

REDEEMED BY HIS BLOOD

Ephesians 1:7-10

⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

1/Happy or Holy?

- We are 'called to be holy.'
- How do we measure our effectiveness as a church? as individuals?
- By how *happy* we are or how *holy* we are?

2/In Him

- Note again that everything is 'in him'
- When we are in Christ, we are in the realm of God's blessing
- Everything we need is found in Christ (Eph 1:3; Col 2:9)
- We are found in Christ by faith (Phil 3:9)

3/The Need for Redemption

- Redemption is needed because of human sin
- Consider current social problems or personal problems
- Sin is basically selfishness
- We need to be saved from ourselves
- Redeem = buy back. See Exodus 13:13-15; Lev 25:25-29, 47-55
- 'The word indicates deliverance at a cost... This word necessarily involves the thought of a ransom price, a substituted being demanded...' [Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (1955), 1998:24,26]
- Read Psalm 103:4; Galatians 4:5; Titus 2:14.
- No eternal redemption without blood
- Recall Old Testament sacrifices [Ex 13:13-15; Rom 3:24; Heb 9:7, 12-15; 1 Peter 1:15]

4/A story of redemption...

- Spindles: 'I made it, then I lost it and now I've bought I back again!' 'Redeemed it,' said Redgum.
- He had both made it and bought it. So it was really twice his. [B.Chant, *Spindles and the Wombat Tabor*, 1997:45]
- *I am redeemed*
I am redeemed by the blood of the Lamb
I am redeemed and I know I am
I am redeemed by the blood of the Lamb
Saved from sin and I know I am

*All my sins are taken away
Praise the Lord!*

5/Forgiveness of sins

- Forgive literally = send away. See Psalm 103:11,12
- Covers all past, present and future sins
- Hamlet waited to avenge his father's death until his uncle Claudius was committing a sin to ensure he would not go to heaven (Hamlet III.iii). He did not understand the grace of God. Under grace, we are saved not by what *we* do but by what *Christ* has done.

6/No condemnation

- Romans 8:1
- 'Through Jesus Christ, God offers total, unconditional forgiveness. So when we come to God through faith in Christ, we are totally and unequivocally freed from every guilt complex.' (B.Chant, *Breaking the Power of the Past*, 200:12)

7/God's grace

- Grace = undeserved favour
- Riches = more than enough. Compare the Medieval idea of the treasury of the saints where the excess good works of the 'saints' was credited to the negative balance of the sinners! In Christ there is more than enough anyway!
- Lavished = overflowing

8/Wisdom and understanding

- Wisdom = *sophia*
- Lifestyle more than knowledge (James 3:13-17)
- Understanding = knowledge; insight
- Redemption demonstrates God's wisdom
- Redemption enhances our understanding

9/The mystery of his will

- God's Great Purpose
- God's great purpose is to bring all things together under Christ.
- To accomplish this he sent Jesus Christ to redeem us by his blood
- This is our great hope
- Let's rejoice in this great redemption today!

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Read: Ephesians 1:7-10

1. What do you think it means to 'have' redemption? (Think about what happens when you pawn something and then buy it back. What if you could pawn a living thing like a pet... How might the pet feel?)

2. Think about the phrase 'through his blood.' Read the account of the day of atonement in Leviticus 16. What do you learn from this about the shedding of blood in Old Testament times? Then read Hebrews 9:1-15 and 24-28. In what ways was the sacrifice of Christ similar to an Old Testament sacrifice? In what ways was it different?
3. How do you feel when you read that we have forgiveness of sins right now? How does that affect your view of your past life? Of your future life?
4. How do you feel when you read the phrase 'lavished on us'? (8)
5. What do you think is the 'mystery of his will'? (9)
6. How do you feel about the future when you read verses 9 and 10?