

REDEEMED!

Ephesians 1:7-8

Our hymn book includes many songs in which we rejoice in our redemption: *I Will Sing of My Redeemer, Blessed Redeemer, Since I Have Heen Redeemed*, “Redeemed how I love to proclaim it, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Redeemed by his infinite mercy, his child and forever I am.” Redemption is one of the great themes of the Bible. To redeem, in the most simple of terms, is to buy something back.

When God first made man, Adam belonged to God. But Adam sinned. And as a result of sin, Adam became estranged from God. And the rest of the Bible is all about God’s plan to redeem people, to bring mankind back to Himself.

We have already learned that vv.3-14 is really like a song, a great biblical doxology or hymn of praise to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The entire section lays the foundation for the themes that Paul is going to write about in this letter to the Ephesians. Paul sums up the blessings of God to the saints, beginning before the creation (eternity past), includes all of human history, and eternity future. He gives a very brief summary of the blessings of God which are the basis for our worship, praise, and obedience. These blessings are spiritual blessings, brought about in Christ, but involving the activity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Today’s passage, is part of is the second stanza, vv.7-12. Just as the work of the Father in choosing and adopting us was the focus in verses 3-6, the work of the Son is the emphasis of verses 7-12, although the entire text deals with God’s blessings “in Christ.”

God’s Glory in the Church (1:3-14)

I. God the Father Planned the Church (1:1-6)

II. God the Son Purchased the Church (1:7-12)

III. God the Spirit Preserved the Church (1:13-14)

A quick outline of this section is:

II. Praise for the Work of the Son (7-12).

The Benefits of our salvation: God the Son paid the price for the church.

- A. He Redeemed us by His blood—We are forgiven (1:7-8).**
- B. He Revealed His will to us (1:9-10).**
- C. He Realized an inheritance for us (1:11-12)**

Listen to Ephesians 1:7-12:

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace
8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,
9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,
10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; in Him.
11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

In these verses Paul concentrates on two major dimensions of the work of Christ. The first is the work of Christ in relation to the salvation of lost sinners—the redemption which He accomplished through the shedding of His blood at Calvary. The second is the work of Christ in relation to the eternal purpose of God, that is the **“gathering together in one all things in Christ.”** In this lesson we will consider Christ’s work of redeeming lost sinners, and next time we will pursue this great mystery of the “summing up of all things in Christ.”

I. We are Redeemed (v.7a).

A. The Meaning of Redemption.

1. Redemption in the Old Testament

Redemption is a not a word you hear used much today outside of church. It is not a new term in the New Testament. The Old Testament has laid an excellent foundation for us, so that when redemption is spoken of in the New Testament, we may quickly grasp what is meant. Consider the meaning of redemption as defined by its use in the Old Testament.

The great act of redemption in the Old Testament is the exodus, the deliverance of the nation Israel from her bondage to slavery in Egypt. This event epitomized redemption:

“Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.’” (Exodus 6:6).

The Old Testament Scriptures speak often of redemption (the verb for redeem, ga'al is used 98 times in 82 verses in the OT). The primary idea in redemption is that of deliverance. Redemption is the deliverance from bondage, or distress, or opposition, something from which one cannot otherwise escape. In the Old Testament, men were redeemed from:

- Slavery, bondage, or captivity (Isaiah 48:20; Micah 4:10)
- Adversity or distress (Job 6:23; 2 Samuel 4:9; 1 Kings 1:29; Psalm 107:2)
- Trouble (Psalm 25:22)
- Death, or one’s soul going to the pit (Job 5:20; 33:28; Psalm 49:15; 103:4)
- Tyrants, oppressors, or one’s enemy (Job 6:23; Psalm 106:10; 119:34)
- Sin (Isaiah 44:22)

Very often, redemption was accomplished through the shedding of blood. So the writer to the Hebrews says, **“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.”** (Hebrews 9:22).

2. Redemption in the New Testament

From the time of the announcement of our Lord’s birth in the Gospels, men and women of God recognized that He was coming to redeem His people, as it was prophesied in the Old Testament:

Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist prophesied saying, **“Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people,”** (Luke 1:68).

An old woman named Anna meets the baby Jesus in the temple and Luke tells us: **“And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”** (Luke 2:38).

After Jesus’ resurrection the two disciples on the road to Emmaus say, **“But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.”** (Luke 24:21a).

Jesus came to provide redemption through the shedding of His blood on the cross of Calvary. John the Baptist announced the Lord Jesus as a sacrificial lamb saying, **“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”** (John 1:29b).

The word for **redemption** comes from a Greek word which meant *“to release from captivity.”* It was used in Roman times for the paying of a ransom to purchase a slave. By New Testament times the Roman Empire had as many as six million slaves. If someone was a slave and another person wanted him freed, that person would have to buy the slave in order to free him. This is what the word translated **redemption** has in view. It is the paying of a ransom for the purchase of freedom. And that is precisely what Christ did for us.

In a sense, all human beings are slaves. We are all slaves to sin. Jesus said in John 8:34, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin..”** Like the slaves of Rome, Rom.7:14 says we are all **“sold under sin.”**

If we are to be set free from sin’s slavery, someone has to pay the price. Rom.6:23 says the **“wages [value, price] of sin is death.”**

B. The Price of Redemption.

V.7 says that our **“redemption”** is **“through His blood,”** His death. Jesus Christ paid this price **through His blood.** His blood was the price of our redemption. It was a sacrifice which cost Him His life, but provided life for us.

Think about what Jesus did for us. He found us on the slave market of sin, and paid the ransom price for our lives, and set us free. And our redemption can only be found **in Him.** It is in Christ that we have been set free. It is because of His blood shed on Calvary that we have been redeemed. In 1 Peter 1:18-19 we read, **“ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”** Jesus paid the price to purchase us back for God's purposes.

It is like the story of a young boy who made for himself a beautiful model sailboat. He spent months on that boat, and after it was finished he began to sail it on a stream near his house. One day the current, aided by a sudden gust of wind, caught the tiny boat and carried it quickly out of sight. He searched and searched for that little boat, but in vain. He came back day after day to search the banks of the stream, but never found it. Then one day as he was walking through town he saw it. It was displayed in a store window! He went in and talked to the owner about the boat, announcing that it was his. The owner replied that it was not the boy's, for he had bought it from a local fisherman for good money. The boy could have the boat, but he would have to buy it for a price. And so this young man began to work at odd jobs, doing anything and everything, until he finally returned to the store with the money. Finally, holding this precious boat in his hands, he said, "You are twice mine now. I made you, and I bought you. You are twice

mine." That is what Jesus did for us. He made us. And He bought us. We are twice His.

The OT blood sacrifices prefigured Jesus' sacrifice but they were symbolic and powerless. Heb.9:12 says, "**Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.**"

Jesus tells us why He came in Mark 10:45, "**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**"

II. We are Forgiven (v.7b).

And what did His redemption buy us? It bought us, according to verse 7, **the forgiveness of sins.**

A. God forgives our Sin in Christ.

All men are sinners. The Bible plainly says in Rom.3:23, "**For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**"

In salvation, we find total "**forgiveness of sins.**" Because Jesus bore our sins on the Cross, we can now be forgiven completely. We have been pardoned in full because of Christ's sacrifice. What a wonderful benefit! We are the redeemed. The redemption price is Christ's blood. And the redemptive result is the forgiveness of our sins.

When God redeems us, He forgives ALL our sins, past, present and future. You might say, "**God wiped my slate clean when I was saved, but now its up to me to keep it clean.**" That sounds good, but it's not only unbiblical, it's impossible. You couldn't be good enough to be saved and you can't be good enough to stay saved.

Either you are forgiven or you are not. It's that simple. If we are not forgiven of every sin, we are not forgiven of any sin. We are lost.

Max Anders says it this way: "**God forgives every one of our sins. Period. Past, present, future. All. Not a few, but all. Not some, but all. Not most, but all. All. When God created the world, your sins were in the future. He created the world anyway. When Jesus died on the cross, all your sins were in the future. Jesus died for you anyway. When you were in the womb, all your sins were in the future. God gave you life anyway. There is nothing you have ever done or can ever do that will surprise an omniscient God. And there is nothing you have ever done or can ever do that will earn your acceptance with God. That acceptance comes only through Christ. There is nothing we can do to enhance it, there is nothing we can do to detract from it, because it depends on Christ, not on us**" (Anders, pp.36-37).

What an exhilarating truth! We are totally forgiven. Our salvation is absolutely free... we couldn't earn it, we can't lose it! It's all due to God's grace.

B. God Forgives Us According to the Riches of His Grace.

We are forgiven "**according to the riches of His grace.**" This qualifies how and how much we have been forgiven. V.8 says He made this grace "**to abound toward us.**" He lavished it upon us.

Grace is God's unmerited favor toward us. **Grace** is receiving the favor of God when we deserve His displeasure. When we receive the grace of God, we are receiving something purchased by the death of Christ, and given to us because

of what Christ did, not because we deserve it. Grace means God brings us *in* instead of casting us *out*; He gives us life instead of death; love instead of hate; blessings instead of cursings; pardon instead of judgment; peace instead of pain; joy instead of sorrow; and heaven instead of hell.

God chose to give us this grace in a specific way. It is given "**according to the riches of His grace.**" Now, God could give us His grace *out* of His riches, or *according to* His riches. There is a vast difference.

John D. Rockefeller, who was one of the richest men in the world, used to have himself photographed dressed in a top hat and cut-away coat, giving a dime to some little waif. He was giving money from the famous Rockefeller fortune. Though it doesn't seem like much today, to some of those boys it was quite an honor to receive anything from Rockefeller's fortune. But just imagine what it would have been like to have received according to Rockefeller's fortune. Instead of a dime he could have given the boy much more. He could have given him a beautiful home, complete with furniture, and manicured lawns. He could have even adopted him into his own family and given him an inheritance. That would have been giving according to his riches.

There is a vast difference in receiving out of a fortune and receiving according to a fortune.

God has a vast, limitless, storehouse of grace. And He gives us His grace without limit. He lavished upon us this grace. He did not simply give us a little tiny bit of grace. He lavished upon us grace in an extravagant way. We didn't get the leftovers, we got the main course. In Christ God has given us "**redemption**" and "**forgiveness**," a full pardon.

We will always be lavished with God's amazing grace. I think that's what the hymn, *Amazing Grace* means when it says, "*When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we first begun.*"

We didn't get the leftovers, we got the main course. In Christ God has given us a redemptive pardon.

How about you? Have you been set free from sin by Jesus Christ? Jesus said, "**Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.**" (John 8:36).

I urge you today to be sure of your salvation. If you are still continually in bondage to sin, the flesh and the devil, ask Jesus today to save you.

And if you are redeemed, then realize that your life is for the praise and glory of God. You have been redeemed, not so you could do your own thing, but to serve God, Hebrews 9:14 says, "**how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**"

We have been set free from sin to serve the living God! Are you serving Him or yourself?