

REDEEMED AND FORGIVEN

Ephesians 1:7

Intro: I want to make it perfectly clear today, just in case there are those that may not understand, that when the Apostle Paul spoke of our spiritual blessings in Ephesians 1:3, he was speaking of the blessings God has bestowed upon us in salvation. And all of these blessings belong to all of us all of the time. None of us really understood, and so we did not appreciate, when we were saved, all that God had done for us. And that what He did, we could never have done for ourselves, because it is through these blessings of salvation that we have been made acceptable to God through Christ, or, as the Apostle says over and over again in these opening verses of this epistle, we have these blessings “in Christ.” Let me point this out to you by reading through these verses as we already have many times.

In verse 3 we are told that for those of us who are saved, God “hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings **in Christ.**” In verse 4 we are told that we were “chosen **in Him** before the foundation of the world.” In verse 5 it is stated a little differently, that we have become the sons of God “**by Jesus Christ.**” In verse 6 we are “**accepted in the Beloved,**” which is a reference to Christ. In verse 7 which we are going to be considering today, right at the beginning of the verse, and following “the Beloved” at the end of verse 6, we have “**in whom**” we have redemption through His blood.”

Skipping down to verse 10 we are told that the time is coming when God will “gather together in one all things “**in Christ.**” Then in verse 11 we are told that in Christ, “**in Whom,**” that is, in Christ, also we have obtained an inheritance.” In verse 12 we are reminded that when we were saved it is because we “trusted “**in Christ.**” And then in verse 13 we have “**in Whom**” twice, and both of them refer to our Lord. Then verse 14 brings us to the climax of it all.

None of us got these blessings of salvation because we earned it. None of us got these blessings of salvation because we deserved it. You can’t buy salvation. You can’t work for it. It is all God’s gift to us “**in Christ.**” If the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, you have them all. If He is not your Savior, you don’t have any of them.

And so this is a good time for me to ask you, “Is He your Savior?” It

would be a real tragedy, in fact, I can think of nothing worse, for anyone to sit through these messages on Ephesians, and not know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. Don't be satisfied if you can only say, "I hope I am," or "I think I am." If you have sought Him for the forgiveness of your sins, if you have a love for God's Word in your heart, if you are here today because you want to be with the Lord's people, if you love God and want to live your life to please Him, then you ought to be able to say with the Apostle Paul, "I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12). This is one thing that you need to be sure about. I think the words at the end of John, chapter 3, are the words of John the Baptist. He said in the last verse, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." But listen to the last part of that verse: "And he that believeth on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him (John 3:36). "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). "For by grace ye are saved through faith . . ."

It is only because of God's love, His grace, and His mercy that we are not all going to hell. Don't be one of those people who says, "I will take my chances when I stand before God." Let me tell you, "You don't have any chance." Your doom is already sealed unless by the grace of God you put your trust in Jesus Christ to save you from the penalty you are under because of your sins. If the Lord Jesus Christ is not your Savior, trust Him now. Silently right where you are, tell the Lord that you are trusting the Lord Jesus as your Savior.

But now let us turn to verse 7 here in Ephesians chapter 1.

If this were the only verse in the Bible, this verse would be enough to tell us what salvation is.

I. SALVATION IS IN A PERSON.

That Person is the Lord Jesus Christ. When Paul wrote his second letter to the Corinthian church, he had this to say,

For He [referring to God] made Him [the Lord Jesus Christ] sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God (and here are our words from Ephesians 1 again) – in Him (2 Cor. 5:21).

Paul's words here in our text are, "In Him we have redemption through

His blood.” The only One Who could qualify to be our Savior was a man who was not a sinner. Jesus Christ was not a sinner because He was, always has been, and always will be the Son of God, having the very nature of the eternally holy and righteous God. This sinless Son of God became a Man, born of a virgin mother, conceived by the Holy Spirit. He did not deserve to die because He was sinless. But He became our Substitute. The Father laid on His Son our sins, and so Christ died in our place, and what He accomplished on the Cross has been imputed to those chosen by God and given to His Son. So it is “in Him” that our salvation has been secured. Jesus Christ is the Savior, the only Savior. This is what Peter declared before the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem when they asked why he and John had healed the man who had been lame from birth. In Peter’s answer he told them that it was by Jesus Christ that they had been able to heal him. And then Peter went on to say, speaking of Jesus Christ,

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

Peter was saying not that Jesus Christ was one savior among many, but that He was the Only Savior! That is why Paul said, “In Whom we have redemption.”

What comes next in our text?

II. SALVATION IS BOTH A PRESENT AND AN ETERNAL WORK OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST.

Notice the words, “We have redemption.” We all know from our lessons in English that the word “have” speaks of something that we have now. It means that also in the language which Paul wrote this letter to the believers in Ephesus. But in that language, Greek, it also meant that we continue to have it. We are never going to lose it. It is eternal redemption, eternal life. Lots of Bible verses teach us that salvation is not something that you can get, but later you might lose it. The Lord not only saves us, but He keeps us.

Long before Paul wrote Ephesians, King Solomon of Israel wrote in the Bible book of Ecclesiastes,

I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him (Ecc. 3:14).

That is a perfect description of salvation. When He saves us, He doesn't leave anything out, nor is there anything that anyone – neither we, nor the Devil, nor any church body – can take away from it. It is present, perfect, eternal, and unchangeable. The message of the Bible is the same that it has always been, and it will never be changed. Heaven and earth are going to pass away, but God's Word is unchanged and unchangeable.

Going on we read that here

III. SALVATION IS CALLED “REDEMPTION.”

This is what one Greek scholar calls a strengthened for the word for a deliverance which makes this word mean *a deliverance from something by the payment of a price*. What is the price? We see it in the words “through His blood.” Remember that we are talking about Christ from the words “in Whom” at the beginning of the verse. So “through His blood “ speaks of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. But to whom was the ransom, or price of deliverance paid? Hebrews 9:13-14 is one passage which gives us the answer:

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:
14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Payment was not made to the Devil although the Apostle Paul did speak of people who are saved recovering “themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will” (2 Tim. 2:26). But this is when God grants sinners repentance and faith. No, it is not the Devil who stands in the way of our salvation. Our problem is the righteousness of God. But our Lord satisfied that by His death when He offered to God His perfect sacrifice for our sins.

But what did our Lord Jesus Christ deliver us from when He offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. Well, our text tells us one major deliverance in the words, “the forgiveness of sins.” And we know from passages like Romans 6:6 that by the death of Christ we have been redeemed from the power of sin. Here are the Apostle Paul's words in Romans 6:6:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

We have not only been redeemed from sin's penalty, death, eternal death,

but we have been redeemed from sin's power. Sin no longer dominates us as a master. Christ is our Redeemer. He has set us free, not to sin (that is not freedom, but bondage), but freedom from sinning. We can still sin, and we do sin, and will sin, until we die. But we no longer have to sin. Paul has given us hope for deliverance from sinning (which is based upon what Christ did for us when He died in our place) by his words to the churches of Galatia when he said,

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh (Gal. 5:16).

What a salvation! When is the last time that you gave thanks to the Lord for redeeming you from your sins with total forgiveness, and redeeming you as well from sin's power? We all ought to be able to answer, "I thanked Him today." And when He forgives us, He forgets our sin. I read or heard that someone said of God, that He has a good memory and also a good "forgetery." He remembers what we forget, but He forgets what we remember. We remember our sins so that we will not repeat them. But so often we forget what an amazing thing that God did when He sent His Son to die for us that we might be forgiven of our sins. There is no other way that sins can be forgiven. In Hebrews 10:17 the Lord tells us, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." How can we ever thank God sufficiently for what He has done for us in Christ? We can't, but we need to keep trying.

Now we have come through a lot of truth in this verse. This is one thing about which we can say that it is too good to be true! But, let me tell you, ***it is true!*** But the more we know about our redemption, the more we feel our total unworthiness of such a gift from God. And we are! That is the reason we need to pay attention to the last phrase of verse 7, "According to the riches of His grace."

And this brings me to the last point:

IV. OUR REDEMPTION IS BY GRACE.

What does grace mean? I like the definition which Jerry Bridges has given us. He says that grace means that God does not give me what I deserve to have, but He gives me what I could never deserve. What do I deserve? I deserve to be cast forever from His presence. What has He given me that I don't deserve? Redemption through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. You can say the same, if you are saved. We don't deserve it. We can't buy it. We can't work for it. But by God's grace we can

believe it and receive it. And if God gives it to us, and He has, we can never lose it.

Concl: But let me strengthen your understanding of this word redemption by referring in conclusion to three other verses of Scripture. I hope that you all have noticed that this word, “redemption,” appears two more times here in Ephesians.

You will find it in the last verse of this first section of Ephesians, verse 14. But follow me as I read verse 13 with it. (Read Eph. 1:13-14.) God has given every Christian the Holy Spirit as “the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” This means that the full result of redemption will not be known until the Lord comes. Now the promise of God would be enough. But to strengthen our faith God has given us His Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead, as a guarantee that our salvation will be completed. What is the purchased possession? I am. You are. All believers are. Listen to Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20:

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

So this truth about redemption has some very practical meaning for the way we live each day.

And this brings me to the only other time that Paul mentioned “redemption in Ephesians. Turn to chapter 4, verse 30. (Read.) How do we keep from grieving the Holy Spirit of God? Read on in verses 31 and 32. It is by our obedience to all of Scripture that we please the Holy Spirit, and He moves us closer and closer in our hearts to God’s ultimate purpose in saving us.

Now in closing, please turn with me to the last few verses of 1 Corinthians 1. These verses will sound a lot to you like the verses we have covered in Ephesians 1. Please follow as I begin reading with verse 26. (Read 1 Cor. 1:26-31.)

Those of you who attended the Tuesday Class last year (and maybe before that have heard me say that *salvation* is the big word that covers all that God does in our hearts from the time we are saved until we see the Lord

and are like Him. But then I went on to say that salvation is divided into three parts: justification, sanctification, and glorification. Justification is past. Sanctification is what is going on in our lives now, from day to day as we grow in grace and in conformity to Christ. Glorification is yet future when the work of salvation is finally finished.

But there has always been a question in my mind as to why Paul here in 1 Corinthians 1 said that salvation is “righteousness (which is justification) and sanctification, and redemption.” And just this week I have come to realize that, as we have learned from Ephesians, that “redemption” is glorification! That is, “the redemption of the purchased possession,” in its final form, is glorification.

So when you read about “redemption” in the Bible, and learn what it means, don’t take any of the credit to yourself. We can glory in it. We can rejoice in it. *But all of the glory belongs to God.*

Two things come to my mind as I think about this. I have two questions to ask:

1) First, are you redeemed? It would bring the greatest sadness to my heart to learn that there were people at Trinity Bible Church who heard the Word week after week, regardless of who the speaker might be, who never trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, as their Redeemer. The Lord has promised us that whoever calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved. If you have never called upon Him to save you, call before you leave this place today.

2) My second question is directed to myself and to all of you who know the Lord. It is this: What are we doing to spread this good news of salvation to our neighbors and friends, to people who may live in other parts of the country? We tell ourselves that these truths are so wonderful that it is hard to believe that they are true. People usually have the craziest ideas about God, and about the Lord Jesus, and about the Holy Spirit if they know anything at all. May the Lord burden all of us to be more active in spreading the message of salvation to those who do not know the Lord. That is one of the major reasons that Lord has us here on the earth. The world will not come to us; we need to go to the world. Let us all learn to sin from the heart what we often sing in church, “Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it.”