Hebrews 13:15-16

Intro: As a basis for our study, let us turn to Heb. 13:15-16 “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. 16But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” The Hebrew writer here states that we are to offer sacrifices of praise to God. In the Old law the way the Israelites sacrificed was of animals. But now as Paul says in Rom. 12:1 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. We are told in our text how we are to sacrifice our lives to God.

I. The Fruit Of Our Lips.

A. Singing.

1. We are commanded to sing throughout the New Testament.
   a. Eph. 5:19 “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”
   b. Col. 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

2. We correctly apply this in relationship to using an instrument of music in worship.

3. Many do not apply it to themselves when it comes to using their voices.
   a. Many say that they are making melody in their hearts as an excuse.
   b. But the Lord says to sing, as well as to make music in our hearts.
   c. This is done by using our lips.

B. Prayer

1. Christ ever taught us to pray.
   a. Mat. 6:5-15 “And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 6But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. 7But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. 9After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11Give us this day our daily bread. 12And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. 14For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”
   b. 1 Cor. 14:15 “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”
   c. 1 The. 5:17 “Pray without ceasing.”

2. For what should we pray?
   a. Mark 11:24 “Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”
b. John 15:7 “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

c. A qualification is seen:
   (1) 1 John 5:14 “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:”
   (2) Jam. 4:3 “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusters.”

3. This is possibly one of the most neglected parts of the Christian life.

C. Preaching the Gospel.

1. Christ gave us a great commission.
   a. Mat. 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
   b. Mark 16:15-16 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
   c. Luke 24:46-47 “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

2. It is through preaching that others will be saved.
   a. 1 Cor. 1:21 “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”
   b. Rom. 10:13-17 “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

D. It is possible to use the lips against God.

1. Jas. 3:5-6 “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.”

2. The song “Angry Words” expresses this well.

   Verse 1
   Angry words! O let them never from the tongue unbridled slip; May the heart’s best impulse ever check them ere they soil the lip.

   Verse 2
   Love is much too pure and holy, Friendship is too sacred far, For a moment’s reckless folly thus to desolate and mar.

   Verse 3
   Angry words are lightly spoken, bitt’rest tho’ts are rashly stirred, brightest links of life are broken by a single angry word.

   Chorus
   Love one another, thus saith the Savior; Children obey the Father’s blest command; Love one another, thus saith the Savior; Children obey the blest command.
II. Do Good.

A. We are to be busy doing good.
   1. Jesus left us an example; Acts 10:38 “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”
   2. We will be judged by our doing good; Mat. 25:31-46
   3. Tit. 2:14 “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

B. Visitation
   1. Jas. 1:27 “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”
      a. This is not just a social visit (to say hi).
      b. The idea is visit with a view to help or provide for needs.
   2. Heb. 6:10 “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”
   3. We should be actively engaged in visiting the sick, shut-in’s, etc.
   4. We should be actively engaged in visiting on a spiritual level: wayward members, visitors to services, and those who express an interest in Christianity.

C. Benevolence
   1. The early church practiced benevolence.
      a. Acts 2:44-45 “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”
      b. Acts 4:34-35 “Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.”
      c. Acts 11:29 “Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:”
   2. We are to be benevolent.
      a. Jas. 2:15-16 “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, “And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?”
      b. 1 John 3:17 “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”
   3. The basic idea of benevolence is providing the needs of others.
      a. Feeding hungry.
      b. Clothing the naked.
      c. Conditions.
         (1) This does not mean we supply anything the person desires.
         (2) 2 The. 3:10 “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should eat.”

D. Feel (Compassion) for others like Christ.
   1. That led Him to heal the sick; Mat. 14:14 “And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.”
   2. That led Him to comfort the bereaved; John 11:35 “Jesus wept.” (at the death of Lazarus.)
III. COMMUNICATE.

A. Comes from the Greek word κοινωνία (koinonia).
   1. It means to share in or with, joint participation.
   2. It is the word translated, fellowship.

B. This is the principle: what one does through another, he is credited with personally.
   Examples:
   1. Jews were guilty of killing Christ (Acts 2:23 “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”), through the Romans.
   2. As Saul persecuted Christians, he was persecuting Christ Himself; Acts 9:1-4 “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”

C. How we have fellowship.
   1. By our giving.
      a. Phi. 1:5 “For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;”
         (1) A part of that fellowship in the Gospel was their sending money to Paul as he preached the Gospel.
         (2) Phi. 4:15 “Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.” Communicated is from same word as κοινωνία (koinonia).
      b. 2 Cor. 9:13 “While by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;”
         (1) Distribution is the word κοινωνία (koinonia).
         (2) This is within the general context of giving (2 Cor. 8-9).
   2. By our prayers.
      a. Col. 4:2-3 “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving: Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:”
      b. 2 The. 3:1 “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:”
      c. Heb. 13:18 “Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.”
      d. As we pray for others in their good works; and God works through them, then we have had a part in the good they have accomplished.
   3. By our support or encouragement in whatever for that may take.
      a. Exo. 17:11-12 “And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.”
      b. Speaking encouraging words; writing encouraging letters, etc.
Conclusion: We are to be constant engaged in our sacrifices to God. These sacrifices will only be acceptable to God if they are through Jesus Christ. To be through Christ, one must be in Christ with comes by way of our baptism into Him; Rom. 6:3 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"; Gal. 3:27 “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”