

## **REDEMPTION**

### Colossians 1:14

#### INTRODUCTION

One time when I was preaching on this section of scripture, a little girl in the congregation was listening intently to what I had to say. After the sermon, she leaned over to her mother and said, “Mommy, I don’t know the meaning of those big words, but I know I have trusted in Jesus. Is it true that I’m not saved if I don’t know the meaning of those big words?” Bless her heart. She did not quite understand what I was saying, but her heart was right before God. If a person has placed his faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, that person is saved. Salvation is so simple a child can believe and be genuinely saved. However, if we are going to appreciate our salvation, we must come to know what the Bible teaches on the subject. We must begin to plumb the depths of salvation so we can rejoice in it constantly.

Colossians 1:14 says, “In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” There are two other verses of scripture that are very similar. Ephesians 1:7 says, “In him we have redemption through the blood, the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of his grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.” Romans 3:24 says, “And are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

#### DEFINITION OF REDEMPTION

The Greek word for “redemption” is *apolutrosis*, which means “to purchase and set free by the paying of a ransom price.” Redemption was a very common word in New Testament times, and it was often used of purchasing slaves out of the slave market and setting them free by the paying of a ransom price.

Biblically redemption is the purchasing of men and women out of the slave market of sin by the paying of the ransom of Christ’s death and setting them free forever from the guilt, penalty and dominion of sin. Redemption not only implies a purchase out of sin but also a release, a liberty and a freedom from sin.

#### NEED FOR REDEMPTION

Men need redemption because all people are sinners. They are not just guilty of acts of sin but they are slaves to sin (John 8:34). Before conversion to Christ, a person is engulfed and dominated by his sinful passions. The non-Christian may or may not do gross, immoral acts of sin, but he always lives for himself and not for God. Money may become the all-consuming goal of his life. Pleasure may occupy his every thought. Status among men may be the constant pursuit of his being. Man without Christ is a captive and a slave to his habits, appetites and attitudes, and his whole life is designed to further the “Big I.”

Unsaved men are slaves to sin because they willingly present themselves to sin. They are the moral subjects of their sinful natures. They are hopelessly and helplessly slaves to sin and they stand under the judgment of a holy God. All men outside of Christ are in desperate need of being freed from this terrible bondage to sin. Without redemption, men will perish in their sins (John 8:24).

#### FACT OF REDEMPTION

Redemption is connected up with the Greek and Roman market place called the *Angora* where many things were sold. However, the *Angora* was best known for its slave trading. Slave traders would purchase slaves by paying big prices for them. They would be purchased out of the market of slavery and become the bond slaves of their new masters.

This is a beautiful picture of the unsaved who are slaves to sin and in bondage do the slave market of sin due to their own sinful natures. God, through the paying of the ransom price of Christ's death, purchased the sinner out of the slave market of sin. Yet, from the Greek word *apolutrosis* we know that God not only purchases the sinner out, but He also sets him free forever from the guilt, penalty and bondage of sin.

Martin Luther, before his conversion to Christ, was a Roman Catholic priest. He knew he was a sinner and under the curse of the law. He felt himself a slave to sin and did not know how to get release. He trusted Christ to save him and received glorious release from the guilt and penalty of sin and began a life of being progressively set free in Christ. Luther renamed himself *Martin Eleutheros*, which in the Greek means "Martin the Free." Christ set Luther free!

## OBJECTS OF REDEMPTION

When Christ died on the Cross, He paid the ransom price for sin and the sinner. Christ substituted for sin and purchased sinners through His death (Col. 1:14). We were not able to pay the price, but thank God, Christ came and paid the price for us. He has paid the price, and so the prison in which we were held captive by sin and the devil was opened, and we, who were slaves to sin, have been set free.

Suppose I was given a traffic ticket. I was guilty before the law and in debt to the law. When I appeared in court, the judge listens patiently to my story, and even may be somewhat sympathetic. But I have broken the law and must pay the penalty. The judge passes a just sentence of fifteen days in jail or \$500.00. I have no cash on me and no way to pay the fine. Just when I am about at the point of despair, the judge says, "Mr. Arnold, out of the good pleasure of my own will, I am going to pay this debt of \$500.00 for you." He lays out the money and says, "You may go free now. Mr. Arnold." All I can do is thank him for His graciousness and leave a free man. The judge passed a just sentence on me and then paid the debt for me. Being a free man, I would be indebted to that judge and would probably do anything for him.

Another object of redemption is the Christian's body. Christ not only redeemed our souls but will also redeem our bodies. At the Cross, Christ positionally redeemed both soul and body (immaterial and material) and that redemption is certain. However, experientially, we still sin as Christians but one day we will receive a total, complete and perfect redemption when we receive our resurrected bodies (Rom. 8:23). Every Christian is waiting for his yet future redeemed body that will be free from the presence of sin forever.

## THE CAUSES OF REDEMPTION

The means for accomplishing redemption is the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7). His blood was the ransom price. The cause of redemption is the grace of God that He lavished on us (Eph. 1:7). We deserve nothing but judgment, but by grace, we get forgiveness and are set free forever.

The price was the blood of Christ. To whom was this price paid? Some think it was paid to the devil. However, it is most likely the price was paid to God the Father.

## THE PURPOSE OF REDEMPTION

To Appreciate The Forgiveness of Sins (Eph. 1:7). "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding." The Christian, because of redemption, has the forgiveness of all sins – past, present and future. This is pure grace and grace should make us desirous to live and serve Christ even more as His redeemed children. Whenever we have an appreciative heart, we serve Christ out of love and not fear.

To Praise God Before Others (1 Pet. 2:9). "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." Christians are said to be "a people belonging to God." The ASV says, "A people of God's

own possession.” Literally this means “a purchased-possession people.” Because we are a purchased people, we are to declare the praises of God to the entire world because He has called us out of darkness into the wonderful light of Christ. One reason we do not witness with more zeal is because we do not understand or do not really believe the truth of redemption.

To Live Holy Lives (1 Cor. 6:19-20). “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body.” The Christian is no longer his own master because he has been bought with the price of Christ’s blood. The Christian belongs to another Master, Jesus Christ. Redemption made it possible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in the Christian. Now the Christian has the power to live a holy life. A proper understanding of redemption gives a new motivation for living a life of holiness and service.

“On Christ Almighty vengeance fell,  
That would have sunk a world to hell;

He bore it for a chosen race,  
And thus became a hiding place.”

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, some archeologists discovered some very valuable letters written in New Testament or Koine Greek. One of the letters was about a woman who laws a slave and was put up for sale in the slave market. A slave trader purchased this woman for a very high price. After the purchase was made, for no good reason other than the good pleasure of his own will, he told the woman, “I have paid a high price for you and have bought you out of slavery. Now I set you free forever. You never have to be my slave or anyone’s slave again.” He turned and walked away and she stood there a free woman. A few minutes later the slave trader heard hard pounding footsteps behind him and a weeping woman’s voice crying, “Sir, Sir.” He said, “What do you want with me woman? I have set you free forever.” The woman cried out, “For your kindness in setting me free, I will voluntarily be your slave forever. You are now my master.” So it is with the Christian. When he comes to understand that he was a slave to sin and Christ purchased him out of the slave market of sin and set him free, he voluntarily makes himself a slave of Christ.

#### REASONS WE DO NOT EXPERIENCE REDEMPTION

Lack Of Understanding. A Christian may have a simple faith in Christ, but not know anything about the depths of salvation. He may be starving on milk when God wants him to feast on Christ and his glorious salvation. Ignorance can keep a Christian from experiencing the results of having been redeemed.

Failure To Believe What God Says. A Christian may understand intellectually the depth of redemption but be weak in faith, refusing to believe what God says is true about him being set free forever in Christ. Will we believe God or will we believe our emotions, or what others tell us, or what some preacher says? We are purchased and set free if we have Christ as Savior and Lord – the case is closed! By faith, we begin to experience what has already happened to us. Positionally we are free. By faith, we begin to progressively experience the freedom from sin.

In 1945, the WW II was over with Japan. Victory was declared. However, it was months before many Japanese surrendered. One Japanese soldier in Guam did not surrender until 30 years after the war. We were redeemed at the Cross. When we trusted in Christ redemption was ours and we were victorious and set free positionally. However, we spend the rest of our lives in mopping up operations with the enemy of sin in our lives. One day, however, victory will be complete on resurrection day.

Sin In The Life. “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30). When we Christian choose to sin and rebel against the Lord, we break our fellowship with Christ. When we are out of fellowship, we cannot appreciate our redemption in Christ

because “I” instead of Christ is on the throne of our live. We need to confess our sins and we know we will be forgiven because Christ died for every sin we would ever do – past, present and future.

## CONCLUSION

Christ died to redeem men and set them free – free from the guilt of sin, free from the penalty of sin, free from the dominion of sin. Christians are set free. We are not free to sin, not free to transgress the moral law of God, not free to have an independent spirit, not free to do as we please, but we are free to serve Christ, free to be Christ’s slaves and free to let Christ rule our lives. Spiritual freedom in Christ is the most precious freedom known to man and we must be ready to defend it and die for it if necessary. “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery” (Gal. 5:1).

Christians are the freest of all people in the world because their souls have been redeemed and set free. They may be in jail, or a slave or in political bondage, but they are free. “Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants (slaves) of Christ” (1 Pet. 2:16).

Redemption brings glory and praise to the Redeemer and value and purpose to the redeemed.

*“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:9-10).*