

Offerings (Part One)

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I am going to begin a series here that probably will take me at least five sermons to complete. It probably will not be complete because of the way the schedule works out until sometime into March. Hopefully, I will get it done before Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread come along because what we are going into here has a great deal to do with understanding the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

We are going to begin in Psalm 111.

Psalm 111:1-2 Praise the Lord! I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation. The works of the Lord are great, studied by all who have pleasure in them [or as the *New American Standard* says, "Great are the works of the Lord, they are studied by all who delight in them."].

Well, I hope you are one who is studying very deeply into the Word of the Lord. And if you are, you are beginning to appreciate, I am sure, the depth and the breadth of the teaching that is there. His works *are* great and how great they are I do not believe that man's finite mind is able to fully appreciate. We appreciate what we are able to see; and we sometimes exult in the mind, in the intelligence of our great God, in the experience that we have in being able to consider even a small part of the intelligence of that great and majestic mind.

If we compare God's creations with man (I think that you are familiar with this), but almost anything that you look at that man has created, the closer that one gets to what man has created, the more flaws that are visible. You might be able to see no flaws at all with your eye, but you put a little bit of a magnifying glass on whatever it is that you are looking at and little imperfections, scratches, little things that your eye cannot even pick up otherwise cannot even be seen. You take that thing out from under a

magnifying glass and you put it in a real powerful lens on there, a microscope, and then you begin to see all kinds of flaws that were not even apparent, even under a magnifying glass.

Now, the works of God are different. The more closely you look, the more intensely they are magnified, the more wisdom, the more beauty, the more perfection that one sees in what God makes. A man's mind is finite, but God's is infinite.

Consider for just a moment how adept God is at creating something that can have a great number of uses to it, and it seems as though everything God creates has more than one function to it. But I am just thinking here of one with which you and I are very familiar with. We are breathing it in and out constantly. I am talking about air. We never give it a thought unless somebody mentions it to you. You know, we just do it. But that little breath of air supports life because it puts oxygen into your lungs and then into your body. But that same breath of air can also support fire. And were you not glad that you had some fire these last couple of days when it was cold? What if there was not such a thing as fire? What if there was not air that would support something that would create heat? Then we would not only have cold houses but an awful lot of things that are manufactured would not be manufactured because there would be nothing to support the combustion that it takes to make it.

Not only that, but air supports or carries moisture. It enables us to have rain, which enables us to eat. Beautiful thing, rain. Air, just move your hand right through it and you can begin to feel it when your hand strikes against it and it does not feel as though there is anything there, but the faster you move, the more closely the molecules begin to pile up. And if you get that air moving fast enough against a piece of canvas, it moves a ship. Many thousands of tons can be moved by what appears to be a gentle breeze. And all it is is tiny invisible molecules piling up against the canvas and beginning to push it. And it is so strong, in fact, that if you have piled them up close enough to one another it will pick a great big 747 right off the ground—and you cannot even walk on it. And there are tens of thousands of tons being lifted off the ground by something you cannot even see.

Not only that, air carries to us the fragrances of a beautiful meal or of a flower or of perfume. Not only that, air is conveying the sound of my voice to you right now. If there was a vacuum, there would be no sound, and it would be awfully difficult to give sermons, would it not? And many other things besides.

I am sure there is a lot more uses to air and maybe you can get to thinking about many more of them. I just want to illustrate how God is able to make something, and if man were going to make the same thing, he would probably have to make one tool for each job that he wanted to be carried out because we are not able to combine things as well. Do you ever see the way man combines things? I mean, if he does it on his own? You have probably seen this down south. It is very common. Somebody will take an old automobile and they will saw the back end off of it and put an old beat up half ton truck or quarter ton truck body on the back of it and they convert an automobile into a dual purpose vehicle. It looks terrible. It is both car and truck at the same time. But that is the way men do things.

Now, we can do better than that. But nonetheless, again, I think it illustrates the way we do things. God makes things that have multi-purpose use. And the closer we scrutinize what God makes, the more brilliance, majesty, and power, and intelligence we see in what He made.

I remember hearing one of our ministers who is no longer with us, say (it was a good illustration), that a simple cell, one single cell, the kind of cell that you would take out of your body, maybe a blood cell or a skin cell or whatever, that a simple cell is about as complicated as New York City. One single cell. Now, I do not know whether that is a good illustration at all. I do not know whether it is totally valid because that is not my area. That is not my field. I am not a biologist. But I do appreciate the illustration for what it illustrates: that even the simple things that God makes, hey, that little cell is *alive* and it can reproduce itself, which is such a wonderful thing!

Well, God's Word is like God's work. It too has multi-faceted use to it. His Word is just as much of a creation of His mind as air is a creation of His mind. And even as the air has multiple uses and all the things that God has made, and God's mind has such great and infinite length and breadth and

depth to it, so does the Word of God have infinite length and breadth and depth to it as well. And it seems as though the uses of it are inexhaustible. And it is so pure and it is so absolute that I do not care whether you live in the time of Adam or Abraham or Noah or David or anybody else who has lived right up to the end time, God's Word is so infinite. It is so inexhaustible. It is so pure that it *always* applies. It is *always* true. It is *always* valid. It can *always* be used.

Psalms 119:17-18 [the psalmist says] Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your word. Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.

Now there was a man with the right idea. "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law." It is one thing to look *at* the Bible. It is another thing altogether to look *into* the Bible. And that incidentally is something that we have to do as we look into the Bible, that we have to ask God to open our eyes so that we are able to see wondrous things out of the law.

Let us go to the book of Proverbs, chapter 2, where Solomon gives an illustration of the way the Word of God has to be looked into.

Proverbs 2:1 [Solomon says] My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, . . .

Is that the way you look at God's Word? As though it is a pearl of great price, as though it is a treasure, something that you would give a great deal in order to possess? Are you willing to really work for the Word of God now that you have a little bit and you have been able to taste a little bit of its goodness and you are beginning to be able to see somewhat of its value? What would you do if you did not know the value of a diamond and you lived where there were a lot of diamonds? And as a kid, you tossed them around like they were stones and then you became older, more mature, and you began to realize that these things that you were just tossing around like they were nothing were things of very great value. What would you give to be able to go back to your neighborhood, where diamonds were laying around like stones? You would give all your possessions to be able to do that.

So he says,

Proverbs 2:2 . . . so that you incline your ear to wisdom, . . .

See, do you treasure God's Word so that you incline your ear and cup your hand around your ear so that you are really able to get it?

Proverbs 2:2 . . . and apply your heart to understanding; . . .

After you hear, are you willing to churn it around inside of your mind and meditate? Like David said, "I meditate on Your law all the day long."

Proverbs 2:3-4 . . . yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures, . . .

Perhaps you have read about that place in Africa; this thing about the diamonds laying around on the ground. There actually was a place in Africa, it was on the western coast. It was right near the sea coast where diamonds were just strewn through the sand. It was on a kind of a desert. They were just strewn all over the place almost as if a volcanic eruption had occurred and just threw these things all over the place and they were right out on the surface and people began to find it. I doubt if there is any laying on the surface now because when people heard about it, they probably beat a path there.

But most of the time you do not find precious things like that, do you? Most gold mines, I mean the real "mine" mines, not the kind that where you are panning out on a river bank somewhere, but they go deep under the surface. It is the same way with other mines as well. Right now, the gold mines in South Africa go miles into the surface and they are thousands of feet underground. They just keep digging and digging away, chasing the veins of gold; and thousands of men are required to work those things.

I was telling the North Hollywood church this morning about one occasion that I had in my life back in the early 70s to go looking for geodes. You know what a geode is? A geode is kind of like the afterbirth of an explosion

of a volcano. When they explode, they throw just thousands of tons of molten rock up in the air and as it goes up in the air that molten rock begins to solidify. Well see, trapped within that solidification-like object that is flying through the air are all the minerals that comprise that molten rock that was going up in the air. And as they cool, they begin to form crystals on the inside. Now, not all of them, but some of them.

Well, out here in Eastern California, out beyond life, there is an ancient volcano that exploded in the past, in time immemorial, and there are geodes there. And so a group of us from what is now the Garden Grove church went out there and we spent the whole day with pick and shovel and pail looking for geodes. And we found a lot of them! All by myself I found a whole pailful. All of them were about the size of a golf ball. But once you find them—and it took all day to do it—we still were not done because once you find the geode, then you have to cut the geode open because the beauty is on the inside.

Now, about more than 99% of them all you find on the inside is nothing but slag, there is nothing there. But every once in a while you find one in which the crystal formations are almost beautiful beyond imagination. Sometimes they will be formed into a picture, and I know that you have seen them in gift shops, where it looks as though you are looking into a grotto and you see the beautiful water and the sandy beach. Somebody told me about one this morning where there was just a little touch of light in the back of it, like the sun was coming up over a beautiful desert island.

But you do not find geodes just sitting on top of the ground. They are there, but you have to dig for them. And that is the way God's Word is too. There is a reward even in looking on the surface, but there is an awful lot more there that has to be dug for. And when you dig and you dig and you may go a long time before nothing really explodes on your mind. But every once in a while you will be digging and wham! you will get a brilliant idea, a spiritual insight that makes it worthwhile and rewards you with something that you did not have before.

II Timothy 3:16 [Paul says to Timothy that] All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

All Scripture! Now, there is undoubtedly some parts of the Scripture that are more profitable to us at one time than they are at another. There are some portions of Scripture that no matter when we are in the church, they do not seem to be profitable to us. Like the begats. I can just tell by looking this is a group that is willing to spend months reading through the first several chapters of I Chronicles. No, you are not. You know, everybody snickers and laughs because everybody jumps over the thing. We cannot even pronounce the names that are there, let alone find any relationship to our life. But someday, brethren, you mark my words, those begats are going to be important to you. Some day, maybe, you are going to find that your ancestor is named there and you find out where your family came from. Someday. There is a wealth, a spiritual insight of knowledge somewhere in those things!

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable. Now, where do you like to spend your time? Well, wherever it is, I am sure that it can be profitable. But there are some parts of the Bible that we have a tendency to avoid.

Now, in an overall sense, the Bible is a book about government: the government of God, the governments of man, the government of the individual himself, controlling himself and ruling over himself. So the Bible has a great deal to say about government, and we see that and indeed, it is right that we should study about it. We also find that the way of this government is love. Love is an outgoing concern that is equal to your concern for yourself. And that is the way that this government operates. And so there is a great deal about love in the Bible. What love is and how it is to be done. And it is important to the operation of proper government. If we do not have love, then government is not going to flourish in the right way. And so it is important that there be a great deal about those two subjects.

But there is another aspect as well that you need to understand about the purpose and intent of the Bible, and that is that Christ is one of the major objects of the Bible. Turn with me to Romans 10, verse 4 where Paul says,

Romans 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

That is what he is saying there. That Christ is the *object* of the law. He is not saying that Christ is the conclusion of things, that the law is going to be wiped away, that it is no more needed, it is done away with. That is not what he is talking about at all. He is saying that Christ is the goal, He is the purpose, and He is what the law designs. He is the personification of it.

So the purpose of the law is to bring us to Christ. He is the personification of perfect love, He is the personification of perfect government, and He is the standard toward which men are to strive. And so the law then describes what His character is like in very broad principles. Another way of putting it would be this: that the goal of the law is to achieve Christ-like character. We would not even know what the object would be unless the law would tell us. And the law does tell us.

Now, the Bible, especially the Old Testament, is filled with types. We might call them symbols, emblems, tokens, but I am going to use the word types. There are typical persons. It is well understood that David is typical of Christ. We might say that Abraham is typical of God the Father, that Isaac is typical of Jesus Christ. That Rebekah, Isaac's wife, is typical of the church, and so on it goes.

There are typical things. The Temple is typical of the church and so was the Tabernacle typical of the church. The furniture inside the Temple and the Tabernacle are also typical of things as well. So is the brazen altar on the outside typical. And so there are typical people, there are typical things. There are also events that are typical as well, one of which we are going to give you in just a little bit. And there are also typical times that are shown in the Old Testament as well.

I think that we can safely say that the great majority of all of these things—the people, the things, the events, and the times—are directly related to Jesus Christ and His ministry, that He too is the object of those things as well. He is not just the object of the law, He is also the object of the typical things as well. Now turn with me to Galatians 4 and I will show you an example right in the New Testament of how Paul used this principle. This is why Mr.

Armstrong said that the Bible is dual, that it has applications so that it is always applicable no matter when men live. No matter what the times are like, the Bible can be applied to it.

Galatians 4:21 [Paul says] Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

The word "hear" there, what does he mean? Was the law making a noise? No, he did not mean hear in its literal sense, did he? What he meant was, do you understand what the law is teaching? Can you comprehend what is in the law and what its application is to a New Testament Christian? Now, what we find out, and I think that this is a truism, is that in most cases Scripture has more than one meaning. That is, that there is a literal application. It is true, it is a literal application. But then again, under the surface, there is another application that might just be its real intent and the real reason it was put in the Bible.

Paul gives an example of that. We are not going to go through it, but what he is talking about here, beginning with verse 22, is the episode that occurred between Hagar, who was the bondwoman of Abraham, and Sarah, who was the free woman, you see, his wife and their children, Isaac, the son who was born by promise, and Ishmael, the son who was born by natural methods. Paul says this is an allegory. He says, do you not understand that that story is there not just so you will have some nice reading, but it is there to teach you a spiritual lesson, and that is what an allegory does. It is a story (and it can even be a fable), but it is a story whose purpose is to teach a moral or spiritual principle. So the Greeks came up with Aesop's Fables, and so they use animals and fabricated situations which teach a moral or a spiritual lesson at the end. Usually a moral lesson.

Well, that is what Paul is using here with this episode. There is a real spiritual lesson involved in this thing that just appears to be a historical narrative about something that took place a couple of thousand years ago. And that is its real intent.

Now we find that not only are there sections of Scripture that are like this, that are allegorical, that are typical, entire books are typical.

The book of Genesis lays down the foundations for everything that follows. And so that we see the recreation of the earth at the beginning. We begin to see even before chapter 1 is over the barest kind of insight into God's purpose. He tells Adam and Eve to replenish the earth and to fill it. We get into chapter 2 and He says to dress and keep. To dress means to beautify and to enhance; to keep means to preserve from deterioration, and that has something to do with the building of character. We get into chapter 3 and we begin to find the foundation of this world through Adam and Eve and their progeny as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve because of the deception of Satan.

We begin to get up into the days of Abraham and we find the beginnings of both spiritual and physical Israel through Abraham, the patriarch, and Isaac and then Jacob. And when we leave the book of Genesis, we find the children of Israel in slavery or just about ready to go into slavery.

Then the book of Exodus opens with them in slavery and so they have to be redeemed from slavery. They have to be gotten out of their slavery. And that is what the book of Exodus tells us about, the redemption of those who are in slavery through the miraculous intervention of God. And there are typical characters there. Pharaoh represents Satan, Egypt represents the world of sin, and so on.

Now we get into the book of Leviticus and it concerns itself with access to and communion with God. Into Numbers we find wilderness wanderings and these things are typical of you and me as spiritual pilgrims, people without a home, a homeland. We are on our way to the Kingdom of God and so there in the book of Numbers are laid out a multitude, sure they are physical examples, but there are spiritual lessons buried within each one of them, things that we are going to have to face spiritually in our trek toward the Kingdom of God.

And then we have Deuteronomy, the second law—once again! The final preparations for the taking over of the land, the Kingdom of God. A reiteration, a review to make sure that we are finished and prepared for the responsibility ahead. And on and on it goes into other areas. Within all of these books, we see Christ, remember He is the object, that is what Paul said, of the law. And we just went through the law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus,

Numbers, and Deuteronomy. And in all of these books, we see Christ in His offices.

We are going to be spending a great deal of time now in the next month or so on the book of Leviticus. It has much instruction in it in regard to the work of Christ and its bearing on worship, the worship of God. Now, I hope that you have not in the past who are presently thinking of these sacrifices of Leviticus as being barbaric because of all the blood that was involved; being primitive or being childish or being insignificant. Because they are none of those things. They are very important to your salvation. Now, I do not mean that we cannot have salvation without an understanding of the sacrifices of Leviticus. I do not mean that at all. But if we are going to increase in our understanding of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and what our responsibilities are, then you are going to find the book of Leviticus a tremendous help.

Now, in the book of Hebrews, the apostle Paul writes this. Hebrews 10, beginning in verse 1. We just really want a phrase out of here. Leviticus, or I mean Hebrews 10, I said Leviticus because it is drilled into my mind that Hebrews is the Leviticus of the New Testament.

Hebrews 10:1 For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

I want you to think about the law having a shadow of good things to come. We just read there in Romans 10:4 that the law prefigured Christ, that Christ is the object of the law. It is a shadow. In order for there to be a shadow, some reality has to be casting the shadow. Christ is the reality, but the law is a shadow of what He is.

God is the author of these laws and never forget that. Sometimes people get confused because of what it says in Galatians 4 there about the weak and beggarly elements, about the worshipping of times and years and seasons and whatever. And they begin to think that God is talking there about the Old Testament law. No, He is not at all. What an affront that is to God to have His law, that came out of His brilliant mind, to be called the weak and

beggarly elements of the world! That Old Testament Law was designed by a Master Craftsman. And even though it is just a shadow of the reality, it gives you and me some sort of an idea of how great the reality is. Because we need oftentimes something physical that we can relate to in order to get a grasp on how great the spiritual is. And that is where we begin, with something physical, and we grow into the spiritual understanding. The law is a shadow of good things to come and it is not insignificant.

Let us go back a couple of books to the book of Luke, the 24th chapter. After Christ was resurrected, He was speaking to those men on the road to Emmaus. And after walking with them for quite a number of miles and they did not recognize who He was, He said,

Luke 24:25-27 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all of the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

All those typical things back there, including no doubt what we now call Leviticus 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Now in the book of Leviticus, instead of seeing Christ as redeeming us from sin (that is what the book of Exodus is about), we see His work for those already redeemed, we see His work for the church member, somebody who is already in the Body. He is not bringing us out of Egypt, we are already out. He is, in the book of Leviticus, keeping us out, restoring us when we fail, and keeping us in a happy fellowship with God. Now, you know that is very, very important.

I mentioned to the North Hollywood church this morning reminding you of John 17:3, where God defines eternal life in God's inimitable way. He says eternal life is to know God. You cannot know God unless you are fellowshiping with God. And that is why the book of Leviticus is so important. How can we be restored to fellowship with God so that we can continue our relationship with Him and be in the Kingdom because we know

Him, how can it be restored whenever we fall away in some way? And how can we continue to be in good fellowship with Him? What is it that really pleases Him?

Do you not, if you want to fellowship with someone, like to please that person so that you can remain in fellowship with them? And so in order to remain in fellowship with somebody that you admire, respect, and love and honor, you will send them little cards every once in a while and tell them how much you appreciate them. If they do something for you, invite you to their home and you have dinner there, later on in the week, you get out a thank you card and remind them that you really appreciated what they did. You want to continue in fellowship with those people. And if you really love somebody, you will get them a little gift once in a while.

What pleases God? How can you remain in fellowship with Him? What kind of gifts does He want? What will keep the ball rolling so that we can fellowship with Him long enough so that at the end of our life, we have fellowship with Him so much, we are just like He is, we have become the spitting image of Him. That is what the book of Leviticus is about because the book of Leviticus, what it does is it shows you the character, the mind, the attitude of Jesus Christ in about as great a detail as you will find it anywhere in the Bible. We are going to see what pleases God.

So we need to be concerned with the details that show up here in the book of Leviticus because it has a great deal to do with us. And so I want to warn you that even though Christ is the sum total of the offerings—He is the object of it, they are describing Him. Please remember that we cannot separate ourselves from this because of what it says in the book of Hebrews. Let us go back there again in Hebrews the 2nd chapter and this time in verse 10, but let us go back to verse 9. It is a good verse too, a good lead-in.

Hebrews 2:9-10 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory [that is you and me], to make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

It is the word "author" I want you to concentrate on. I have mentioned this to you before in other sermons. It's the Greek word *archegos*. Phonetically it is Archie-Goss, and it is translated author, captain, pioneer. In things other than the Bible, it appears as "a scout." It is also translated in Greek literature as the founder, someone who begins a city or begins an institution. Regardless of where it is used or what kind of a context it is used in, it always has the same general thrust to it. And that is an *archegos* is someone who does something with the intent that others will follow after him and do the same thing. And so a scout blazes a trail so others can walk the same path. A pioneer establishes a city so that others can come in and live in that city. A captain leads his forces into battle, expecting the lieutenants and the sergeants and the corporals and the privates to follow after him into the battle.

Now, Jesus Christ is the pioneer of our salvation and what He does He expects us to do. It is Paul's way of saying that He is our example and that we are to follow Him. Very important. We are not going to do things as well as He did but we should strive to do things after the same manner as He did.

Christ did a very great work and He does the major portion of the work of our salvation. We have a very small part in it, but it is an important part and we have to try to follow through so that God is able to have a free hand in His creative efforts in bringing us into His Family.

Let us go back to the book of Romans, this time in chapter 8. I am laying quite a groundwork here because I want you to understand where I am coming from when we finally do get into the sacrifices.

Romans 8:28-29 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed [Look at this. What has God predestined us for?] to the image of His Son.

We are to be like He is and that requires some cooperation on our part. But that is God's purpose. And so by following His example and with the work of God's Spirit within us and us exercising faith, gradually we will become conformed to the image of His Son.

Let us look at another one in Ephesians 4.

Ephesians 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some to the apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping. . .

The word equipping means to make something for the purpose for which it was intended, to bring it to a state for which it was designed and intended. Sort of like on an assembly line. There are scattered bits and pieces of whatever it is that is being made and gradually as the automobile or whatever moves on the assembly line, it becomes equipped until finally at the end of the assembly line it is like it was intended to be. That is the purpose of the ministry, to bring the people of God, that is, the saints,

Ephesians 4:12-13 . . . for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

And so God, in order to help bring us to this place, He has given men with some insight into His Word that is generally deeper than those in the congregation and the intention of that is to give people information so that they can cooperate with God in God's purpose. And His purpose is to bring us all to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. So we are conformed to the image of His Son, of the pioneer, the author of salvation. We have to grow up into Him. I think that is down in verse 15.

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head—Christ.

Now, in the sacrifices, the offerings, there are very many types. We, that is, the members of the body of Jesus Christ, cannot conform to every one of them. And the reason being is that they are not all intended for you and me. Some of them just give us insight into the character of Christ and they are instructive, but they do not all apply directly to us. But those that *do* apply, we must strive to apply and to understand them first.

Some of the factors in the offerings are common to all the offerings. I better qualify that "all." For example, some of the factors are common to, let us say, three of them, and the three that generally have the most in common are the sweet savor offerings, and those are the burnt offering, the meal offering, and the peace offering. Some of the factors are common to only two and some of the factors are common with nothing else. They are diverse, and they appear only in one offering and none of the others. There are five offerings, incidentally, that we are going to be covering.

In each offering, all five of them, we see an offering, an offerer, and we see a priest. Those three things are common to every one of them. There is an offering, there is an offerer, and there is a priest. But in each one of the offerings, there are variations in each, and each one will emphasize a particular aspect of the person or the character or the office of Christ. Remember those three things, *the person, the character, or the office of Christ*.

Now, in those offerings, Christ *is* the *offerer*. In all of those offerings, Christ is the *offering*. So you see a condition where the offerer is offering himself. And that is interesting. And in each one of those offerings, Christ is also the *priest*, but we see Him in different functions. As an offerer, we see Him as a person, God who became man. As the offering, we see Him in His character. This is an extremely important one. In the offering, we see Him in His character. On the one hand, in two of the offerings, He is a victim. In three of the offerings, He is not perceived as being a helpless victim. And the other one is He is the priest. We see Him in His official function to us today, as our priest mediating for us, interceding for us before God.

There are also variations within each one of the offerings as well. And you have to understand that these variations are also important because they show us different aspects of the character of Jesus Christ. For example, this is not about the offering, but it shows you the necessity of seeing the offerings from several different angles. There are four gospel accounts, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Now there are some events that appear in all four. One of the events that appears in all four is the episode in the Garden of Gethsemane and what occurred at the end of it. I will just pick out two of the books to give you an illustration of how different their approach is.

In the book of Luke, the book begins by telling you that He was the son of Adam. Gives you a clue right away that we are going to see Christ as a man in a peculiar aspect. There is something that Luke has a tendency to concentrate on and that is Christ as a suffering human being. We see Him in His humanity. Now, in the Garden of Gethsemane episode in the book of Luke, this is the one where Luke tells us that Christ perspired. He sweat blood, you see, which would tell you what? It was an indication of deep concern, at the very least. We might even say of fear. I do not know whether to go that far or not, but it would take a tremendous emotion welling up inside of a person for him, not to just sweat water but to sweat blood. We also see Him in the book of Luke, the same episode, we see Him praying for three hours, one hour at a time. And He goes out and tells the men who are with Him, Peter, James, and John, "What? You could not even wait for Me without falling asleep?" We see Him as a man reaching out to His fellows for encouragement, for support, for help, and not finding it. They went to sleep.

Now, the book of John, same episode, does not tell a word about Christ's suffering. (John incidentally says, "Here is your God." That is the main theme, "Behold your God.") And so we see Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Roman soldiers come up and they say, "Where is this Christ?" And Christ says, "Here I am." and the soldiers fall over backwards. Power! You are just looking at Christ from a different angle. They are both true, but each one chose to show a different facet of the episode as it developed.

The offerings are this way. They are multifaceted in their approach to describing Christ in all of His offices: as a person, as the offering, and as the priest as well.

Let us go back to the book of Leviticus and we will begin with the burnt offering. Burnt incidentally comes from the Hebrew word *olah*, which simply means to ascend, something that rises. Now, before we begin this, I want to give you kind of a subtitle to the burnt offering. The burnt offering shows Christ, and hopefully you and me (you might put "man" in parentheses), giving Himself to God as God's portion. It shows Christ giving Himself, you see, an offering of Himself to God as His portion. That is, as God's portion, not Christ's portion; as God's portion, God's portion of His life. Another way of putting it, it is a man giving to God what truly satisfies

God. What satisfies God? What really tickles Him? What makes Him feel a sense of satisfaction, a sense of well being, and would make Him say, "Boy, I like that." Well, that is what the burnt offering is about.

Now there are four distinctions that we need to make here. These are four overall categories. Let us read verses 1 through 4.

Leviticus 1:1-4 Now the Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When any of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd or of the flock. If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord. Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make an atonement for him.'

There are four things about this offering you need to get down.

1. It was a sweet savor to God, or as my Bible says, a sweet aroma. It smelled good; it was not like garbage. It was something that was pleasing to God. It was a sweet savor to God.
2. It was offered for acceptance in the stead, or in the place, or in behalf of the offerer.
3. A life was given.
4. It is completely burned up. All the offerings were not completely burned up. The meal offering was not completely burned up, nor was the peace offering completely burned up, and neither was the sin offering completely burned up. But the burnt offering was completely burned up, which means that the offerer did not get any of the meat.

Now, let us examine them just a little bit more closely. First of all, it was a sweet savor to God. Three of them were sweet savors, two were not. The three that are sweet savors are the burnt offering, the meal offering, and the peace offering. The two that were not are the sin offering and the trespass

offering. The sweet savor offerings were offered on the brazen altar that was just outside the door of the Tabernacle, the sin offering and the trespass offerings were offered outside the city. It was not even offered right outside the Temple, it was offered outside the city. Thus Christ, you see, was killed outside the city of Jerusalem. Now understand this: in the sweet savor offerings, *there is no sin seen in them at all*. There is no penalty. In the sweet savor offerings the person is not making the offering because he has sin. He is making a gift to God. So it is a sweet offering and the offering is accepted *because* there is no sin. Therefore, God appreciates it because He appreciates, He loves things in which there is no sin because sin destroys.

What is there that a person can offer to God that really makes God happy, that pleases Him, satisfies Him, makes Him smile and say, "Boy, there is My son. I love him." Let us go back to the New Testament to Ephesians the fifth chapter.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.
[Now, he is going to tell you what to follow.] And walk in love. . .

Love is an outgoing concern. Walk? What does walk mean? Walk symbolizes, it is typical of the way in which we conduct our life. So he says, conduct your life in love as Christ. So there is a standard for you. It is not just a matter of occasionally walking in love, but it is a matter of walking in love as Christ walked in love. Now, how did He walk in love? He never once sinned. You see, there is the standard now.

Ephesians 5:2 . . . as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us [Is he talking here about the sacrifice of a life? No. But as], an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling aroma.

That tells you that Paul is not thinking about a sin offering here. He is thinking about the burnt offering. Now you know what pleases God, what makes Him say, "Boy, I like that, that satisfies Me. Boy, does that feel good! There is My son. I'm really pleased about that. He's walking, He's living his life completely and entirely by love," the keeping of the commandments and outgoing concern.

Let us draw this picture a little finer. In Ephesians 5:2, as I mentioned, Christ is not appearing there as our sin bearer and neither is He appearing that way in Leviticus 1 in the burnt offering. But rather He is appearing as going further and offering something to God that really makes God happy.

The thought in the background (maybe I should say in the foreground) of all of these sacrifices is the eating of a meal. It is food. That is where the metaphor here is being drawn from. Now, you know how nice it was this past week maybe, that when it was a little bit chilly and you came home from work, maybe you had worked outside all day or at least you had spent a little bit of time outside and it was chilly outside, and you came home, men and women, and somebody had a roast on the table or on the range or there was a soup mixture that was going, somebody was cooking a stew, and what did it smell like? It smelled so good, did it not? The fragrant odor of food. What does that do to you? You begin to anticipate the enjoyment of a meal, the enjoyment of spending time with your family, of talking things over, communicating with one another, making plans, telling about what went on all through the day, and at the end of the meal, after having eaten and talking with your wife and family, what do you feel? You feel a sense of satisfaction, you are full, you feel good; life is worth living.

Now, that is the idea that is at the forefront of these offerings, only the one that we are having the meal with is God. He is the one that has prepared something or we prepared something for Him and we are going to communicate with Him and at the end, we are going to be satisfied. Let us go to Malachi. I will just show you this very quickly because it is a fairly clear example.

Malachi 1:10 "Who is there even among you who would shut the doors, so that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain?"

You see the subject here is His altar. And if you would see the whole chapter in its context, you would see this more clearly. God says,

Malachi 1:10 "I have no pleasure in you," says the Lord of hosts, "nor will I accept an offering from your hands."

Malachi 1:12 "But you profane it [What is it they profane?], in that you say, 'The table of the Lord is defiled; and its fruit, its food, is contemptible.'

The table of the Lord in this metaphor is the brazen altar where the food, where the animal is offered. And so these people were snuffing at what God was willing to share with them.

We still have not arrived yet at what really satisfies God, but it has something to do with that subhead that I gave you. Now, we saw there in Ephesians 5 that it was the walk of Christ, the life of Christ that was lived as a sweet smell, as a sweet aroma to God. Let us go to Romans 12 and we will add another scripture to this picture.

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable [or your spiritual] service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Here is something that is sweet to the taste of God, something that makes Him happy, makes Him feel satisfied. It is a life that is completely in every aspect devoted to Him. Loyal devotion in every labor of life is the most satisfying and acceptable worship of God. Another way of putting it is that real worship is the offering of one's everyday life to God. From the time that you get up in the morning and brush your teeth and get yourself off to work—the way you eat, what you eat, the way you drive your automobile, your relationships with your employer, your relationship with your fellow employees, your relationship with your husband, your relationship with your wife, your relationship with the rest of your family, with your children, your aunts and uncles, your neighbors, the way that you conduct business, the way you do your shopping—every aspect of life is lived in love. Love to God first and love toward fellow man. That is the way Christ lived His life.

Now, we are just starting to build this foundation and we are going to see that, we are going to add to it completely. So what is it that really pleases God? It is not death, not the sacrifice of a life in death. He says, "I take no

pleasure in the death of the wicked." That does not make him happy at all. What makes Him happy? What gives Him satisfaction is a life that is completely devoted. That is what the burnt offering represents. What is well pleasing to God is a life completely devoted to Him. Christ lived that life. He is the example we are to follow.

The next thing was that it was offered for acceptance, that is, in the offerer's stead. Another way of putting it is this: the offerer remains alive, the animal represents him. And so the devotion of the offerer satisfies God. So it is offered for acceptance.

Let us go back to Leviticus 1.

Leviticus 1:3-4 "If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will.'

You might want to underline that because it is mistranslated and I cannot for the life of me figure out why they did that. If you will turn just a few chapters to Leviticus 23 I will show you exactly the same phrase and this time it is translated correctly. Leviticus 23 is the holy day chapter. The subject is the wave offering.

Leviticus 23:10-11 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted on your behalf.'

Same phrase in Leviticus 1:3 that is translated of its own free will or of your own free will or his own free will. And it should read, "It is to be accepted at the door [see] in his behalf." That is conclusively shown in verse 4 where again it says that "it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him."

I want you to pay a little bit of attention to the word "atonement" because we relate that to the Azazel goat in the Day of Atonement where there is sin involved in it. And so, frequently in the Bible, atonement and sin or

redeeming from sin or covering of sin are seen together. But here, atonement does not imply sin because sin is not seen in the burnt offering. Atonement here implies satisfaction because a person has met God's loving and holy requirement. And so God is satisfied. And what is He satisfied with? A life that is completely devoted to God.

So we are not satisfying offended justice here. The law of God is not being broken, but God is satisfied because we have met the requirement of devoting our lives or Christ has met the requirement of devoting His life completely and totally to God.

The third thing: a life was offered.

Leviticus 1:5 'He shall kill the bull before the Lord; and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of meeting.'

Now, what He is you showing here is that not only are we living life completely devoted to God, that that devotion does not end during the midst of a difficult trial, but what is pleasing to God is that we will go to our death in order to satisfy His requirements. Are you willing to do that? That is just something to consider. You know, how deep is your devotion to God? Do you draw lines that "I'll go this far and no further"? Well, then we cannot say that we are meeting the requirements of the burnt offering. Now, Christ did that. He went all the way to His death and never once gave in to the human nature that was there, to any selfishness that might have been there as a result of human nature, but He was completely devoted to God—entirely.

We need to consider here the offering of this life because a great deal of the impact of the offerings here to the Israelite was given in the offering of the life of this animal. Because the person who made the offering had to lay hands on it and that animal became, symbolically, him. And then the animal died, so devoted to God that it would go to death. Now, I want you to consider the animal. When was the last time that you put to death a pet that you loved very much? When was the last time that you shot your dog in the head or that you strangled your cat, one that had been in your family for a long time and your children had played with it?

Well, do you realize that the animals that these people were offering were in most cases just that. The average Israelite, from what we are able to tell from what is written in history books, was a subsistence type farmer. He was just barely getting by. He did not have a ranch that he had 10,000 bullocks from which to draw or 1,000 sheep or 500 goats. He was a person who was just getting by, like you and I, and so he had a couple of animals, a couple of sheep and a couple of goats. And you know very well in that kind of a situation, you know those goats or those sheep or that bullock so well that you have given a name to it! It is Old Bill or it is Old Charlie or whatever. And you may have even had part in the delivery of that animal when it was given birth by a ewe or a cow. And you say "Boy, doesn't it look just like its mother or just like its father?" And that animal becomes a pet because that is all that you have and you feed it by hand and you watch it grow. Then the time comes that you want to make an offering before God, and what do you have to offer? All you have is your pet.

We used to have sheep, my wife and I, and those sheep became so familiar with us they would follow me wherever I would go. If I would go in the pasture, I would have a whole bunch of sheep behind me. And those sheep were such that they knew the sound that I made. And if I would go out to the little pasture they were in and all I had to do was hit a pan with an old spoon and they would come running no matter where they were because that meant supper or breakfast. I can relate to what it says in John 10, that they know the sound of their master's voice and they follow you around just like a little kid.

How would you like to take something that was almost a member of your family and then *you* lay hands on it and then *you* cut its throat? There is a lot of impact there. Now, if you were going to kill your family pet and you were doing it even as a mercy killing because it was just about dead of old age or it had some kind of a disease, the chance is very likely that you would take it somewhere else and you would have somebody else put it to death with a shot or something. And even if you could not do that, you would probably take a gun, something that you would think that would be merciful and quick, and you put it against the head and turn your head and pull the trigger. You would not choose to kill that animal with a knife. It is too personal, too close. You would feel like a murderer. There is a lot of impact there.

Now maybe you understand Luke 14:26 a little bit better. Luke 14, verse 26 is the kind of devotion that God wants and what God got from Jesus Christ.

Luke 14:26 [Christ said] "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

You can see why not many have lived up to the burnt offering. There has been only One in the 6,000 years of man's history who has so completely devoted His life to God, every part of His life, every aspect of life in every area of life. He was completely devoted. *He did not hold any part of His life back.*

Back to Leviticus 1. I am going to take you overtime just a bit. I seem to be wordier in the afternoon, windier, or whatever. You can write down in your notes Philippians 2:5-8 where he tells us that we have to be of the same mind, the same humility, the same approach, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" who was willing to give up being God to serve us.

Leviticus 1:6-9 'And he shall skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces. The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar, and lay the wood in order on the fire. And then the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that is on the fire upon the altar, but he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.'

The head, the fat, the legs, the entrails. What do they mean? What are they typical of?

The head represents your thoughts, your thinking processes. Remember, you are identified now with the animal, you are the one that is going to be completely devoted. You laid hands on that animal and you are going to be devoted to death. And so God wants to make clear that you understand that He wants all of your thinking processes. That head is going to be offered there too and it is going to burn.

The legs represent the conduct of your life, the way that you walk. So Christianity is not just a thinking religion where we believe because of academic understanding, but it is something that is put into action and the way that we conduct our life. That too is devoted to God.

The entrails represent your emotions. God wants your emotions to be like His as well, to be devoted to Him. Your guts.

And then what about the fat? The Bible uses the fat as a symbol of things that are good, of prosperity, of peace. It is a symbol of richness, of well being, a symbol of good health. And so the fat is burned representing your general health and your vigor. He wants all of your energy as well. Whatever you do, you do with all of your might. You think it through, you act it out or walk it out, you do it in the right emotion, and you do it with all of your might. Complete devotion to God, totally surrendered, nothing reserved for yourself.

So to God, the burnt offering tells us that we must give Him a *total* love, a love which dominates our emotions, directs our thoughts. It is the dynamic of all of our actions.

Go back with me to Matthew 22 and we will conclude right here.

Matthew 22:36-38 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all of your soul, and with all of your mind.' This is the first and great commandment."

And that too is the meaning of the burnt offering.