

Easters Other Sacrifice

The message of Easter is extraordinary. By extraordinary I mean exceptional or unique. There is no other religious teaching in the world to compare with the meaning of Easter. No other teaching can speak of God's love for the 'world', nor aspire to reach out to the world, in the manner in which the Easter message does. We are familiar with that message. We know that the story of Easter tells of God's love for mankind in the sending of His Son as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world.

It is a story that peels with the message of God's 'grace' to the undeserving; proclaiming forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life through **faith**. In other words, 'grace' heralds salvation for mankind, not on the basis of man's 'righteousness' or 'good works', but as the '**gift**' of God. The story of Easter proclaims that God Himself has provided a way in which guilty men and women can be reconciled to Himself, and be given assurance of eternal life.

All this is a 'gift', but a gift that cannot be received without **another sacrifice**.

The Collect for the First Sunday in Lent says, "O Lord, who for our sake did fast forty days and forty nights; give us grace to use such abstinence, that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, ..". To be the recipients of the righteousness of Christ's atoning sacrifice constrains us to offer ourselves as a 'living' sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2), 'subdued to the Spirit' ie., submitting ourselves to obey God in righteous and holy living. **Christ's sacrifice constrains ours!**

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