentary animal sacrifices.
4. Your body is important _____.
 - a. The goal of redemption is "a new heavens and a new earth, not just a bunch of saved souls." (Ken Myers) This includes redeemed bodies. I Cor 6:13-20; Romans 8:10-23; II Cor 5:10.
 - b. Our contemporary culture seeks ways to transcend the body (technological, pharmaceutical, spiritual, paranormal). Christianity affirms the goodness of the gift of embodiment, while not denying the detriments caused by the curse.
 - c. Our bodies are members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. I Cor 6:15, 19

Holy: How can this be true of our bodies?

Acceptable to God: pleasing, delightful, as a sweet smelling aroma. Again, this echoes the sacrificial system under the Law, but in a new light.

Reasonable, Spiritual: Gk. *logikhen*, from *logos*, from *lego*.

1. Expressive, rational, thoughtful. Spiritual service is "conscious, intelligent, consecrated devotion." (Murray)
2. Contrasts with mechanical externalism, but not with formality, per se. All service to God must take some form, and should be well planned when possible (I Cor 14:33). In Creation and in Redemption, God models for us the principle that thoughtful planning and proceeding according to a well-laid plan are virtuous.

Service, (act of) Worship: the service rendered by a menial to his master.

Use your mind to direct your body to serve God -- that is spiritual worship in a nutshell. In what ways does bodily self-sacrifice play out in day-to-day living?

~ Lord, my body is yours. Do with it as you see fit. ~