

Every Spiritual Blessing is Found in Christ (Redemption)

Please turn with me to the book of Ephesians. Our text this morning is Ephesians 1:7–10. In these verses, Paul reveals the core of the gospel: God’s redemptive purpose fulfilled through Christ Jesus. He emphasizes the glory of Christ’s work, the riches of God’s grace, and the unfolding of the Lord God’s eternal plan from the beginning.

Here we see that our redemption is not something we could ever accomplish for ourselves, but something the Lord God Himself has accomplished for us through the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through His blood we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins, not according to our merit, but according to the abounding and overflowing riches of His marvelous grace. Paul also lifts our eyes beyond our personal salvation to the grand purpose of the Lord God in all of history: that in the fullness of time, He is bringing all things together under the rule and authority of Christ Jesus.

Let's read the text together.

Ephesians 1:3-14 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth in him. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

In the original Greek, this is one long and continuous sentence in which Paul describes six ways the Lord God reveals His blessing and character to those who belong to Him.

1. God is the One Who Blesses (v. 3)
2. God is the One Who Chooses (v.4)
3. God is the One Who Adopts (vv. 5-6)
4. God is the One Who Redeems (vv. 7-10)
5. God is the One Who Ordains (vv. 11-12)
6. God is the One Who Seals (vv. 13-14)

This morning, our focus will be on Ephesians 1:7-10. God is the One Who Redeems. In this passage we learn four things about redemption.

1. The Meaning of Redemption (v. 7a)
2. The Cost of Redemption (v. 7b)
3. The Effect of Redemption (vv. 7c-9)

4. The Purpose of Redemption (v. 10)

Let's look at each one in detail.

Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,

The first two words of v7, the phrase “in Him,” refers to Jesus Christ, the Beloved Son. Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places is found in Him and comes to us only through Him. God chose us in Him before the foundation of the world (v. 4); God predestined us for adoption as sons through Him (v. 5); God has freely bestowed His grace upon us in Him (v. 6); and now Paul shows us that our redemption is also found in Him, for it is through His blood that we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins (v. 7). From beginning to end, our salvation is centered in Christ Jesus, secured by Christ Jesus, and ultimately accomplished for the glory of Christ Jesus.

But this now leads us to an important question: What exactly does Paul mean when he says, “In Him we have redemption through His blood”? What is redemption? What does it mean to be redeemed? To understand the greatness of what Christ Jesus has accomplished for us, we must understand the meaning of redemption itself.

In the New Testament, there are several closely related Greek terms that help us understand the meaning of redemption. One word is *agorazō*, which means “to buy” or “to purchase,” often used in the context of the marketplace. Another is *exagorazō*, which means “to buy out of” or “to purchase out from.” The imagery behind these words is the buying and selling that took place in the marketplace. These two terms are used in the New Testament to describe the redemption of sinners.

The Scriptures depict humanity as hopelessly enslaved by sin, guilt, and judgment, powerless to free itself. This goes all the way back to the book of Genesis. Because of Adam's sin, all men are born in sin. Man is not born good, morally free, or spiritually neutral, but spiritually dead, enslaved to the power of sin, and under the just and righteous condemnation of God. Man is not merely weakened by sin; apart from Christ, he is held captive by it. Sin has thoroughly corrupted his nature, darkened his mind, hardened his heart, blinded his eyes –leaving him unable to save himself or come to God on his own.

Redemption, then, speaks of deliverance from that bondage by the payment of a price. It is the language of rescue and liberation. The sinner could not purchase his own freedom, could not satisfy the justice of God, and could not break the chains of sin by his own effort. But what man could never do for himself, God has done through Jesus Christ. Christ came to pay the ransom price through His own blood, purchasing His people out of slavery to sin and setting them free from condemnation, so that they might belong to Him forever.

In Ephesians 1:7, the Greek word translated “redemption” is *apolytrōsis* (ah-pol-oo-tro-sis). It refers to a liberation or release brought about by the payment of a ransom price. The word carries the idea of being set free from bondage because a price has been paid, conveying the picture of being purchased out of the slave market and set free. In other words, redemption speaks of God purchasing sinners for Himself and delivering, setting them free, from their bondage through the payment of a ransom price. What is the ransom price? What does the term ransom mean? The literal idea is “a release upon payment”; it means to set free, to deliver, to liberate. It is the term used to describe the price that is paid in order to secure that release. So ransom does not merely describe freedom itself, but the cost involved in obtaining that freedom. It is the language of a transaction: someone pays the price, and another is set free.

At the time the book of Ephesians was written, there were likely millions of slaves throughout the

Roman Empire. Some slaves had been born into slavery; it was all they had ever known. Some had once been free men but had been conquered by Rome and were forced to live out the rest of their lives under the Roman yoke of slavery. Still others had become slaves through debt, where the only way to repay what they owed was to enter into servitude and work off the debt. Whatever the cause, a slave was not a free man. He was not his own master. He was not able to do as he pleased. His will was subject to the will of his master. Slaves were considered property, belonging to and in bondage under their owners. And the only way for a slave to become a free man was through redemption, the payment of a price to secure his release. That payment was the ransom: the price that was paid in order to set him free.

According to the Scriptures, all men are born in desperate need of redemption. All men are born into slavery, born into bondage, the bondage of sin. Contrary to what many believe, man is not born innocent and free; rather, he is born guilty and enslaved. And this is not merely a theological assumption; it is the clear testimony of Scripture itself.

Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

David traces his sin, not merely to his actions, but to his very nature from birth. He confesses that he was brought forth in iniquity, showing that we do not become sinners only through our actions, but that sin is already part of who we are from conception.

Romans 8:7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

Paul explains the condition of the natural mind: it is not neutral toward God, but hostile. It does not and cannot submit to God's law, revealing the deep moral inability of fallen man.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

Paul goes further to show the spiritual inability of the natural person. Apart from the Spirit, the things of God are not received, not understood, and not embraced; they are considered foolish, because they can only be discerned spiritually.

So the question that naturally presses upon us is this: why is this the case? Why is man hostile toward God? Why does he refuse to submit to God's law? Why does he not receive or understand the things of the Spirit? Here is the answer: because a slave obeys his master. A slave belongs to his master. A slave does not, nor is able to, act with an independent will of his own. He is in bondage to his master, under his absolute authority and control.

John 8:34 Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.

The master of the natural man is sin. And sin is not merely influential; it rules. The natural man cannot resist it; indeed, he will not and cannot. He is enslaved to do the will of his master. Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. You may think you are freely choosing, doing only what you want, and that sin has no real hold on you. But sin is a slippery slope. The more you yield to it, the more it tightens its grip on your life. What begins as something you think you can control slowly becomes something that controls you. "I'm not enslaved to sin—this is what I want to be doing." "How can something I desire be bondage?" But know this: sin is a liar. It deceives, it blinds, and it slowly redefines what you call freedom. Sin hardens the heart, dulls the conscience, and deepens its hold, until it becomes a master that a man cannot easily turn away from. What once felt like freedom is revealed to be slavery.

This is exactly what John Bunyan portrays in Pilgrim's Progress at Vanity Fair. In that city, everything is for sale, pleasure, entertainment, riches, honor, and approval. The world calls it freedom, a place where every desire can be satisfied. But those who truly see, like Christian and Faithful, understand that it is actually a place of bondage. The people of Vanity Fair think they are free, yet they are enslaved to its system and cannot escape its grip or even see their need for deliverance. And that is the point: no man walks out of Vanity Fair on his own. No man breaks free from the bondage of sin by his own strength. If there is to be deliverance, it must come from outside of us. It must come from One who is stronger than sin itself. It must come from a Redeemer.

The only way for a slave to be made free is for that slave to be redeemed. He must be delivered. He must be liberated through the payment of a ransom. And what is the cost of redemption? What does it cost to redeem a fallen man? What does it cost to deliver a sinner out of slavery? What is the price of the ransom?

Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,

The cost of redemption is blood. The ransom is blood. For men to be redeemed from the bondage and tyranny of sin, someone has to die, because "the wages of sin is death."

Hebrews 9:22 Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

You cannot bargain with God. You cannot negotiate the price of redemption. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. Sin demands a price, and that price is blood, either your blood, or the blood of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

The Greek word translated "bore" literally means to carry, to bring up, or to bear up. It is often used in connection with a sacrifice or offering, referring to bringing something up to the altar or laying it upon the altar. There is also within the term the idea of lifting and carrying a burden from a lower place to a higher place. It is the picture of taking something upon oneself and bearing its weight. So when Peter says, "He himself bore our sins," he is saying that the Lord Jesus Christ took up and carried the full weight of our sin in His own body on the tree. There are many similarities between this passage and the prophecy of Isaiah 53:

Isaiah 53:4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, voluntarily and without coercion, offered Himself as a sacrifice for us. He carried up to the cross our sins in His own body and offered Himself as the atoning sacrifice for sin. The word "atonement" means the repair of a broken relationship. Because of sin, man's relationship with God is estranged; it has been severed. Fellowship with God has been broken. As a result of sin, all men stand justly condemned before God, without hope and without God in the world. But God, because of His great

love for sinners, sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world so that sinners might be saved, redeemed, and reconciled to Him, and that our relationship with Him might be fully restored. The Lord Jesus Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. He accomplished what the Old Testament sacrificial system could never accomplish.

Hebrews 9:12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ we are redeemed. Through His blood we have eternal redemption. It was His blood poured out for us, His blood shed in our place as our divinely appointed substitute, freeing us from the bondage of sin—once for all. The Lord Jesus Christ gave His blood; the Lord Jesus Christ gave His life; He gave Himself for us on the cross. The death that was due to me, the death I had earned, the death I rightfully deserved—He died for me, in my place. The Lord Jesus Christ accomplished what we could never accomplish. The Lord Jesus Christ accomplished what the blood of bulls and goats could never accomplish.

Hebrews 10:12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

By one offering, at one time, the Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect Substitute, paid the ransom in full and has thus set His people free. And this is the central message of the gospel: in Him we have redemption through His blood. He paid the price for sin, He delivers us from the enslaving power of sin, and He sets us free as redeemed sons and daughters of God.

And like all of our other spiritual blessings—like election, like adoption—redemption is wholly the work of God. He planned our redemption before the foundation of the world. Our redemption was not impulsive, nor was it an afterthought. The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ was not a last-minute plan; our ransom was not paid on a whim. It was foreordained in eternity past, before the creation of the world. Our confession of faith, the London Baptist Confession of 1689, teaches that God has decreed in Himself, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever comes to pass. In other words, God will most certainly accomplish all of His good purposes. He will accomplish everything He has set out to do. His Word does not return empty, but will surely accomplish what He has purposed. This is exactly what Paul celebrates in Ephesians 1. From eternity past, the Father planned our redemption; in time, the Son accomplished our redemption; and through the Spirit, that redemption is applied to us. Nothing is uncertain. Nothing is accidental. Nothing is left to chance. It is all according to His will, all according to His purpose, and all “to the praise of His glorious grace.” Our deliverance from sin was decreed by God; it was determined by Him before the foundation of the world was laid. It was according to this decree that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world. The Lord Jesus Christ entered into history and became a flesh-and-blood, living and breathing man. He came into the world to seek and to save the lost. He came to free those who were enslaved in the marketplace of sin. He came to die at the hands of His own creation, for His own creation. He was buried, He was raised from the dead, and He has been exalted in glory. The Lord Jesus Christ is our Redeemer; He made the purchase of our sins with His own precious blood. Thomas Watson remarked,

Great was the work of creation, but greater the work of redemption. It cost more to redeem us than to make us. In the one there was but the speaking of a word; in the other there was the shedding of blood. Creation was but the work of His fingers; redemption is the work of His arm.

It is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that has redeemed us; it is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that has freed us from the penalty and the power of sin. This is the high cost of our redemption. And yet

redemption does not stop there. It is not only deliverance from the marketplace of sin and slavery, it also brings with it three great blessings: forgiveness, wisdom, and insight.

Ephesians 1:7-8 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

The primary result or effect of redemption is forgiveness—the forgiveness of our sins. Redemption would not be complete without God also providing a divine pardon. The Greek word translated “forgiveness” means to remit or release; it means to cancel a debt, to wipe the slate clean, and to send it away so that it no longer returns. In other words, the forgiveness that flows from our redemption means that God has released us from liability to suffer punishment. He has released us from the penalty and judgment that sin deserves—namely separation from Him. Forgiveness means that the Lord God no longer holds our sins against us. They have been canceled, removed, and sent away, never to return.

Psalm 103:11-12 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

David emphasizes the immeasurable greatness of God’s mercy toward His people. God’s steadfast love is as high as the heavens, and He removes our sins completely and permanently—so far away that they are no longer held against us.

Micah 7:18-19 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. 19 He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

Micah marvels at the uniqueness of God’s forgiving character. God delights in steadfast love, does not remain angry with His people forever, and shows compassion by completely dealing with their sin; removing it, conquering it, and casting it into the depths of the sea. Our sins have been forgiven. Our sins have been blotted out. Our sins have been cast into the depths of the sea—never to return. And not merely our past sins, but all of our trespasses: past sins, present sins, and future sins have all been forgiven in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 2:13-14 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

Every man and every woman owes an immeasurable debt to God. As we sin against God, against our fellow man, and even against ourselves, day after day and year after year, our debt continues to accumulate. In our short lives, we pile up a staggering record of guilt—a debt that must be paid and there is a record kept. There is a record of every sin, every transgression, every act of rebellion. It is as though there exists a certificate bearing your name, containing the full accounting of your debt before God. And that record is perfect. It is without error, without mistake, and without omission. This record stands against us. It testifies against us. It justly condemns us to judgment and eternal punishment under the wrath of God. And apart from Jesus Christ, this judgment awaits every man, every woman, and every child without exception. But for those who have been redeemed; for those who repent, believe, and receive the Lord Jesus Christ, do you know what God does with this hostile record that stands against us? God cancels it. He wipes it away. He removes it completely. With one stroke, it is gone. J.C. Ryle remarked:

Christ has purchased a full forgiveness, if we are only willing to receive it. He has done all, paid all,

suffered all that was needful to reconcile us to God. He has provided a garment of righteousness to clothe us. He has opened a fountain of living waters to cleanse us. He has removed every barrier between us and God the Father, taken every obstacle out of the way, and made a road by which the vilest may return. All things are now ready, and the sinner has only to believe and be saved, to eat and be satisfied, to ask and receive; to wash and be clean.

Our ransom was paid by the precious blood of Christ. It was not paid with silver or gold, nor with anything perishable or earthly, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish and without spot. And through His blood we have the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. But the riches of His grace do not end with forgiveness. Redemption also brings wisdom and insight.

Ephesians 1:7-8 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

The word wisdom refers to understanding the true nature of things, eternal things, such as God and humanity, heaven and hell, life and death, righteousness and unrighteousness, and time and eternity. Wisdom is about the eternal truths and purposes of God. Insight is about understanding and applying these truths in practical ways. It means having discernment in the needs, problems, and principles of daily life. Insight is a spiritually sensitive and biblically guided way of seeing things, shaped by knowing God and His Word. Primarily, Paul is speaking of the wisdom and insight of God Himself. God did not redeem sinners randomly or impulsively, but according to His infinite wisdom and perfect understanding. Every aspect of redemption, the choosing of His people, the sending of His Son, the shedding of Christ's blood, and the forgiveness of sins, was planned and accomplished according to the perfect wisdom of God. Yet, through this redeeming grace, believers are also brought into the knowledge of God. Through Christ, our blinded eyes are opened, our darkened minds are illuminated, and we begin to grow in spiritual wisdom and discernment as we are conformed to His truth by the Word of God. So then, wisdom and insight, taken together, speak of the right application of the knowledge we possess. They refer to the practical use of truth, the ability to govern one's life according to the principles of Scripture.

Job 28:28 And he said to man, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding."

Job teaches that true wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, and true understanding is demonstrated by turning away from evil. Biblical wisdom is not merely the possession of knowledge, but a life that reverences God and walks in obedience to Him. God has not only redeemed us and forgiven us of all our trespasses, but He has also graciously equipped us to walk in the truth and live according to His will. God has lavished upon us wisdom and insight so that we might discern His ways, walk in obedience, and live for the glory of His name according to the purposes He has revealed in His Word.

Ephesians 1:9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

Paul now explains the manner in which God has lavished upon us wisdom and insight: by making known to us the mystery of His will; by revealing to us the glorious truth concerning Jesus Christ and His church. In the New Testament, a mystery is not so much characterized by complexity or intrigue as it is by revelation and timing. A mystery refers to a divine truth that was once hidden but has now been revealed. It is something that could not formerly be seen clearly, but has now been made known by God. The grace and blessings of God overflow to His children in that He has revealed Himself and the mystery of His will to us. God has made known to us His plan of salvation in Jesus Christ. According to His good pleasure, God has revealed the mystery of the church, the body of Christ, and the salvation of sinners through the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. God desires that His people know and understand His glorious saving purposes—His

election, adoption, and redemption in Christ Jesus. And do you know why God has made known this mystery? Do you know why God gave us this amazing revelation?

Ephesians 1:9-10 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth in him.

At the completion of human history, at the fullness of time, God will bring all things under the rightful rule and authority of Jesus Christ. Everything that is broken by sin, everything that is corrupted by rebellion, and everything that is scattered by the curse will be gathered together and summed up in Him. All of creation will be placed under the headship of Christ. This is the ultimate purpose of redemption: the glory of Christ displayed in the full restoration and rightful ordering of all things under His lordship.

Philippians 2:9-11 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This passage teaches that because of Christ's obedience unto death, God has exalted Him above all. And one day every single creature will bow before Him, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And this is not merely a future expectation; it is rooted in the present reality of who Christ already is. The book of Hebrews gives us a glorious picture of the Son already enthroned, already reigning, already exalted above all creation, with every power and authority subject to Him.

Hebrews 1:8-13 But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." 10 And, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; 11 they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, 12 like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end." 13 And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

The Lord Jesus Christ will gather the entire universe into unity. This is the purpose of redemption; this is the goal of creation—that all things in heaven and on earth would be brought together, restored, and placed under the rightful headship of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the final goal of all creation. All things will be united in Him—things in heaven and things on earth. The paradise lost in Adam is restored in Christ. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He has lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of His will.

And when we truly behold the fullness of what the Lord God has done in Christ Jesus, His sovereign plan, His redeeming love, His uniting all things under the Son, there is only one fitting response for the people of God; worship and adoration. All glory be to Christ.
