

Living Sacrifice

"The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit"—Rom. 8:26-27.

FROM Adam, we have the law of sin in our members, and we are also all sinners ourselves—

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23).

It is God's law that (Heb. 9:22)—

"Without shedding of blood is no remission—forgiveness—of sin."

Why? Because sin is a destructive, infectious plague that cannot be ignored. It must be dealt with and eradicated. The sacrifice of Christ is God's way of dealing with this plague, and eventually removing it completely from the earth.

It is not a magic wand, or just a technical ritual. It is not just a form of words, or an arbitrary arrangement, or a rubber stamp. It is a practical method, an orderly procedure, a beautiful, effective contrivance of divine love and wisdom.

Christ—that is, of course, God in Christ—laid the essential foundation: something we ourselves could not do. He was specially provided and specially strengthened to do that work. *We* are required to build our own salvation on that foundation—

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

The promise of life is to "him that *overcometh*" (7 times in Rev. 2 & 3). Whatever that means, it clearly means that we must *do* something, we must *accomplish* a certain task, we must achieve a certain victory—on Christ's foundation, and with God's help.

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The eternal principles of holiness, righteousness, justice & truth required a perfect sacrifice for sin, a perfect condemnation of sin and upholding of holiness, to lay a sound foundation for the extension of God's mercy to fallen mankind. God and His holy law of life had to be honoured and vindicated—openly, publicly, eternally. This was done in the crucifixion of sin's flesh on the cross—a voluntary cooperation and manifestation of joint love by God and Christ for mankind.

Christ's perfect lifelong obedience and sacrificial death provided one real, sound, holy, perfect man out of the whole race of fallen mankind, in whom and upon whom God could build His divine family. Until Christ destroyed the devil in himself on the cross, he was not the completed, purified, victorious man that God required as the foundation of His plan (Heb. 2:14)—

"That through death he (Jesus) might destroy him that had the power of death, that it, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

All his life he held the devil within himself completely powerless by the strength of his perfect love and perfect obedience. But that war had to be brought to a climax and settlement. Sin, the devil, had to be not only held off, held powerless, but utterly destroyed.

It must be a sacrificial death—a voluntary, obedient submitting to a death that was otherwise escapable. If Christ had just lived a perfect life and then died a natural death, he would not have been voluntarily giving up his life, laying down his life, pouring out his blood, choosing in obedience to be a purifying sacrifice for mankind. Nor would it have clearly and dramatically and openly and publicly manifested God's holiness, and the repudiation and condemnation of sin.

In Christ—THE man, the perfect sacrifice, the complete example, the central reality of the whole divine purpose—the body of sin had to be put to death, *really and truly and literally and actually*, as it was typically and figuratively in the Mosaic shadows. It had to be lifted up before all the world in condemnation and repudiation.

The crucifixion of Christ is the most public event of all time. All mankind's history is dated from Christ—forward and backward—AD & BC. This present entire heathen, pagan world, in international dealings, dates every act according to his birth. Diverse as they are, it is their common point of reference. This is no coincidence, no mistake, no accident or oversight. It is a providential, condemning witness. From God's point of view, Christ's life and death form the pivot of all human history: all radiates from it, all revolves around it.

Sin, the Devil, the Diabolos—in the Romans, in the Jews, in the world of mankind—openly rejected him, openly rejected the perfect Son of God who had never done anything but good, and put him to a cruel death, cut him off violently from the land of the living. The Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman—the eternal enmity—begun in Eden, brought to a climax at Calvary, finally resolved when the last enemy, death, is destroyed, and God is all in all.

Christ, in his death, did not appease or satisfy or put away God's anger. Rather he manifested God's love and holiness and goodness. God's anger against sin is never appeased. He will be angry with sin till sin is eliminated from the earth. But anger is more properly applied to responsible living creatures: not inanimate principles. God's anger at sinners is appeased when they repent and change and put away and repudiate their sins, and wholeheartedly seek Him.

Christ's sacrifice was not to appease God's anger. The whole conception was all of God's Own love and wisdom and initiative, for man's reconciliation—

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them . . . We beseech you, be reconciled to God . . . He (God) made him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:19-21).

There is nothing here about anger being appeased, but rather God and Christ working together in love to manifest Truth, and to open a way of holiness for man to escape death and achieve the divine nature. THEN, with the flesh of sin condemned, and holiness upheld and vindicated, mercy could be soundly extended without violating righteousness—as long as the perfect Christ-foundation is always kept prominently in view and recognition as the only doorway to life. Therefore we always pray, always approach God, always seek His attention and help and communion "*in Jesus' Name*."

Mosaic sacrifice has long since passed away in actual use, but its lessons and instructions are just as current as ever as to what God requires of those who seek Him.

The ordinances of sacrifice in general, and Christ's supreme sacrifice in particular—the one great reality which fulfilled all the shadows—were *representative*, NOT substitutionary. This is an essential and fundamental distinction. The substitution idea leads to all sorts of error. The representative principle guides us both in true understanding and true action. Christ's sacrificial death was not as a substitute, *instead* of us: it was as a representative, *on behalf of us*. He was one of us. He stood for all mankind. Only as part of him can we approach unto God. All are wrapped up and included in him—

"If one died for (on behalf of) all, then were all dead" (2 Cor. 4:14).

This reasoning does not follow, if "for" is taken as "instead of." As a representative, as *one of us*, a strong one of the sin-stricken race, his death was beautiful and fitting, and a manifestation of God's holiness, and an opening up of a way out of death through travail unto joy, for himself and for us in him.

As one of us, our representative, he opened up the way of life. And we can follow him in that way to eternal life only by dying completely to ourselves and becoming *a part of him*, completely enclosed *in* him and covered *by* him. As a representative, a strong loving Elder Brother to lead the way and carry the weak, he manifested God's love and provision for man.

"*By his own blood* he entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12).

"God brought Jesus again from the dead *through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant*" (Heb. 13:20).

Viewed as a substitute, dying *instead* of us, bearing God's wrath, the innocent punished for the guilty, there is no beauty, no justice, no glorifying of God, no manifestation of God's righteousness. God did not in anger punish Christ for our sins. Rather in love He *forgave* our sins for Christ's sake —

"Whom God hath set forth to be a *hilasterion* [a 'mercyseat,' a place of extending mercy] through faith in his blood, for the remission [forgiveness] of sins that are past, that He (God) might be just, and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25-26).

Christ is the golden mercy-seat, the coverlid of the Ark, the Cherubim-throne of the glory of God. The Mosaic mercy-seat was purified unto God's service by the sprinkled sacrificial blood—"by *his own blood* he entered . . ." Viewed as a substitute, the Mosaic sacrifices and the great fulfilling, culminating sacrifice of Christ teach us nothing as to the way we must walk. They just take the responsibility off us and put it on someone else. Substitution is a heathen conception of sacrifice, not a scriptural one.

Perceived as representatives of us, Christ's sacrifice and the Mosaic sacrifices in all their host of detail and regulation teach us a great treasure of guidance and instruction, of solemn responsibility and joyful duty.

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifices of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name . . . To *do good* and to *communicate* [*koinonia*: share, distribute] forget not, for with *such sacrifices* God is well pleased (Heb. 13:15-16).

The Mosaic sacrifices beautifully manifest and teach 7 basic principles of approach to God:

1. REPENTANCE, CLEANSING, PURIFICATION. We are unclean from birth by reason of the law of sin in our members, and additionally by our allowing it to move us to sinful action, to rule over us. This is especially illustrated by the purifying Sin & Trespass Offerings.
2. ADORATION, HOMAGE, WORSHIP, SUBMISSION-humble and abased recognition of the greatness and majesty of God.
3. CONSECRATION, HOLINESS, DEDICATION, DEVOTION. The complete, unreserved giving over of the whole life to God. This is seen especially in the solemn Whole Burnt Offering.
4. THANKSGIVING, GRATITUDE: recognition of goodness and blessing *from* God. This is shown in the Drink Offering of wine.
5. SUPPLICATION, ENTREATY, DEPENDENCE, NEED. Seen especially in the sweet Incense of prayer.
6. OBLIGATION, RESPONSIBILITY, DUTY, LABOR, SERVICE. Seen particularly in the Meat [more correctly, Meal] Offering—the fruit of the ground and of man's daily toil.
7. COVENANT-RELATIONSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, COMMUNION, entrance into the divine family—especially manifested in the joyful Peace Offering, the only one of which the offerer himself partook.

A primary requirement of the sacrifices is that the offerer must bring them "with his own hands." There could be no substitutes. The rich could not pay to have someone do it for them. An earnest friend or parent could not do it for one who was lax. Each must do it himself in person. All stood equally before God, and each must do his required part. The clear lesson for us today is that no one is exempt from the work of the Lord. We *dare* not leave it to others, no matter how much better qualified they seem to be. Truly the work may take many different forms according to ability and circumstances—sweeping the hall is as important as lecturing to many 1000s, *if that is our best*—but all are required to give their best & most, and to do everything they do "as unto the Lord."

We should never, in any aspect of life, do anything that cannot be done as unto God. This eliminates all useless, unworthy activity, and gives meaning and purpose and holiness and sanctification to life's every necessary task, however humble or ordinary it may be. And it also emphasizes the responsibility to do *everything* we do to the very best of our power and ability—not because the thing itself is necessarily important, but because the way we do anything is important to our character. We must live wholly *in God*: all must be done as unto God: and God requires the very best.

This is another general aspect of the sacrifices: they had to be the very best a man had. They had to be perfect and without blemish. This was not only to teach that the One Great Offering for sin must be perfectly sinless and spotless, and that man can never therefore earn his own salvation from sin and death—but it was also to teach the parallel and balancing lesson that *our* offering to God must be the very best we have, even though we admittedly fall far short of perfection at best. Giving less than our all is presuming on God's mercy, and dishonouring His love and goodness that He has poured out so abundantly upon us.

For anyone not to desire with intense longing to give everything they can to God, and do everything they can for Him, reveals a fatal lack of devotion, and gratitude, *and understanding*. God can and will graciously accept our puny little "best" as perfection—as purified by the blood of Christ, but how can He possibly impute perfection to us if we do not care enough to do our best to strive toward perfection? This makes a mockery of the whole process, like forcing a noble scholarship on an indolent scholar. If our hearts and minds and efforts are on other things, how can we expect God to pursue us and force perfection upon us?

The first requisite of approach to God is a willingness—yea, more than a willingness, rather an anxious eagerness—to do everything He requires, and to get rid of everything that stands in the way—a true, mature recognition of the respective values and importances of the very brief present and the eternal future. Any reservation or reluctance to submit to any requirement of God makes us useless to Him, for the heart is not right—and *a right heart is vital*.

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THE BURNT OFFERING. This was completely consumed upon the altar—except the skin which went to the priest. This point is interesting, because the skin is the covering, the cloak of righteousness. In symbolism of the slain lamb, God covered the sin and nakedness of Adam and Eve with coats of skins. Their own skin was not an acceptable covering: rather it exposed and emphasized their shameful nakedness.

The Burnt Offering is the basic sacrifice. The 2 lambs every day, and all the principal sacrifices every week, every month, on all the feast days, and on all special and solemn occasions—were all whole Burnt Offerings. This offering symbolized the complete dedication and devotion of the life to God that is essential to gain His favour. This is perhaps the biggest and most vital lesson of the entire sacrificial picture. Until and unless we realize that the essence of our covenant with God is that we give our whole lives to His service, we have no hope of life. For the dedication of this very brief life of probation, He has promised an eternity of purest, highest joy.

At the very best and most that we can do, the requirements and the reward are infinitely out of proportion—we can give nothing remotely comparable to what we receive. But God does require (and what could be more reasonable) as an evidence of our love, *all* that we have: *all* our heart and strength and life and mind. The Whole Burnt Offering, completely consumed on the altar and arising as a sweet-smelling savour to God, teaches us that to attain to the glories of eternity we must constantly labour to bring all our time and energies into the service of God. The sacrifices were typical. They were shadows. They were pictorial representations of what must happen *in reality in us*, if we are to be acceptable to God.

"Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices"

(1 Pet. 2:5).

Therefore this Whole Burnt Offering must have its counterpart in us. It is just as if God said directly to us, "*This* is what I require of you!" Indeed, He does through Paul say so—

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service"

(Rom. 12:1).

And it is a reasonable service. In view of the infinite magnitude and glory of what God promises, anything less would *not* be reasonable. Anything less than a living sacrifice, a Whole Burnt Offering, would be an insult to God's love. And we must not only give ourselves wholly to God. Even that is not enough. We must do it *eagerly*, with the oil of joy without which no sacrifice was acceptable (except in some cases where the specific omission of the oil had a particular significance). We must truly see and realize the necessity and beauty and fittingness and desirability of so doing. It must be a deep and true and satisfying pleasure. We must develop a spiritual state of mind wherein we are not able to be happy doing anything less.

Out of the travail of all our problems there must be born in each of us something very wonderful and very unworldly; something very personal and individual; something very beautiful and spiritual. If this occurs, all the travail is worthwhile. We must perceive in *all* that happens a divine, loving means working out a glorious end. Very little in this life will be as we desire it to be. But we have the all-sufficient assurance that all will be exactly as *God* desires it to be.

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Let us never think of sacrifice in the common, debased sense of the term as men use it—as a loss, a deprivation, a giving up of something. The word doesn't mean that. Men in their ignorance and self-commendation have added that. Sacrifice is a humble, joyful, eager yielding of the self to God in love and thanksgiving, without any assumption of self-glory for some supposed noble self-deprivation. Literally, the word in English simply means "holy. act, deed or work of holiness." The original Bible words for sacrifice just mean "gift, offering, drawing near, devotion, dedication."

We have nothing to "sacrifice." All is God's to begin with. We can never give God anything but our love and our intelligent worshipful realization of the goodness and beauty of all His ways. The joy and satisfaction of love is in giving. Giving is the essence of love. If giving is not its heart and joy, then it is not love, but lust. Love gives: lust wants. The world cannot see the difference.

God is love. He wants to give. It is His essence. He wants to pour out showers of blessing and goodness upon us, but He can do it only where there is an intelligent appreciation of the true facts of life that He has revealed, and a deep and unshakable commitment in the heart to live in harmony with them. Where there is ignorance of the true realities of life, as in the natural mind of the flesh, or where there is unwillingness to conform the life to the things of God, where lust and greed and pride and pleasure are allowed to pull in the other direction, then God cannot bless.

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THE PEACE OFFERING. This was voluntary. It was never commanded specifically, except on the occasion of Pentecost. And this exception is fitting, for Pentecost symbolizes the First-fruits at Christ's coming: the marriage supper of the Lamb—the great consummation of the communion of God with His people taken out of all the previous ages of the world.

In the Peace Offering the offerer himself partook. The Peace Offering was the culminating offering, the joyous offering, the partaking of holy food belonging to God, in His house, as His guest and companion. In this offering, God and the priest and the worshiper all snared. There was a portion for each. Here is the perfect union and fellowship of the believer with God through Christ: the covenant meal of friendship and loving intimacy, foreshadowing the great fruition and fulfilment of the eternal divine plan.

But though this was a voluntary offering, of the offerer's spontaneous freewill and thanksgiving, still there were many specific details of procedure that *had to be followed exactly* for the

offering to be a blessing and not an abomination. Here is vividly emphasized the lesson that we must be taught of God in everything. Of ourselves we know nothing of eternal truth, and we can do nothing right, even our thanksgiving, without divine instruction.

This offering must be completely eaten the same day it was offered (or, in some cases, by the following day). If any part was left any longer, it was an abomination. There are several lessons here. First, the general one of obedience: it must be God's way, even though the offering was voluntary. Then hoarding was discouraged. This is the lesson of the manna. The blessings of God must, in faith, be put to current use in His service. Hoarding is faithlessness and idolatry. Then the related virtue of generosity. To get it all eaten, the offerer was expected to share the feast with others, with the poor, especially the poor among the Levites who were devoted to the service of God and dependent on the offerings of the faithful Israelites for their sustenance.

There is another regulation concerning the Peace Offering that is solemnly thought-provoking. Though it was a joyful and freewill offering to God, yet if any ate of it while unclean by reason of contact with death or unclean objects, *he was to be put to death*. God is a consuming fire to the careless and unheeding. By being given to God, this food became holy, bringing great responsibility to any who partook of it. The eater must be made and kept clean in the God-appointed way, or he would be cut off from life.

What a sobering consideration!—right in the midst of the most joyous and God-directed activity. Israel was called to holiness. They were to be a pure nation of priests to dwell in the presence of God. Tremendous blessings were theirs if faithful, but also tremendous responsibilities. Even in this joyful Peace Offering, there could be no carelessness or thoughtlessness or forgetting of the duties of the divine relationship; no heedless or casual contact or association with the unclean. We are told that all this was for lessons and warnings to US—

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. 11:28).

In the memorial feast, we fellowship at God's table, as did the partaker of the Peace Offering. This bread and wine mean joyful eternal life, *if* we partake worthily, *if* we realize and live up to our great responsibilities; *if* we are faithful and sincere in our solemn covenant of the complete dedication of our lives to the work and service of God—to separation from the world and all its uncleanness.

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THE SIN OFFERING and the TRESPASS OFFERING dealt with different aspects of sin. The regulations are quite different. The animal for the Sin Offering varied according to whether the sin was by the Congregation, a Priest, a Ruler, or one of the people: for the Trespass Offering it did not vary. The Sin Offering did not require restitution; the Trespass Offering did. The Sin Offering seemed to deal more broadly and generally and fundamentally with sin: this was the offering for sin in the national festivals. The Trespass Offering was more specifically for individuals.

In connection with both, sins of ignorance are referred to, and must be atoned for by sacrifice. This is an interesting consideration. If we look back 20, or 10, or even 5 years, we shall realize—*if* we have grown in our knowledge of God—that much of what we did at that time was tainted with the sin of ignorance. We see now where we were then limited in our spirit and attitude and understanding.

And we can be quite sure, though we cannot see it now, that if we continue to study and meditate upon the Word of God, in another 5 or 10 years (if we are still in this present probation) we shall be able to look back and discern many of our *present* limitations and shortcomings that we are blind to today. And so it continues throughout our life. We live under the constant shadow of sins of ignorance, and we must constantly pray for God's mercy on them.

There must be a constant growth of knowledge and understanding in the ways of God and the spirit of Christ. For each added day of life and opportunity that is given us, more will be expected of

us in character and labour and understanding. Woe betide that slothful servant who has not been using all his time in labour and preparation for his Lord!

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We must overcome—not to absolute perfection, because that for us is impossible—but to perfection within the framework of the definition of Scripture, and the merciful appointments of God. Perfection is required by God. In His holiness He can tolerate no less. And in His love He has provided for it: by our constant effort *toward* perfection, *and* by the constant washing and repurifying in the blood of Christ. Every sin must be washed away in that blood. Every sin must be repented of and repudiated. We must stand pure before God to be accepted.

We are so constituted in weakness that we do not and cannot even know all our sins. Every thought out of harmony with the perfection of God and with absolute truth is sin. In the imperfection of our mind and knowledge and weakness of the flesh, we cannot help but constantly sin—constantly fall short of perfection. But He has graciously provided for this too—

"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ..."

—we do not know, we cannot know, to perfection what we should pray for—what sins of weakness and ignorance and incompleteness and partial comprehension we should pray to be forgiven for and cleansed from. We are slowly learning, slowly advancing toward the goal of perfect understanding—

". . . we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, and He that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit."

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For deliberate sin, there was and is no forgiveness. But some sins which *we* would consider deliberate *were* forgiven—so we cannot judge others. The sabbath day gatherer of sticks was put to death: David's murder and adultery were forgiven. Only God knows where to draw the line as to what is deliberate rebellion, and what is weakness for this poor erring flesh. For *ourselves*, we must always bear in mind the danger, remembering with trembling that God will not be mocked. He will not for a moment tolerate rebellion. Whenever we do anything we *know* is wrong, however small it may be, we are treading on the loose gravel of the edge of the precipice of no return—

"*God is not mocked*" . . . "*God hath no pleasure in fools.*"

For *others*, we must always be prepared to forgive and receive, and leave the final judgment to God Who knows each heart.

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THE MEAL OFFERING, always of wheat, was a thankful recognition of the care of God in the daily bread, and a presenting to God of the fruit of daily toil.

THE DRINK OFFERING of wine was an outpouring of spiritual rejoicing and zealous gladness and thankfulness of heart, essential to make the other offerings acceptable to God.

And 3 things must accompany the sacrifices: the SALT of purity and uncorruptness—

"Ye are the salt of the earth."

The OIL of knowledge and enlightenment in the Spirit—

"Ye are the light of the world."

And the sweet INCENSE of faithful prayer—

"Pray without ceasing: in everything give thanks."

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THE PASSOVER was a special sacrifice, a sacrifice of special deliverance. Its ordinances were unique, but it most closely resembled the Peace Offering. All of it except the blood and fat was eaten by the offerers themselves. Unlike the Peace Offering, none was given to the priests, for when it was

first instituted there was no separate priestly class. It portrays Israel in its highest relationship to God as a holy people, a nation of priests.

The Passover lamb was given special attention and care. It was roasted whole, and no bones were to be broken—especially pointing to Christ's offering. Bitter herbs were to be eaten with it, representing salvation through sorrow and suffering.

It was to be partaken of in active readiness for a journey—with feet shod, loins girded, and staff in hand. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, and we too must keep the feast in a state of readiness for the journey, wherever it may lead—recognizing that we have here no continuing city. Nothing of the present is permanent or important. We must keep ourselves lightly loaded and travel-girded, careful not to build ties and possessions in this present evil world.

The Passover must be accompanied, Paul says (1 Cor.5:8), by—

"The unleavened bread of SINCERITY and TRUTH."

Sincerity and Truth are powerful and beautiful words: powerful and beautiful qualities. *Sincerity* is purity from any pretence or hypocrisy or deception. *Truth* is freedom from any error or falsehood or mistake. These are divine qualities, not common to mankind. Very few will hold firmly and faithfully to sincerity and truth when a small degree of concealment or misrepresentation will save them loss, or get them gain. But such are no use to a holy God—

"Thou desirest Truth in the inward parts" (Psa. 51:6).

Only those who in spiritual wisdom perceive the living beauty—and dedicate their lives to the principles—of Sincerity and Truth are acceptable into God's family. By nature, we are all creatures of error and subterfuge and deception. Lying and evasion for self-protection comes naturally right from childhood. Sincerity must be learned. We must be shown and perceive the beauty of the better, more excellent way. Pure, guileless sincerity is essential to holiness.

We must not look upon sacrifice as a "giving up" of something. It is a gaining and receiving; a joy and a privilege. It is the highest and most satisfying *use* to which we may put anything we have, including our own selves and our lives. To a mature mind, there should be no particular pleasure in just possessing something. It is exceedingly juvenile to get pleasure merely in possession—it is a shallow, silly, selfish, unhealthy pleasure, not worthy of the name of pleasure. The pleasure and satisfaction should come in the *use* to which anything is put, in the *good* that can be accomplished by means of it.

And the greatest mature satisfaction comes from putting all we have to the highest and best use. THIS IS SACRIFICE.

Christ, in perfect wisdom, put his whole life to the best possible use: he accomplished with it the utmost possible good. He reversed the whole trend of history from failure to success. He turned death into eternal life, and sorrow into eternal joy, for all who have the wisdom to lay hold upon what he accomplished for them.

Do we detract from the preciousness and nobility of the sacrifice of Christ by saying that sacrifice is not sacrifice in the common, worldly, self-commending use of the term? Do we rob him of the recognition that he gave up everything, and suffered everything, for his brethren?

By no means. He did not give up anything *worthwhile*: rather he achieved and gained everything worthwhile. There was no self-pity, no self-glory, no self-delusion, in his sacrifice—his pure offering, his drawing near, his gift to God, his "deed of holiness." Christ did not look upon himself as a martyr, but as the most highly privileged, the most really blessed, the most deeply honoured, of all mankind.

It was his infinite blessing and riches to be the perfect manifestation of the love and beauty of God, the perfect manifestation of God Himself, to be ever in perfect communion with God—

"I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE" (John 10:30).

He was a man of sorrows; but he was also a man of transcendent joy. He spoke of that glorious, unquenchable inner joy on the very eve of the terrible ordeal of the crucifixion—

"These things have I spoken that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15: 11).

We read on 2 occasions that Jesus wept. There must have been many, many occasions that he wept. His life was a life of weeping—*but not for himself*. On him was laid the burden of the sorrows of all the world, and it was his glorious, suffering joy to take them all upon him, and to bear them all away.

Love not only gives. It takes. It gives of goodness, and comfort, and strength, and courage. It takes of sorrow, and fellow-feeling, and shared bitterness in the fellowship of suffering. If it does not do both—if it shrinks from either task—it is not love.

We may bring ourselves to the giving part, and triumph gloriously in it, and we think our love is complete. But if we shrink or run away from the taking part, it really is not love. We have not yet attained.

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us .."

"He is the mercy-seat for our sins . . "

"This cup is the New Covenant in my blood . ."

"If we walk in the Light—if *we WALK IN THE LIGHT*

—the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from ALL sin."

—G.V.G.
