

Heaven: The Throne Room of the Universe

Redeemed: How I Love to Proclaim It

Revelation 5:9

This morning as we open to Revelation 5:9, we are analyzing the words of the first song we see ourselves singing in heaven—the song of our redemption.

We who were slaves to sin, and lost sinners: were purchased by Christ's blood.

The God who so loved the world that he gave His Son to die on a cross; and shed His blood to pay the price of our sin! The message of this verse could be reduced to the simple phrase:

Redeemed: How I Love to Proclaim It

In Revelation 5:9 we see ourselves the way we will be—singing the new song of our worthy Redeemer. Please **stand** and follow along as we read these words:

*Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; **For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood** Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,*

Pray

Redemption is so important, that is what we sing about as soon as we are given the opportunity to express our gratitude in Heaven. So, redemption is a big subject, and one we each need to more fully understand. How about this morning we all become redemption-focused, and ask the Lord to open our hearts to the blessings we will be singing about in Heaven, while we're here on Earth?

The only way for us to really focus upon understanding redemption, is to see and hear Christ as He redeemed us. Turn back with me now to John 19:30.

In John 19:30 we witness the climactic end of Christ's redemption as the Lamb of God. This summary, of the work of redemption, was captured by John, as he stood at the foot of the Cross. While looking up through the darkness, John heard and recorded Christ's one word explanation of the work of redemption.

*John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

In English we would say: "it is finished"; but in Greek those three words are summed up in the single word that John heard Christ gasp on the cross—**tetelestai**.

TETELESTAI Means: It Is Finished

"**Tetelestai**" was Jesus declaring to God His Father that the price of salvation was paid; and the debt of the sin of the world was paid; and the work of redemption was complete.

This word that Jesus gasped from the Cross, was a word that was very familiar to those of the New Testament times.

This word "tetelestai" should burn into our hearts and minds because it was exactly the same word that a Roman judge would write on a criminals certificate of debt when he was released from prison—"tetelestai": your debt to the Roman law is now paid in full. That meant there was no further condemnation or penalty that ever needed to be paid.

It is the same word that would be written on the certificate of a slave who was redeemed. After he had been enslaved to pay off a debt—"tetelestai" meant, your debt is paid in full, you may now go forth as a free man!

Those two historic usages help us to understand the implications to each of believers who have become followers of Christ, when:

JESUS DECLARED: Paid in Full

Think of the wonders of the Cross. Think of the meaning of Christ's words that the price of our redemption as born-again believers had been paid in full.

Paid in full is what Jesus cried from the cross of our redemption, as the work of salvation was once and for all time completed.

Paid in full is what He declares each time we come to Him confessing our sins.

Paid in full is what Jesus our advocate says while standing before God the Father as Satan the Accuser points out yet another time we have sinned.

Paid in full is the reality that Christ's payment of our redemption has made us *forever free, forever forgiven, and forever His child.*

Redemption involves the blood of Jesus shed as He died on the Cross to pay the purchase price of our salvation.

So redemption sums up Christ's death: His blood was shed, and His life was given as a substitutionary sacrifice.

So if any portion of salvation can be ranked as any more vital than any other—redemption would be at the top of the list. Now, let me remind you of my years as a youth pastor, and:

Illustrating Salvation's Big Three Doctrines

Remember the illustration of the "Big Three Doctrines"? Those big three salvation doctrines we need to always remind ourselves about are: redemption, justification, and sanctification.

1. **Redemption Illustrated:** We started life on earth as dead in our trespasses and sin (pictured by my pen laying on the palm of my hand); **redemption** is when Jesus reached down and bought us out of the slave market of sin (that is my hand grasping the pen);
2. **Justification Illustrated:** **justification** is Jesus lifting me to be seated with Him already in Heaven, we are completely freed from the penalty and record of our sin (pen raised to illustrate our righteous standing in God's sight);
3. **Sanctification Illustrated:** **sanctification** is God forever binding our souls into His grasp and pulling us closer and closer to Him until at the end of our earthly life, He safely lands us into His Presence for ever (pen illustrating us pulled daily a notch closer to God's presence in our choices of life).

Now, go with me back to the context of our study of redemption. Remember how we got to this topic: God wants us to see that redemption is the theme of our worship in Heaven. Here is a reminder of those lessons in True Biblical Worship that Revelation 4-5 teach us.

The Elements of Worship Portrayed in Heaven

First, we have already seen that:

Element # 1: Holiness is Always the Atmosphere of True Biblical Worship (from Rev. 4:1-7)

That teaches us that the setting for worship is important, and that God wants our worship to start by a reverent focusing upon Him as the Awesome and Almighty One upon the Throne.

Element # 2: True Biblical Worship is Always in

Response to God's Holiness (from Rev. 4:8-10)

It is the seraphim and cherubim that first take the stage to lead our worship.

Over all the other sounds of rumbling, voices, and thundering: is their cry that pierces through Heaven that God Almighty is Holy, Holy, Holy.

It is at that instant that everyone and everything responds in worship.

Element # 3: True Biblical Worship is Always Focused Upon God (from Rev. 4:11)

It is amazing that the front row of the worshippers (the 24 elders) fall down so their faces are not seen, but He is seen. They cast off their crowns at His feet to declare that those crowns came from Him, belong to Him, and are only a reflection of Him.

When we get to Heaven we have a strong aversion to the spotlight. We don't take any of the credit, all the glory, honor and power goes to the Lord.

Element # 4: True Biblical Worship Centers Upon the Cross of Christ's Redeeming Sacrifice (from Rev. 5:1-9)

The content of True Biblical Worship is focused upon redemption in Heaven.

Redemption is a word that speaks of debts being paid, freedom being purchased and a life going in a completely new direction from the point of redemption onward.

Application #1: Redemption Should Always Remind us of How Unworthy we are of the Price Christ Paid

The wonder of Christ's redemption needs to be is always kept before us. When John Newton (1725-1807) wrote down his personal meditation on redemption here is his conclusion:

Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)
That sav'd a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

Application #2: God Has Provided The Only Way of Redemption

Redemption is all about the debt our sin has piled up before God.

The legal obligations of debt, was an illustration Paul liked to use. When Paul wrote to the Colossians, he was writing to a church he had never visited. When he explained to them salvation he used a picture they would instantly recognize and never forget.

Open with me to Colossians 2:13-14 and watch Paul masterfully take those saints from Colosse and the world they lived in each day and transport them before the Holy God of Heaven and then back with a clear understanding of Christ's work on their behalf.

*Colossians 2:13-14 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,14 having wiped out **the handwriting of requirements that was against us**, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

The rule of law reigned in the Roman Empire that surrounds the New Testament. Each time a person was convicted of a crime: the law courts that convicted them also produced a "certificate of debt" that listed the exact crime; and the punishment that had to be paid before the criminal would be freed.

The convicted criminal or debtor would have to sign the certificate, and acknowledge the debt or punishment for the crime was rightfully his.

This certificate of debt was then nailed to the door of the cell where they were imprisoned,(or to the cross if it was a capital crime and they were crucified): until their sentence was completed and the crimes were "paid" for.

Look at that phrase in v. 14 "handwriting" that was against us: now, doesn't Paul's imagery leap from the page?

Can't you see the sign over Christ's head? That is how redemption should touch our hearts, reminding us that:

Application #3: We All Are Convicted Debtors to God

This is precisely the legal imagery that Paul draws upon in Colossians 2:13-14. The word 'handwriting' in v. 13 is the exact word for the list of crimes and/or debts the person was responsible for. Jesus took each of those "Certificates of Debt" upon Himself as He hung upon the cross.

The doctrine of redemption means that: "Believers' sins were all put to Christ's account, nailed to His cross as He paid the penalty in their place for them all, thus satisfying the just wrath of God against crimes requiring punishment in full"¹.

¹John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997, in loc.

Application #4: Redemption Means that Christ Died to Pay the Debt of My Sin

So as God the Father looked down at Christ He saw your sins and mine. John calls it “the sin of the world”; and it was the totality of the sin of all humans that was nailed on Christ's Cross.

The Cross was Jesus declaring that He was guilty of every sin listed off for everyone of us and all who would ever live.

Now connect the imagery of Colossians 2:13-14 back to the record of Christ's death upon the cross. The climactic end of Christ's redemption as the Lamb of God captured in John 19:30:

*So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “**It is finished!**” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

Tetelestai was Jesus declaring to God His Father that the price of salvation was paid; and the debt of the sin of the world was paid; and the work of redemption was complete.

Application #5: When Jesus Died Sin's Debt Was Paid in Full

Paid in full is what Jesus cried from the cross of His redemption as the work of salvation was once and for all time completed; and paid in full is what He declares each time we come to Him confessing our sins.

Paid in full is what Jesus our advocate says while standing before God the Father as Satan the Accuser points out yet another time we have sinned.

Paid in full, bought by the blood of the Lamb, and redeemed—that is what we shall forever sing in Heaven around His Throne.

So if any portion of salvation can be ranked as any more vital than any other—redemption would be at the top of the list.

We go through life in growing gratitude the more we understand that:

Paid in Full Means the Gift of Redemption is Mine

We need to experience by faith lived out through daily choices, what the Scriptures often declare—God has **liberated** us from our slavery to sin, **broken** sins chains that long had enslaved us; and **freed** us to focus our lives on what really matters to Him.

First personal impact: Because I'm redeemed—Jesus destroyed the records of my sins and took my punishment. Romans 3:24

being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”.

Because I'm redeemed—Jesus destroyed the records of my sins and took my punishment.

Second personal impact: *Because I'm redeemed—Jesus is all I need! 1 Corinthians 1:30*

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

This verse summarizes the three tenses of our salvation. In the past we *have been saved* from the penalty of sin (His redemption applied); and in the present we *are being saved* from the power of sin (His sanctification applied); and in the future we *shall be saved* from the presence of sin (His righteousness applied).

Because I'm redeemed—Jesus is all I need!

Third personal impact: Christ bought me from the slave market with a high price—I belong to God. *1 Corinthians 6:20*

“For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's”.

Christ bought me from the slave market with a high price—I belong to God.

Fourth personal impact: Because I'm redeemed—my sins are forgiven forever. Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

Since we have not been saved by our good works, we cannot be lost by our bad works.

Because I'm redeemed—my sins are forgiven forever.

Fifth personal impact: Because Christ bought me in redemption—I am God's workmanship. Ephesians 2:10

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them”.

Because Christ bought me in redemption—I am God's workmanship.

Sixth personal impact: Because I'm redeemed—God will finish what He started in me.
Philippians 1:6

"being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ".

Because I'm redeemed—God will finish what He started in me.

Seventh personal impact: Because I'm redeemed—I am set free from any bondage, to be zealous for God! Titus 2:14

"who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works".

Because I'm redeemed—I am set free from any bondage, to be zealous for God!

Final personal impact: Because I'm redeemed—I will worship the Lord forever!
Revelation 5:9

And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

Redemption our song of eternal gratitude is a present possession, for which we should always give thanks!

- Because I'm redeemed—Jesus destroyed the records of my sins and took my punishment.
- Because I'm redeemed—Jesus is all I need!
- Christ bought me from the slave market with a high price—I belong to God.
- Because I'm redeemed—I will live for my Redeemer.
- Because I'm redeemed—I no longer live for myself!
- Because I'm redeemed—my sins are forgiven forever.
- Because Christ bought me in redemption—I am God's workmanship
- Because I'm redeemed—God will finish what He started in me.
- Because I'm redeemed—my sin debt is forever paid in full.
- Because I'm redeemed—I am set free from any bondage, to be zealous for God!
- Because I'm redeemed—I will worship the Lord forever