

Bought, Paid For, Forgiven
Ephesians 1:1-7
By Randy Wages
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Note: The text below was prepared for oral delivery rather than for publication in print. As such, be aware that sentence fragments are intentionally used and that this document has not been edited to correct the errors in grammar, sentence structure, etc.

- I. Introduction: Our primary text for today is Ephesians 1:1-7 and the title of my message is “Bought, Paid for, Forgiven.” And I want to focus our attention on the scriptural truth that each of these 3 aspects of salvation (as with every aspect of the salvation of a sinner) is inseparable. According to the Bible, (1) all who are saved have been bought (so to speak) – God purchased His church – all those He determined to save and whom He chose unto salvation in Christ. And (2) that purchase came at a dear cost – their very salvation has been paid for. Before the bar of divine justice, the debt due unto each and every one of their sins has been remitted by the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ, their Substitute and Surety in whom they were chosen. And lastly, (3) all who are saved are forgiven. God does not charge them with their sins, having charged or imputed them unto their Savior who paid that debt in full.

I hope to show you from scripture that if you believe God’s Word, the Bible, it is undeniable that not one of the blessings that accompany the salvation of sinners can be detached from the others. In fact, before looking at our text, let me go ahead and show you that from Romans 8, beginning in verse 28:

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called <if you love God you are among the called, “...who are the called...> ***according to his purpose.*** ²⁹***For whom he did foreknow,*** <i.e. – the objects of His eternal, electing love> ***he also*** <This is the 1st of 4 ‘alsos’ in 2 verses here showing how these are all connected. “he also...> ***did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*** ³⁰***Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*** ³¹***What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us*** <or that could be read by true believers (such as those to whom Paul was writing) as “since God is for us...”>, ***who can be against us?*** ³²***He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*** <all those He foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified>, ***how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?***

This passage alone makes it clear that all things pertaining to the salvation of a sinner (from their eternal election in Christ to their final glory in heaven cannot be separated. And so the same is true of these 3 aspects of salvation we will focus on this morning.

In reference to God's election of a people in Christ, (1) it cannot be said that any one of them might fail to believe on Christ because of their choice – not if you believe the Bible and the passage I just read. No – all of God's elect will choose God – they'll be among those called ones who love Him (this God of election – the God of the Bible) because he first loved them (I John 4:19). As Psalms 110:3 teaches, God makes them willing in the day of His power. In reference to Christ's death on the cross (2) it cannot be said that a single one of them for whom He died might not be saved. The popular heresy that God loves all without exception and Christ died for all without exception is exposed to be a deadly lie if God's Word is your standard for all spiritual truth. And (3) each and every one whom God chose unto salvation in Christ and for whom Christ died is a forgiven sinner. Let's examine this further in today's text, Ephesians 1, beginning in verse 1 where we read...

- II. Text, Ephesians 1:1-7: ***Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints*** <i.e. - written to the set apart believers of like-minded faith, to the saints...> ***which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: ²Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: <"in Christ" – underline those 2 words in your mind's eye – all the blessings mentioned in this long sentence are all due to their union in Christ> ⁴According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, <This is their election unto salvation in Christ.> that we should be holy and without blame <That means not guilty – righteous in His sight. "...holy and without blame> before him in love: ⁵Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, <not your will but His> ⁶To the praise of the glory of his grace, <His favor upon those who do nothing to merit or earn these blessings. That's grace...> wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. ⁷In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;***

Bought, Paid For and Forgiven.

- III. Illustration: Let me share an illustration that might present a contrast so as to help us focus on how these 3 aspects of salvation are sure, certain, and inseparable realities for all who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ.

Consider the simple transaction of purchasing something. Let's say you ordered some merchandise on the internet but the item that you ordered is temporarily out of stock. Even so, you entered and confirmed the order. So at that point, you have bought it and in doing so you have committed to pay for it – obligating yourself to do so. And if all goes according to plan, once the item comes available, they will send you a bill (or more likely a credit card will be debited based on the information you entered when you made the order) and they will ship the items to you. If they send you a bill, you'll receive it with information on where to send your payment. It will read, "Remit to..." and then list the vendor and address where you are to send the check. Remission must be made for this transaction to proceed. And if it were charged on a credit card, you'll eventually receive that monthly statement and among your charges will be the one for this product, and that bill too will read, "Remit to..." the credit card provider and their address. Now once your check has cleared the bank, the debt is then forgiven. It should be taken off the books. It won't appear as one of the charges due on the next credit card statement. So it can be said that you bought something, paid for it, and you owe nothing more – the debt is forgiven.

Well as I attempt to draw an analogy between such a scenario and the 3 aspects of a sinner's salvation which I've asserted are sure, certain, and inseparable, there's an obvious problem with the analogy isn't there? And that problem is all due to where the responsibilities lie for causing these things to occur. In my illustration, fallible creatures like you and me bear the responsibility for successful completion of the transaction. But in salvation, the responsibility for making that a reality falls on One party who cannot and does not fail. He shall save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

Now with such a simple transaction as I've described in my illustration, what could possibly go wrong? In short, a lot.

A. Bought: First consider the purchase. I've heard of people ordering clothes for a special occasion with plans to return it after wearing it once to their special event and then send it back, claiming it was the wrong size so as to get a refund – perhaps before ever having to remit any payment whatsoever. They were a little fraudulent I'd say – didn't really plan to buy it. In other instances, the purchase may have been well-intentioned with a sincere desire to buy the product, but your credit card could be denied because you've maxed it out or it could have been frozen due to an identity, theft completely out of your control.

And what about the seller?

We hear of scam websites offering to sell items that are never delivered. You may have wanted to buy it but too bad if that's the case. Even well-intentioned, reputable sellers may become insolvent and declare bankruptcy or go out of business without delivering. The manufacturer could have a material shortage, a major disaster in their factory, or a safety recall with the product – all kinds of things could prevent them from delivering what you bought. You wanted to buy it but you can't be sure of making that a reality.

- B. Paid For: What about payment? By placing that order, you committed to pay for it. Even if the buyer is well-intentioned, things can go wrong. Financial disaster can strike and you may no longer have the ability to pay for it once it comes available.

Likewise the seller may have gone out of business, and his bank accounts all closed so as to not be able to receive your payment.

- C. Forgiven: And finally, let's say you did buy it, you paid for it but you continued to receive notices indicating you still owed the debt – that the debt hasn't been forgiven. I've had occasions where I had to send a vendor a copy of the cancelled check in order to prove that payment had been made. Payments can get lost in the mail. A fraudulent seller may prey on certain folks so as to continue to get paid multiple times for the same goods, never removing the debt from the books – it wasn't forgiven.

And suppose you agreed to buy something (such as a vehicle) by making periodic payments over some agreed upon term. You've bought it, but the debt isn't forgiven. Even though you've bought it and may be using the car, whoever is financing it keeps up with the balance due. And you don't receive the title until it is completely paid off. There's no forgiveness of that debt until it has been paid off in full. And if at any point you fail to make a timely payment, the take back man may come and repossess your vehicle.

Well enough of this. Clearly, lots of things can go wrong when it involves fallible creatures such as we are.

- IV. But God...: But when it comes to God's purpose to save a people, nothing can go wrong. Salvation is truly of the Lord as the Bible proclaims – the whole kit and caboodle – every aspect as we saw from the Romans 8 passage.

- A. Bought: In Acts 20:28b, saved sinners are referred to as, “**...the church of God, which he <God> hath purchased with his <God's> own blood.**” In saving sinners, God provides that which He alone purchases with His own blood. God alone bears the responsibility for making the salvation of His people a reality and He can't fail!

Typically when we reflect on this verse we think of the redemptive work of Christ on the cross where the purchase price was paid (the shedding of His own blood) whereby those for whom it was paid are fully forgiven. But for our purposes today, consider that when you determined to place that order for a product, you essentially bought it at that time – committed to the purchase. Well likewise, as we read in Eph. 1:3-4, God has ***“...blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,...”*** From before the foundation of the world God (from eternity past) entered the order. In that sense He bought us in eternity past. Christ willingly took on the responsibility to pay the debt as the Surety of His people. In His electing love, God the Father put His people in God the Son, in Christ – chose them IN HIM. The reputation of the Godhead was laid on the line as God obligated Himself to Himself.

Now is there any possibility that the triune Godhead (the all-powerful, the all-knowing, faithful God of the Bible) would or could default on His well-intentioned purpose? God forbid. As God declares of Himself in Isaiah 46, beginning in verse 9, ***“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel <His purpose contrived by infinite wisdom> shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: 11Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: <a reference to the instance of God’s use of the pagan King Cyrus to deliver the Jews from their captivity> yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.”*** And that is true of all that God purposes to do or else He would cease to be God.

What God purposed from before the foundation of the world shall come to pass. He bought His people in electing love and their sins (and only their sins) did He obligate Himself to pay for – to come in time and make remission for all their sins whereby they are eternally forgiven of the debt that was due unto all of their sins.

- B. Paid For: The popular presentation of Christ’s death on the cross as simply an expression of His love or some sort of token offering that makes folks savable if they’ll do their part is totally contrary to what the Bible teaches concerning His death and what it actually accomplished – He redeemed a people as we’re told in Galatians 4:4-5, ***“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”*** Sins were paid for and we see this in our text. As Paul enumerated the blessings of salvation in Christ, He said at the beginning of verse 7, speaking of Christ, ***“In whom we have redemption through his blood,...”***

As I mentioned earlier, Acts 20:28b speaks of this when it refers to, “...***the church of God, which he*** <God> ***hath purchased with his*** <God’s> ***own blood.***” This is speaking of the blood of God – God, who is Christ – the God-man. The greatness of redemption is magnified by the greatness of the Redeemer who died, the just for the unjust (I Peter 3:18), who offered Himself up without spot (Heb. 9:14) – the sinless Substitute. So we get some idea of the immensity of these blessings, by the immensity of the nature of the One who alone could and did accomplish redemption – God and man in one Person. As believers are told in I Cor. 6:20a, “***For ye are bought with a price:...***” and Oh what a price!

The Greek word that is translated “redemption” in Ephesians 1:7 and other places is a compound of 2 other Greek words. And as combined it means deliverance, denoting the release by the full payment of a ransom price – no balance remaining due. The word is borrowed from an ancient, well-known custom of buying off or redeeming what is pledged by one man to another, by way of security. So one could be said to redeem something when he buys it out or pays it off. And such is the case for those who have redemption in Christ. They are bought out of the hands of God’s own strict and inflexible justice so that He might achieve His great design in all things – that He might be glorified and worshipped as He is – as both a just God and a merciful Savior.

In our text we see that these saints are said to be accepted in the beloved (accepted in Christ) and that from all eternity and this by virtue of the necessary, God-purposed, and therefore certain redemption that took place in time – the buying back before the justice of God of His own adopted children who were chosen to be holy and without blame in order that they would and could be so viewed (holy and without blame – righteous) and that consistent with the just character of God – and all based upon the redemptive work of Christ at the cross. Those who are saved, accepted in Christ, have the entire merit of the perfect satisfaction to God’s law and justice that was rendered by His sinless obedience unto death on the cross, His righteousness, imputed or accounted unto them. In Romans 4, Paul mentions how David “...***describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, ⁷Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. ⁸Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.***” – having imputed them to their Surety, their Substitute, their Savior! (Romans 4:6-8)

So redemption speaks of a price paid to God, whose justice is offended, whose law is broken – against whom all sins are committed. It’s the remission or payment due unto the justice of God.

It's the price paid to a God whom the Bible tells us will not clear the guilty at the expense of His justice. They must be righteous, not guilty in His sight if they are to be cleared – They are made righteous in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). In Rev. 5:9 Christ is said “to redeem” men “unto God by His blood.” And so we see that the redemption price is (1) His shed blood and (2) it is paid or remitted unto God Himself. And we know it was sufficient and paid the debt in full because Christ arose from the grave in victory over death, proving that God's justice had been fully satisfied by His shed blood – by the everlasting righteousness He rendered which demands spiritual life and everlasting life for each and every one for whom it was rendered.

Dare any suggest that the price of His own precious blood was insufficient or only partially effective so as to have failed to save even one soul for whom it was shed? Sinners like us may default and fail to fully pay something off but not so with God. And yet by nature, we're prone to think God to be more like ourselves. In Psalms. 50:21, God, speaking through the Psalmist, was testifying against the people and he tells us where their thinking was flawed in vs. 21 when He says, “***These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.***”

And much of the heresy so rampant in so-called “Christianity” has in mind an idol that is called “god” but who is thought to be altogether different from the one true and living God of the Bible. Many preachers present and their listeners believe in a god (little ‘g’) who is thought to be too much like us creatures – one who (according to their doctrine) presumably could (and does) fail to save many of the objects of his love whom they allege are included among those for whose sins Christ died. They worship a god who tries to save but fails for the most part.

Well, despite the popular teaching of our day, Christ did not redeem any who will eternally perish. He said to the Father as recorded in John 6 that all that you've given me shall come to me and I'll not lose one of them but will raise them up at the last day. Oh, what low opinion I once held (and sadly many still hold) of what we called the redemptive work of Christ in thinking that even one for whom He died could possibly perish. A god that would take adequate payment for the sin debt of anyone and still send that sinner to hell would be an unjust monster – not the God of the Bible. No matter what we called it – that's not redemption. He redeemed all of those for whom He died and they shall live forever with Him in heaven's glory! We're told in Hebrews 10:17-18, of all who are included in God's everlasting covenant of grace, He says “***...their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. ¹⁸Now where remission*** <payment made> ***of these is, there is no more offering for sin.***” Christ's death wasn't an attempt made. It was a payment paid!

C. Forgiven: Those who are saved are bought, paid for, and forgiven. In verse 7 of our text, we read of Christ, ***“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*** The sin debt was paid whereby the sinners for whom it was paid are fully forgiven. Consider that by the one act of redemption (by Christ’s death on the cross) the redeemed sinner is justified (i.e. - through redemption, pronounced righteous before God from all eternity) and (2ndly) he or she is absolved from all guilt. They are pardoned or forgiven. So while these blessings cannot be detached from one another, we recognize that they are distinguished in the scriptures as distinct aspects of the one great eternal salvation of the saints in Christ.

To illustrate how these blessings are distinct (though inseparable) from one another allow me to share an illustration which I’ve used before. Consider that if a king or ruler pardons a criminal (which can be likened to forgiving him), that such an action does not entitle the pardoned criminal to inherit the king’s estate, or his crown or his kingdom. But it does free him from punishment to which he otherwise would be subjected. But what if the king not only forgave or pardoned the criminal but legally adopted him so as to make him his son and an heir. Wow – what a double blessing because the adopted child then is entitled to the life of the kingdom and the happiness that such an inheritance brings. So have the children of God adopted in Christ. Not only have their sins been put away, but they have His perfect righteousness imputed – the entire merit of His obedience unto death. And as such, theirs is the kingdom of God, the King of kings – an eternal, incorruptible, inheritance!

Their sins have been remitted – paid for. And though these blessings describe different aspects of salvation, they cannot be detached from one another – not according to God’s Word. And there is another reason we know that for any whose sin debt was paid or remitted by His shed blood, forgiveness of their sins is sure and certain. The Greek word, aphasis (af’-es-is) that is translated as “forgiveness” here in Ephesians 1:7 and in 6 other places if I counted correctly, is also translated as “remission” in 9 New Testament passages. “Forgiveness” and “remission” are the same Greek word. It’s a word that means deliverance, pardon, release and a complete forgiveness – it means paid in full. This makes sense for we know that when you remit a payment so as to pay someone off, they are released from their obligation, forgiven of the debt, but only if it has been paid in full.

V. Closing: From today’s text, I trust you can see how these eternal blessings in Christ are indeed inseparable. They cannot be detached from one another. We get the same sense from Hebrews 10 where the Lord, speaking through Jeremiah was quoted regarding His everlasting covenant of grace.

Look with me at that beginning in verse 14, speaking of Christ's one offering for sin on the cross, we read, ***For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*** ¹⁵***Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,*** ¹⁶***This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;*** <And as I read earlier> ¹⁷***And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*** ¹⁸***Now where remission*** <same word translated forgiveness in Eph. 1:7> ***of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*** They're forgiven.

And if we continue reading in Ephesians 1 we discover how we might know if we are included among those possessing these inseparable, eternal blessings in Christ – how they belong to us by God-given faith – another inseparable blessing that accompanies the salvation of God's elect. Look at that beginning with verse 7, speaking of Christ – ***“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*** ⁸***Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;*** ⁹***Having made known unto us*** <by the revelation of God-given faith> ***the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:***

¹⁰***That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:*** ¹¹***In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*** ¹²***That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*** ¹³***In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation:*** <the Gospel wherein His righteousness is revealed to us> ***in whom also after that ye believed,*** <What assuring words if this describes you – “...after that ye believed, ...> ***ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*** ¹⁴***Which is the earnest*** <the sure guarantee> ***of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession,*** <Note here that redemption refers to our final redemption into heaven's glory> ***unto the praise of his glory.***

Rejoice with me if you too have put all your trust in Christ and His finished obedience unto death on the cross (His righteousness imputed to you) for all your salvation because if so, you too have been bought, and your sins fully paid for and completely forgiven. There's nothing better! Bought, Paid For, Forgiven!

Footnote from the author: While this sermon was prepared and delivered by me, I often utilize the commentaries, study helps, and teachings of others to supplement my own prayerful study of the scriptures. Since this document was not originally prepared for publication in print, please excuse and recognize that it was unfeasible to properly identify and credit all of the various original sources used to develop the content herein. Ultimately, it is my sincere and foremost objective to accurately present the gospel of God's grace found in the only infallible source, God's word itself – the Bible.