

Romans 12:1-8

August 27, 2017

“From the Life God Gives to the Life a  
Believer Lives – It’s Your Turn”

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Twelfth S. a. Pentecost

Pastor Hartwig

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God our Heavenly Father and Jesus  
Christ, our Lord. Amen. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ –

**[Introduction]**

Only a few people know – I am an avid Black Friday shopper.  
Now, I haven’t always been. I was tricked into it. I am serious.

It was when Micah was born.

Kara – my wife – has always been a Black Friday shopper.

Her, her mom, sister, and cousins made it an event.

Up early in the morning. Hot chocolate and coffee at McDonald’s.

Kohl’s, Penneys, the mall, Target...

They went all over

And I would not meet them until lunch –

Maybe dinner!

But the year that Micah was born I was tricked.

Kara couldn’t go and there was something,

some sale at Target that was too good to be true.

Kara asked for me to go – so I went.

I don’t remember what it was for.

I do remember as I walked through the Target parking lot

at some early hour in the morning in Peoria, Illinois,

I hear someone calling out, “Pastor!”

Now, every year, I go out Black Friday shopping.

I scour the ads for deals. I make my shopping plan, and we head out.

You know sometimes the lines to check out are so long.

Longer than any line I ever stand in at Disney.

They snake you through the aisles

Until you finally arrive to the checker who says, “Next in line.”

Next in line. This is a common fast-food and retail phrase.

Next in line – the rental car agent calls you forward.  
Next in line – you can now check out your library books.  
Next in line – Maybe you heard this when you went back-to-school shopping.

Next in line – It’s your turn! This is what happens in our text.  
Paul turns from the indicative to the imperative. It’s your turn!  
“I therefore urge you, brothers (and sisters)...” It’s your turn!

Over the last two months  
as we follow the lectionary  
we have progressed from Romans 5 to 12.

Each week the Epistle reading pushes us forward in the Romans text;  
it pushes you and me through the season of Pentecost.

From the Romans text we have heard about  
“Life in and through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5-8),  
moved through “The righteousness of God and Israel” (Romans 9-11)  
to arrive at the opening of this new section.  
We now hear about the “Life a Believer Lives”  
(Romans 12-16).

“I therefore *URGE* you, brothers (and sisters)...” It’s your turn!

**[Your Turn!]**

It’s your turn to be a sacrifice!

Now, in the Old Testament there are five main types of sacrifices, or offerings:

1. The burnt offering (Leviticus 1; 6:8–13; 8:18-21; 16:24)
2. The grain offering (Leviticus 2; 6:14–23)
3. The peace offering (Leviticus 3; 7:11–34)
4. The sin offering (Leviticus 4; 5:1–13; 6:24–30; 8:14–17; 16:3–22)
5. The trespass offering (Leviticus 5:14–19; 6:1–7; 7:1–6).

Each of these sacrifices required an animal or fruit of the field,  
and each had a specific purpose.

But ultimately, the purpose of each of these sacrifices  
was to point forward to the perfect and final sacrifice of Christ.  
to point to his body.  
to point to his blood.

to point to his death, and even  
to point to His resurrection.

The Old Testament sacrifices were simply  
“a shadow of the things that were to come;  
the reality, however, is found in Christ.”  
That is what is says in Colossians 2:17.

We know Christ’s atoning death on the cross is the only sacrifice needed for sin.  
We know Christ’s resurrection foreshadows our resurrection.

The sacrifice of Jesus was offered once and it was for all (Hebrews 10:1–10).  
It is Jesus’ death and resurrection that opened the “holy place” for us (Hebrews  
4:19–20),  
and now we can freely enter God’s presence.

We can enter His presence to offer our sacrifice.  
***It’s your turn to be a sacrifice!***

#### [A Living Sacrifice]

Oh yeah! From the Life God Gives to the Life a Believer Lives – It’s Your Turn.  
It is your turn to be a sacrifice. But what kind of sacrifice?

A burnt offering? Someone light a match!

A peace offering? The blood is going to pour!

No. no. (hold on.)

You are to be a sacrifice that is living, holy, and well-pleasing.

#### A Living Sacrifice

Now, that is an oxymoron if I have ever heard of one.

An oxymoron is a figure of speech

in which two apparently contradictory terms appear together.

1. It’s Jumbo shrimp – It is either large or small!
2. I’m clearly confused – You are either clear or confused!
3. Oh! Act naturally – You are either acting or are natural!

But don’t you see? You are a living sacrifices because the Spirit has given you life!

Once you were dead, but now you are alive!

And now you confess: “I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life...”  
(*Nicene Creed*).

Don't you see, you are a living sacrifice and a... Holy Sacrifice

In the Old Testament,

the sacrifices given to the priests and also some other offerings  
were literally called “the holies” or “the holy things” ...

or even “a holy of holies” or , in the plural, “the holies of holies,”  
even “the most holy things....

Thus “holy” describes a sacrifice that has been sanctified, purified, and cleansed.  
Already in Romans 1:7, Paul asserts that God calls the Roman Christians “holy.”

My dear sweet people, you are living and you are holy.

Finally, St. Paul wants you to know that you are a... Well-pleasing Sacrifice

Paul tells us that Christ's sacrifice was a pleasing, fragrant aroma (Phil 4:18).  
And you are in Christ. So you are a well-pleasing sacrifice.

In Christ, You are a sacrifice that is living and holy and well-pleasing.

**[Conclusion]**

Oh yeah! From the Life God Gives to the Life a Believer Lives – It's Your Turn.

God has given you life eternal.

God has made you alive.

God has made you holy.

God has made you well-pleasing.

Next in line. It's your turn. So, go live like it!

“I therefore urge you, brothers, through the mercies of God to present your bodies  
[as] a sacrifice, living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God. Amen!