

"PRESENT YOUR BODIES LIVING SACRIFICES"

WHOEVER fails to see that the Church as "members" of the Christ suffer with him sacrificially (after being "justified by faith in his blood"), will be logically bound by and by to interpret the sacrifices and sufferings in some other way. This our opponents already do. They say that we offer merely "the sacrifice of thanksgiving." (Psa. 116:17), "the sacrifice of praise to God." – Heb. 13:15.

True, we answer, the word sacrifice is used in that broad sense, even though it is a pleasure rather than a sacrifice to praise God, as the word sacrifice is now generally used. This sacrifice under the Law was represented in the "peace-offerings" and "thank-offerings." But St. Paul also urges us, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God." (Rom. 12:1.) He as well as the Master intimates that there is a more difficult sacrifice than the offering of praise before us when we forsake all and take up our cross to follow him in the narrow way. St. Paul urges, "Let us go to him outside the camp, bearing the reproach with him." He identifies these words with the Sin-offering by pointing out that the blood of both the bull and the goat of sin-offering was taken by the Priest beyond the second veil into the Most Holy. He identifies it again by his reference to the burning of *both* "outside the camp." Compare Hebrews 13:11-13 and Leviticus 16:27. If once you saw the beauty of this application of the "better sacrifices" and see it not, confess the blindness that has come upon you and seek the precious eyesalve of Divine supply.

So far from the "sufferings of Christ," which we experience, being sufferings for sins, the reverse is true. Even the "great company" suffers not for its own sins, but suffers the

"destruction" of their *justified flesh* (as the "scape-goat"), because they fail to *sacrifice it*.

This is the *one* peculiar and destructive feature of the Gospel Call of this Gospel Age, differentiating it from the preceding and the succeeding ages! Some of the past, from Enoch to John, had the sacrificing spirit and did lay down their lives in the service of the Lord and righteousness, but God did not accept them as *sacrificers*. Our Lord's great sacrifice was necessary first for our *actual* justification before God. Since then is the opportunity for believers who have the same sacrificing spirit – "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God." "*Now* is the acceptable time" – "the acceptable year of the Lord" – the time in which God will accept your sacrifices, because he accepts you as "members" of the Body of the Christ, the Great High Priest, the Great Mediator of the New Covenant. – Isa. 61:2; Luke 4:19; 2 Cor. 6:2; 1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 1:6; Rom. 12:1.

In the future age "the acceptable time" will be past – the Antitypical Atonement Day will be at an end. Satan will be bound and none will any more suffer for righteousness sake.

Now note the import of this. The Ancient Worthies will get restitution blessings as a part of the world. "Instead of thy fathers, they shall be thy children." (Psa. 45:16.) They will be the first-born children of "the everlasting father." Under the new order of things they will be made the earthly agents or representatives of the Kingdom. And the world will get restitution blessings also as under the New Covenant they obey the great Mediator. But *why* is this? Is there partiality with God that we of this Gospel Age alone of all mankind have the offer of a *spiritual* or *heavenly* inheritance?

No, we answer! The *gift* in every case is the same, namely *restitution of earthly rights* secured by our Lord's *sacrifice of his earthly rights*. The whole difference is that

we live in the "acceptable year (or time) of the Lord" and willingly take advantage of the privilege afforded. That privilege is restricted to those who have ears of faith and hear the "glad tidings" now, and fleeing from sin become servants of righteousness and present their "bodies living *sacrifices* holy and acceptable to God." We receive of our Redeemer *earthly restitution rights* by faith, and *sacrifice these* with whatever we have of earthly advantage. All such are accepted as "members" of the Christ, under the Redeemer their Head, the Prophet, Priest, Mediator and King of the world.

Whoever sees this sees "the Mystery hid from past ages and dispensations, but now made manifest unto the *saints* – Christ in you [which is, that you are his 'members,' and that this fact is the only ground for your] hope of glory." Whoever helps to *blind* those who have once seen this great "Secret of the Lord" (Psa. 25:14) is beguiling them of the prize (2 Cor. 11:3), whether he knows what he is doing or not. Whoever loses sight of the *fact* will cease to strive for it. And the fact that the Lord led into the light of "Present Truth" and showed us the "Secret," the "Mystery," implies that he would not let us be plucked out of his hand and away from his leading unless the *heart* was at fault.

Nor is it necessary for us to specially *condemn the hearts* of those who are now losing their sight of what they once claimed to see as clearly as we. Some of them may be merely blinded by dust and may be recovered; and find their chief trial along the line of humility in the matter of acknowledging their error. Let us neither do nor say anything to make their way back more difficult. Let us apply the principle rather to ourselves. Let us find comfort, peace and joy as well as caution in the assurance that if our hearts are *loyal*, God by myriads of agencies is able and willing to keep our poor heads!

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