

*Bless God for Redeeming You!*

Ephesians 1:7-12

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 (Allen S.)

Bethany Baptist Church  
March 25, 2017 (a.m. service)

...pray...

The approximate *population* of the planet is currently **7 billion souls**.

Of those **7 billion**, the *United Nations* estimates that at least **30 million** live in *slavery*. The modern *slave trade* is a *huge & insidious* industry.

But the *Bible* guarantees that absolutely *everyone* is born into *slavery*...!

*Spiritual* slavery.

For which there is only **one** *hope*.

But it is *great hope*!

**Let's return to Ephesians 1... read vv.3-14 (focus on vv.7-12).**

Maybe this was Paul's opening *worship song* – like our *call to worship*!

We *do* know it's one of Paul's best loved *long sentences*. *Yup*, this is *all* just **one** long sentence – **202** Gr. words. And it's pretty difficult to *dissect*!

But you *can* organize it into **3**-stanzas:

**#1** – The blessings by the *Father*.

**#2** – The blessings in the *Son*

**#3** – The blessings thru the *Holy Spirit*.

Every *stanza* ends with a reference to *the praise of the glory of [God.]*"

Last Sunday we examined *Stanza 1* – the *blessings of election* ( → *election, predestination, adoption, depravity*) & therefore the *goal of worship* → "to the *praise of the glory of His grace*."

This morning we'll unpack *Stanza 2* – the blessings of *redemption, revelation, & our inheritance* – again, all *to the praise of His glory*!

**The best blessings you have were purchased by the blood of Jesus!**

- 1. The precious price of our blessings (v.7 & 8).**
- 2. The rich blessings of our salvation (vv.8-11).**
- 3. The blessed goal of our redemption (v.12).**

**Our blessings are *free*, but they aren't *cheap*! Paul writes of the precious price of *redemption* (v.7 & 8).**

1. Paul began his *anthem* (v.3) by *blessing* God for *blessing* the saints with *every spiritual blessing...in Christ*.
  - a. While we are going to examine **three** *blessings* that Paul's associated with *God's Beloved...*,
  - b. I want to begin by especially focusing on the **first** of those *four*: the blessing of our *redemption*.
  
2. *In Him we have **redemption** through His blood!*
  - a. It's easy to see from the end of **v.6** that "*in Him*" refers right back to God's "*Beloved*," His Son Jesus Christ. *Redemption* is only possible in Jesus!
  - b. The **NT** vocabulary of *redemption* comes out of an entire *family* of words with meanings like: *acquittal, pardon, adoption, mediation, ransom*. Many of those words deal with *legal actions*.
  - c. The starting point here is *redemption* rooted in the idea of *paying a ransom*. *Redemption* is the language of the Roman *slave market*.
    - i. By the time the *Empire* had reached its *heights*, it included as many as **600 million** *slaves*. Slave trading was *big business*!
    - ii. Slave were to *buy, trade & use* – they were simply *property*.
    - iii. But from *time to time* someone *saved up* and *bought* a slave to set him/her *free*. Paying *the full price* and then letting him go *free* with *documentation* to *prove* it was all *legitimate*.
    - iv. Paul's "*redemption word*" (Gr. **λυτρω**) is rooted in the picture of *buying back a slave* to grant him *complete freedom*.

- d. You were a *slave*... The Bible clearly teaches that *every* man/woman is born into *spiritual slavery*.
- i. In **Romans** (7), the Apostle – *we are **all sold into bondage to sin***. Paul was referring to the outcome of *Adam & Eve's sin*.
  - ii. Paul *also* taught (**Rom 8**) that even *creation is cursed* as a result of *Adam's fall*.
  - iii. Jesus said (**John 8**) – “*Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the **slave of sin***.” Our own acts of sin *confirm & further entangle* us in our *spiritual slavery*.
- c. But if you are *in Christ* you are no longer a *slave to sin* because Jesus *paid the ransom to secure your redemption!*
- i. The *cost* was dear, you can't *measure* it in any *earthly currency*, you can't *weigh* it out on any *merchant's scale*...
  - ii. Your *freedom* was bought with *blood*...the *blood of Jesus*, shed on the *cross*.
  - iii. This *truth (blessing)* that the *Lamb of God* died to *buy your pardon* is all over your Bible: *Leviticus & Isaiah & John & Romans & Hebrews & Revelation & ...*
    1. Where could you go in your Bible & *not* find the *blood of Christ!*
  - iv. **1 Pt 1:18&19** - *knowing that you were not **redeemed** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but w/ **precious blood**, as of a **lamb** unblemished & spotless, **the blood of Christ***.
    1. His *blood* bought *our blessing!*

3. Then (still v.7) Paul immediately *identifies* the result of *redemption*. The sin that *enslaved* us is now *forgiven*. It is *sent away*!
  - a. In the **OT** *sacrifice* system, on a day called *Yom Kippur*, the *priest* would receive **2** *unblemished* goats. The *first* he would *sacrifice* on the *altar*.
  - b. The *second* he would *lay* his hands on, symbolically *transferring* all the *sins of Israel* onto the animal.
  - c. The *goat* was then taken off into the *deep wilderness* and *abandoned*, *bearing the sins* of the people. It would *never return* to the camp!
  - d. In *redemption*, Jesus *died* to pay *the* penalty for *your sins*. They were *placed on Him* and taken totally *away*, never to *return* to you!
  - e. **Redemption** is the cause & **forgiveness** is its result: our trespasses are placed on Christ & paid for by Christ ... & sent away!
  
4. No *human scale* can measure the value of Jesus' *sacrifice* for His people.
  - a. Paul writes the only *scale* is the *heavenly measure* of the *grace* of *God*.
  - b. Our Father's treasury of favor, *the riches of His grace*, is poured out on us *in His Beloved*...
  - c. **V.8** - ...*grace* is **lavished** (*spread on thick*) on you & me, His *elect*.

**...in Him...your redemption is in Him!**

**And Paul's second stanza has just begun; he follows redemption w/ two more blessings in vv.8-11 (don't read).**

1. Let's call our *next blessing*, the privilege of "revelation." **Read vv.8b-10.**
  - a. When you gain a *privileged position*, it often allows you *access to information* you didn't know *before!* One of the *big blessings* that believers have in Christ is *revelation* into the mysteries of God's will.
    - i. "Revelation" is seen in Paul's interconnected use of the terms (8,9): *wisdom & insight & making known & mystery & will.*
    - ii. *Wisdom (σοφία)* – *understanding of principles & teachings & truths.* I think **MacArthur** is really helpful here when he defines *wisdom* as "*the understanding of life's ultimate questions.*"
    - iii. But what do you *do* w/ your *wisdom*? In **OT** *thought, insight* was the ***practical application*** of *wisdom.* It's taking your *Bible out of the door* on Sunday & *into your life* on Monday!
    - iv. "Making known" is what God does here for us (9a)! Spec. He *blesses* us w/*the wisdom & insight* to know His *will...*
    - v. ...which brings us to "mystery." *Mystery* is a pretty common theme w/ Paul (ch.2&3); in the Bible *mystery* means a *truth* or *plan* that God has *hidden* from mankind & can't be *discovered* w/o His *grace* (help), but the *mystery* is revealed to *whom* He pleases, *when* He pleases.
      1. God does *not* give just *anyone* the ability to *decode* His *will.* So it remains a *mystery* to the world.
      2. But He has *revealed* His will to *us!* In fact, Paul has written in **1 Cor 2** – *we have the mind of Christ!*

- b. Now Paul briefly *reveals* the *mystery of God's will* in **v.10 (reread)**.
- i. *First of all, it isn't surprising to know that God's will is grounded "in Him" → in Christ (9b & 10).*
1. Christ is the *focal point, the linch-pin*, of all of God's *plans*.
  2. Let' simply *reinforce* that by reading a little further in **ch.1: vv.18-23**. God makes Christ the *head of all!*
  3. Spec. (10), God will implement a *kingdom (administration)* in which *all things* are gathered **back up** & given to Christ.
  4. This is essentially God's plan for the *end our age* (= *fullness of times*, v.10). You & I have been given a *preview* of history's *final chapter!*
    - a. Beloved, here is hope: *history belongs to God!*
    - b. God has revealed to *us* history *ahead* of time: *every knee will bow & every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father!* (Ph 2)
    - c. *History belongs to God*, and God will **wrap up** *history* into *Christ!*
- c. One more *truth* about God's *mystery*: *it's always good!* Paul writes (9) that God's *will* reflects God's *kind intention* – **good pleasure**.

2. Christ has given us the *blessings of redemption & revelation* & (3<sup>rd</sup>) of an *inheritance*. (**Read v.10b-11** – *In Him also we have...*).
  - a. I.e, we have the *blessing of an inheritance in Christ*.
  - b. Paul *immediately* ties your *inheritance* to the *Doctrine of Election*, spec. he refers for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time to *predestination & God's purpose*.
    - i. Does this sound *familiar*? It *should*! Let's *rewind* to **vv.3&4**.
    - ii. God *predestined* you to *adoption* (4) & God *predestined* you to have a *heavenly inheritance* (10)! In **vv. 5&10** you simply can't miss the connections between *adoption & inheritance*, all made possible by *predestination & election*!
    - iii. Paul is simply *previewing* one of the *outcomes* of God's *choice*: God *chose* you to *adopt* you as His child & to *receive* your *inheritance* (= Phil 4. *all the riches in glory in Christ Jesus*)!
  - c. But is it *possible* that this won't *happen*? (Maybe your *circumstances* don't *feel* so *royal* this morning...) Beloved, God *assures* you that as **certainly** as you are *redeemed*, you will *receive* your *inheritance*...
    - i. It's all right here at the end of **v.11**; *I love this promise...*!
    - ii. God **works** all things *after the counsel of His will*. (2X) Just as He *determined*.
    - iii. Not that He **works out**, He simply **works**. I.e. He isn't *reacting* to the "*cosmic whatever*" and making a *silk purse* out of a *sow's ear*, He has *predetermined* it all & *brings* it all to pass *exactly as detailed* in His eternally decreed *blueprint* .
1. Before we move on, let's stop to *enjoy* the blessings of *revelation & inheritance*.
  - a. Both blessings are proof of your *privileged adoption*. To say it simply, only *insiders* get a *peek at the plan*! And only *sons & daughters* are granted an *inheritance*.

**It's all yours in Christ – redemption & revelation & eternal inheritance.**



**So what is God's goal in blessing you? Read v.12**

1. "**We**," Paul writes, are "*the first to hope in Christ.*" That "**we**" applies to *all believers...*
  - a. Spec., *we* now belong to God because of Christ, who **redeemed us through His blood, granting forgiveness of our trespasses & release from their penalty.**
  - b. So *we* are now God's because of our *hope* in Christ's *death & resurrection.* Think of "*hope*" here like *trusting or believing.*
    - i. Your *life* is to be this lovely old *hymn: My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood & righteousness!*
    - ii. The apostle's "*grammar of hope*" (12) indicates that *once upon a time you placed your hope in Jesus & you've kept on hoping in Him ever since!*
    - iii. Your *hope*, beloved, from the day you *turned to Christ*, must *always & actively remain in Him.*
2. The sinner's *hope in Christ* brings *redemption & forgiveness & revelation & inheritance*, from the *predestined decree* to its *present reality...!*
3. And here (2<sup>nd</sup> time) is the *refrain* that *marks the end* of each of Paul's **3 stanzas & reminds** us of God's goal: "*to the praise of His glory.*" (vv. 6 & 12 & 14)
  - a. The *point* is that every time Paul *concludes* a category of *blessings* he wants to *remind* us of *why* we've been *blessed.* *God's goal is that...*
  - b. ...*from eternity past to eternity future, from election to eternal inheritance* and the *eternal kingdom*, God's goal is God's *glory...*
  - c. ...on *your lips!*

***Redemption, Revelation, Inheritance: to the praise of the glory of His grace!***

***...pray... Bless God from Whom all blessings flow...***

