

Redemption through His Blood

Ephesians 1:7

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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:

- A. Today is the 2nd in a series of messages I began a few weeks back on what it means to be “Blessed in Christ.” To refresh your memory, this series is an exposition of what I consider to be one long sentence found in Ephesians 1, verses 3-14. And in this one sentence, Paul sets forth the multi-faceted blessings of salvation by God’s Sovereign grace in and by the Lord Jesus Christ. And as I stated previously, this passage reveals how it is the triune God – Jehovah God in three Co-equal, Co-eternal Persons, (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) – all acting in perfect unison in accordance with their undivided essence of Deity to achieve God’s design and purpose in the salvation of His people.
- B. Now this morning, we’re going to focus on just one verse. And just as I’ve described this entire passage as, not only one long sentence, but a “loaded” sentence – loaded with the glorious blessings of grace in Christ – I think you’ll find today that this one verse is likewise loaded. It’s full and rich with the wonderful news of Christ’s accomplished work whereby sinners are redeemed and forgiven. In fact, I found this verse so loaded, that I plan to bring 2 messages from this one verse. This first message will focus on redemption and the subsequent message on the forgiveness of sins. So today we’ll begin exploring what those eternally blessed saints (described in verses 3-6 as chosen, predestinated, and accepted, all in Christ) – what they also have in Christ by virtue of His shed blood – specifically, redemption and the forgiveness of sins. And this morning we will focus on “Redemption through His Blood,” as I’ve so titled this message, as we begin this study of Ephesians 1, verse 7.
- C. By way of review, those of you who heard the first message titled “Eternally Blessed in Christ” will recall that this letter is written to the “saints” or sanctified ones – those set apart by God the Father in Christ in every generation and in every place. And as such, the wonderful blessings described by Paul in this passage belong to all of them and exclusively to them. Now to set the context, let’s briefly look again at the verses leading up to verse 7.
1. In verse 3, Paul wrote, “***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*** And you’ll see as we continue, that all the blessings that accompany the eternal salvation of God’s sheep, as brought out in this passage, are in Christ.

2. In verses 4-6, Paul said that these saints have been blessed in Christ, ***“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be 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, ⁶To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”***
 3. So here we saw that Paul ascribed to God the Father 3 manifestations of His grace and love toward these saints in having:
 - (a) Chosen them in Christ, (vs. 4)
 - (b) Predestinated them to the adoption of children by Christ, (vs. 5) and
 - (c) Accepted them in Christ to the praise of the glory of his grace (vs. 6).
 4. And through verse 6, Paul had yet to speak of any external operations of God the Father, Son or Holy Spirit, but rather spoke of God the Father’s view of His chosen, predestinated and accepted children in Christ. So again the work of the three Persons of the God-head, (Father, Son, and Spirit), if understood correctly, cannot be set at odds with one another for it is altogether the work of one unified God in purpose and design that insures that Jehovah God will be glorified and that the 2nd Person of the Godhead, God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ shall receive all the preeminence in the salvation of His children.
 5. These to whom Paul writes are favored and eternally blessed by God the Father in Christ. And now as we reach verse 7 we will consider the actual work of the God-man, (God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ) that He accomplished in time in the room and stead of these saints on the cross of Calvary about 2000 years ago.
- II. Verses 7: Now as we reach verse 7, to capture the flow of the sentence, keep in mind that verses 5 and 6 spoke of God having predestinated these chosen saints unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, ***“⁶To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved,”*** – the beloved being the Lord Jesus Christ, verse 7: ***“⁷In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;”*** Now let’s begin our consideration of this verse with the opening words...

A. “In whom...”:

1. Well it is clear by coupling vs. 6 with vs. 7 that this which all true believers have – redemption and forgiveness of sins – is in the beloved – in Christ! It struck me in my study that it doesn’t read that we, (speaking of all the saints to whom this is addressed), have redemption and the forgiveness of sins by Christ, but in Christ.

And that seems consistent with the entire passage we've studied as it has read, (in vs. 3) "...blessed in Christ," (in vs. 4) "...chosen in him ..." <meaning Christ>. Now in vs. 5 it does read, "predestinated... unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ" <not "in" in this case>. But then again in vs. 6, "made... accepted in the beloved" <meaning Christ>. And now in vs. 7, it is "In whom we have redemption... <and> the forgiveness of sins" – in Christ!

2. You see, Christ did not shed His blood to merely make redemption and forgiveness possible. Redemption is not something that is made possible by way of Christ's shed blood as if His shed blood merely met some prerequisite condition or somehow paved the way for sinners to procure their own redemption or appropriate unto themselves the redemption price that Christ paid.
3. No, the entire language of this passage speaks of being in Christ – made one with Him according to the Father's own good pleasure and will. So what He did, He did for these chosen, predestinated to be children, and accepted saints as their Surety and Substitute. Not one drop of His blood was shed for any who aren't redeemed. The redeemed always have been and always shall be accepted in Him, their Surety, their Substitute, their Savior, their Redeemer.
4. Based upon God's never changing view of them in Christ – having viewed them in Christ, having imputed (or charged to their accounts) the merits of His work of redemption – it is in Him that they have redemption. As I Cor. 1:30 puts it, "***But of him <God, the Father> are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*** ³¹***That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.***" You see only for these who were graciously put "in Him" (chosen, predestinated to adoption as children, and accepted in Him) is He made unto them to be their redemption. And if it's any other way, the sinner would have room to glory in himself – for it would then suggest that something remaining to be done by, in or through them is what distinguishes the saved from the lost. And that's not God's way of salvation by grace.
5. So at the beginning of verse 7, we see that these blessings of redemption and forgiveness of sins are in a Person – "in the beloved, in whom..." And oh, what a glorious Person! This morning I want us to review some things that necessarily must be true of this glorious Person in order for redemption to have taken place. In order for Christ to be a suitable, successful, Substitute who could redeem, He had to be (1) Sinless humanity – that is, one made like unto us except without sin. And secondly, He had to be (2) One who was both God and man.

(a) Christ in His incarnation took into union with His deity a humanity – the same flesh and blood as the children for whom He died. The scripture says He was made like unto us in every way – only without sin. So His humanity was unique in that it was a sinless humanity. Conceived by God the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, His blood (the blood of that “holy thing” as the angel referred to Him in speaking to Mary of the Christ child she would birth) – His blood was not tainted with sin as is ours. And that is critical to His being a suitable Substitute, qualified to pay the redemption price.

(b) It had to be the blood of an innocent person. There’s a great emphasis on this throughout the scripture beginning with the Old Testament sacrifices of innocent, unblemished lambs, typifying the unblemished Lamb of God who would take away the sins for which he offered Himself as a sacrifice. The scriptures further assert that it was the just who died for the unjust, that He (who knew no sin) was made to be sin for us, etc. And we take note of the necessity of the innocence of the One whose blood payment was required when in I Peter 1 it speaks of how the saints are not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold but as vs. 19b puts it, these are redeemed “...***with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:***” See, if He had been contaminated with sin, He could not have been a redeemer from sin and His blood would have been insufficient to pay the price of redemption. He died for imputed sin – sin He had no part in producing – sin that neither infected nor contaminated Him, but sins that He truly bore for they were laid upon Him – imputed to Him.

(c) And not only that, it couldn’t be the blood of a mere creature but it had to be of One that is both God as well as man. It took the infinitely valuable blood of the God-man. 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 greatness of redemption is magnified by the greatness of the Redeemer. 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.

B. “...we have...”: Now as verse 7 progresses, we see that in Christ, “...we have redemption...<and> the forgiveness of sins...” The Apostle speaks of this vast work of redemption and the connected forgiveness of sins, as a thing possessed. We, those chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, don’t do a thing to redeem ourselves. The saints were put in Christ who would (and did) in time redeem them. Christ said on the cross, “It is finished” and indeed it was – then and there.

And yet consider with me today the vastness of redemption. The dimensions of its impact are infinite and reach through all time, and through all eternity. As vs. 4 taught us, from before the foundation of the world, the saints were chosen in Christ to be holy and without blame before God. How can they, who would fall in Adam and come into this world as spiritually dead sinners, be so accounted holy from eternity past? It's only by their redemption Christ would work out in time at the cross. Now that boggles my mind. But make no mistake – these saints do nothing to become redeemed – they have redemption! And not only that – they have the forgiveness of sins.

C. Redemption: Let's now consider the first of these 2 related blessings: Redemption.

1. The meaning of the word: The Greek word used here for redemption is one that means deliverance. It speaks of the release by the full payment of a ransom price. 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.
2. These saints were accepted in Christ 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 consistent with the just character of God – and all based upon the redemptive work of Christ at the cross – having the very merits of His satisfaction to justice by His obedience unto death, His righteousness, imputed or accounted unto them.
3. In my study, I truly have become more appreciative of how redemption is indeed a vast subject for it includes everything in relation to the Person, work, and offices which the Son of God engaged in coming to this world to save sinners, in having taken into unity with his deity our human nature so as to redeem God's elect out of fallen humanity by his shed blood and righteousness. So when we preach Christ and Him crucified – we're preaching redemption. As such, we can and should spend a lifetime on this subject, but given the breadth of it, I'll simply share with you a few thoughts from among the many that were impressed upon me in my study of this vast subject.

4. First and foremost, consider that redemption most definitely speaks of a price or a ransom being paid. Christ Himself referred to it as a ransom in Matthew 20:28 when He said, ***“Even as the Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom for many.”*** As you have heard me and others before me put it, redemption is not an attempt made – but a price paid – and it speaks of a price paid in full, no balance remaining due. It is a price paid to God, whose justice is offended, whose law is broken – against whom all sins are committed. It’s paid to a God whom the Bible tells us will not clear the guilty at the expense of His justice. His justice must be satisfied. 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 unto God. And we know it was sufficient and paid the debt in full for Christ arose from the grave in victory over death, proving that God’s justice was fully satisfied by His shed blood – by the everlasting righteousness He rendered which demands everlasting life for all for whom it was rendered.

5. Galatians 3:13a reveals to us just from what God’s sheep were redeemed or delivered as it teaches us, ***“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us:...”*** God’s law demands perfect obedience and since, as the scripture makes clear, all have sinned and come short, then based on the very best efforts of the very best of men, the law curses them for it can only condemn them. When we consider Gal. 3:13 along with 2 Cor. 5:21 which tells us that Christ, who knew no sin, was made to be sin for us, our sense of the magnificence of the redemption should be heightened, seeing what we, the adopted children of God, have in Christ. Here’s the impeccable Christ, described in God’s Word as holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (1) made sin for a people and then (2) as it is described here in Galatians 3, made a curse.

6. Consider the ransom price – what it cost to deliver us from the curse of the law. He, the sinless God-man, was made a curse! He bore the equivalent suffering of hell and more (for unlike those who perish in hell, His suffering redeemed – it paid the debt off). And He suffered this for a multitude of law breakers by paying infinitely beyond all concept of value the ransom price of redemption for the penalty due unto the sins of His people – the price being His precious blood. So the law can have no further demands on those He redeemed from its curse. The law demands perfect obedience that none could render other than the God-man. And He redeemed them by not only perfectly obeying the law as their Substitute, but by bearing the penalty due unto their sins. So, the prison doors are opened and the redeemed must go free!

7. As God has done with me and many of you, I pray to God, that by the power of His Spirit under the preaching of this very gospel – that He will shut the mouths of other sinners who hear this message, just as He graciously did for me and many of you in years past – sinners who dared to imagine that Christ had paid the sin debt before the justice of God for all who ever lived by the shedding of His infinitely valuable blood (having been made a curse for them) while at the same time imagining that many of these for whom He died – even most – would go on to perish in hell anyway.

Granted, the scripture is clear – most indeed will perish in unbelief. But Christ did not redeem any who will eternally perish. He said to the Father as recorded in John’s Gospel 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 of the redemptive work of Christ to even consider that one for whom He died could possibly perish. 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!

8. He bought them with His blood. As I Cor. 6:20a puts it, ***“For ye are bought with a price:...”*** That’s redemption. Dare any suggest that the price of His precious blood was insufficient for even one for whom it was shed? And it is just that, His precious blood, that is precisely the price of redemption so clearly set forth in our text in Eph 1:7 where we see that ***“...we have redemption through his blood, ...”*** Earlier, as I described Christ as the one “in whom” we have redemption, I went in to great detail about His Person and how it took His blood – the blood of the God-man to redeem God’s sheep so I won’t revisit that any further today.
9. But before we leave the broad topic of redemption, I want us to briefly consider that it is through the redeeming work of Christ that the saints have always had and shall always have all spiritual blessings in heavenly places – in Christ Jesus! We, the redeemed, had those blessings in Christ long before we knew anything about them – even before we existed.
 - (a) To consider just one such connected blessing, look with me at Romans 3 where we see that sinners are justified – declared not guilty before God – through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. As Romans 3 proceeds, it begins to speak of the righteousness that is without the law (i.e. – without man’s obedience to the law, a righteousness rendered in full satisfaction to the law which the sinner has no part in producing. With that, we pick up with verse 22 where it elaborates on this righteousness saying, ***“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all <imputed to them> them that believe: for there is no difference: ²³For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; ²⁴Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:”***

(b) Now consider how all these blessings in Christ are tied together in our one great salvation by grace – based upon the glorious Person and redemptive work of Christ alone. Abraham, along with all of the Old Testament saints were justified through the redemption of the promised Messiah who had not even arrived on the scene – the One in whom they were chosen, predestinated to be adopted as children by, and accepted in from all eternity. Likewise, all sinners are justified, declared not guilty – viewed from all eternity as holy and without blame in Christ – through the redemptive work that Christ accomplished in time. All of these objects of God’s everlasting love were justified through or on the basis of His redeeming blood which He shed for them at the cross of Calvary.

(c) And it is said to be “...freely by his grace...” So it is not of man’s merit, but God’s free grace. Even faith itself, by which the righteousness of God in Christ is revealed unto them so that they might enjoy the blessings of salvation – it (faith) has nothing of merit to recommend them for there is no difference among men. They all have sinned and come short. So it is not what they are in themselves but what they are in Christ which makes them the recipients of divine favor. And so likewise, as objects of God’s mercy and grace, they are redeemed (freely by his grace) and on that basis, justified before God.

III. Summary.

Well in closing, let’s look back again at verse 7 where we read beginning with the end of vs. 6, “...*accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*” Now in the next sermon of this series we’ll concentrate on the forgiveness of sins as it is connected here with redemption. But for now I want to direct your attention to the truth that we have redemption and forgiveness “...*according to the riches of his grace;*” In the next message I’ll elaborate on this further, but for today, just consider that all who have redemption, have it according to His grace. That means that there is nothing any sinner can do to merit or procure his or her own redemption. Only those who were chosen, predestinated to be children, accepted saints in Christ have redemption and forgiveness of sins. And to deny this is to deny that it is according to grace.

2 Timothy 1:9 makes this clear as it speaks of Christ “*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*” Clearly, only these so eternally blessed in Christ have redemption and forgiveness of sins. Now when this first registers with us, we all naturally think, “Well what good does that do me? I can’t do anything to be included among these if God’s word really means what it says here. Either I have redemption or I don’t.”

Well, as this long and loaded sentence progresses, we'll see the 3rd Person of the trinity's involvement also in the blessings we have in Christ. God the Holy Spirit in time reveals this gospel to all these redeemed, forgiven sinners. And in so doing, they discover they must have the mercy and grace that is in Christ alone. Nothing else will do. So, their plea before God is reduced to that of the publican who cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

To be among the blessed in Christ is to have the revelation of faith that causes one to see the necessity of having this redemption through His shed blood for me – as payment for my sins. Any who come to Christ plea just that – His blood, His righteousness, as their only hope (but a certain one) for all of his or her salvation. With respect to them, Christ said in John 6:37, "***All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.***" You see, any who come to this Redeemer do so because their coming, their faith, is among the blood-bought blessings of God in Christ, "...***the beloved. In whom ...<they>...have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;***"

Our natural response to these things has been likened to a man who is starving to death but suddenly has food placed in front of him. If he's truly dying of hunger, he won't spend his time trying to figure out if this food was intended for him or not. All he knows is he is starving to death and that plate of food fits his desperate need. So he eats – he chows down. Well does Christ's work of redemption fit your need? If it does, then eat – dig in for the redeemed are among those Christ described, as recorded in Matt. 5:6, when He said, "***Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.***"

Psalms 107:1-2a reads: "***O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. ²Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, ...***"

Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it, Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb! Winston, Come lead us in the singing of that hymn as we close.

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.