

F A C E T S O F S A L V A T I O N (part two)

Redemption

DEFINITION: **Redemption** – *to buy, to buy out, especially of purchasing a slave with a view to his freedom. To release on receipt of ransom. To release by paying a ransom price. (Of Christ's work -- He redeems us from iniquity, self-will, and bondage to sin.)*

I. The Message of Redemption is first of all about God.

God is sovereign Creator. *He is the designer, fashioner, and sustainer of all creation* (Ps 100:3; Acts 17:24-31). He called the universe into existence by His spoken Word and He explains it by His written Word, the Scriptures.

He is revealing His mighty attributes by the creation (Rom 1:18-20). The created universe discloses God day by day (Ps 19:1-6).

He is sovereign Ruler and Lord over everything that exists (Is 14:27; Ps 24:1, 2).

He is an infallible Creator.

He is light – He is the source of all truth, wisdom, knowledge, and ethics (1 Jn 1:5; Prov 1:7). *He is holy. He made the universe in order to demonstrate His holiness.* God is unchanging in His moral majesty, purity, and holiness (Is 6:3). He alone sets the standard for right and wrong -- every commandment he has given is the manifestation of His holy character (1 Pet 1:16, Rom 3:19-21).

He is personal Creator. *God is a personal Being* – He is self-aware, personal, holy, knowable, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient (Ps 139; Rom 11:36).

God is love – He created us in His image (Gen 1:27) in order to have a love relationship with us (1 Jn 3:1; 4:7-10). We were made for communion with Him. He created us for His glory that we might take delight in worshipping, honoring, and reflecting Him (1 Cor 10:31; Is 43:7, 21). ***God is worthy to be loved.*** His character is perfect, wonderful and excellent. We were created to be satisfied in Him and all that He is for us. It is the creature's duty to live for His glory.

INTRODUCTION: **We are not God-centered enough.** *Too often we picture a god who is merely trying to be helpful, rather than the God who is sovereign ruler who reigns over all. We forget that God does all things for His own glory, whether saving lost sinners or bringing judgment on the earth.*

God has always existed – *He was there before He made this vast universe. According to the Prophet Isaiah, it is inconceivable that God should create the universe and not receive the glory for which it was made (Is 42-45). (God's glory is not the same as our glory. We may have some temporary fame or recognition for an accomplishment – but God's glory is different, it is the outshining of His unchanging beauty, excellence, holiness, majesty, wisdom, justice, mercy, and love. We were made to find our satisfaction in His glory.)*

In all of God's acts, whether promises, threats, wonders or self-revelation, we should seek to know His glory. *(This is only possible if you are safely hidden in Christ.) God doesn't need anything to feel good about Himself. But He does receive pleasure in*

revealing His excellence. He chose to form an order of creatures in His own image to whom He would reveal Himself. He is revealed in creation, in providence (history), in His wondrous acts, in the Bible, in His only begotten Son, and in the work of salvation. **All things exist for God's glory – humanism says the very opposite.** God's glory is the purpose we were made from the dust of the earth. We were made to run on God, to take delight in Him, to be satisfied in Him, to find our peace, joy, significance, and security in Him.

The key revealer of the Godhead is man's salvation in Christ. God's might, love and wisdom in saving sinners through His Son is the primary means of making God known. Think about it – God has chosen a way to take defiled, polluted, rebellious sinners and bring them from dust to glory. Transgressors who believe upon Christ and repent of sin become exhibit "A" of God's grace. They become eternal trophies of God's matchless grace. Salvation says more about God than anything He has done since creation! Central in God's plan is His purpose to glorify His grace in the salvation of sinners (see Eph 1 and Ex 33:19).

What a corrective the sovereignty of God is for our man-centered view of life. All things exist for God. He is worthy to be King of creation. Because He is absolutely holy, He does all things well. The perfection of His plan will be revealed on the last day. From our perspective, the tapestry of history is filled with loose threads, dead ends, unpunished crimes. But on the last day, when the final second of history ticks off the clock and all calendars are thrown away, once eternity begins, THEN history will be bound into one giant volume of instruction. A book about the character of the Creator and the character of His creatures, yes it will be the record of the honoring and the dishonoring of God, and the destiny of each of those paths (life or destruction).

II. The Message of Redemption is about man's sinful condition.

Mankind rejects God's wonderful character. God's laws and blessings are intended to show us and warn us of God's loving ownership of us (Rom 2:4). But Scripture says that men will not live for the glory of God (Rom 3:23) -- it is because of sin that people are uninterested and are unable to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. **God's testimony of man's condition reveals that all are in rebellion against God's moral government (Rom 8:5-7).**

None of us have treasured God the way we should. We have sought satisfaction in other things and treated them as more valuable than God (Eph 2:1-3).

Mankind is separated from God because of sin. God has borne witness to the consequences of sin (Rom 6:23). Sin produces guilt, death, and separation from God (Rom 5:12). Sin results in separation of our souls from God forever (God is the only Source of light, life, goodness, and love). **God is just and righteous in shutting us out from the enjoyment of His glory forever (Gal 3:10).** Hell is real, it is not a myth. Jesus addressed the subject of hell more than any other speaker in the Bible (Matt 10:28).

Man is in bondage to sin and cannot free himself. God's Word tell us that the human race is dead to the things of God (Col 2:13). Man's will and choosing are enslaved to sin (Gal 3:22). Man's thinking is darkened (Eph 4:18). Man is spiritually blind (2 Cor 4:4).

God's Word tells us that sinners do not have the power to reverse their habitual breaking of God's laws (John 8:34). We are sinners by birth, practice, preference, habit, bondage and rebellion (Rom 3:10-18).

God's Word tells us that man's soul is eternal (Heb 9:27). Physical death does not destroy the "real you." Christ solemnly warned that those who refuse God's provision for the salvation of their souls will experience eternal destruction (Matt 25:30; Mark 8:12). **God has given us His Word to show us our sin and need of salvation (1 Jn 3:4-6).** Unbelief in God's authority is evident in the fact that humans do not take responsibility for their sin. They run their lives as if God does not matter. They attempt to live lives that are self-made, self-sufficient, and self-fulfilled. Only a correct diagnosis of man's condition, found in the Scriptures, can point man to the divine cure (Rom 10:1-4; Gal 3:23, 24).

The Bible tells us that we are not fit to determine the depth of our sinfulness (Jer 17:9). A hasty diagnosis has ruined many. (EX. Would you suggest that bulldozing the ash away from Mount St. Helens would solve the problem of future eruptions? Our sin goes deeper than the magma under that volcano.)

III. The Message of Redemption is about Jesus Christ, the Merciful Redeemer.

Christ took on human nature in order to deliver us from sin and restore us to God (Heb 2:8,9, 14-18). *Jesus Christ is the "God-man."* He is the only Mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5), He alone can bring a soul to God for acceptance, favor, forgiveness, and adoption (Eph 1:4). ***Christ's obedience to the Father was an obedience to the point of death on a cross (Phil 2:6-8).*** Christ's love for sinners is demonstrated by His willingness to die for us while we were yet enemies of God (Rom 5:8-11).

Christ is the Sin-bearer and Substitute for sinners (1 Pet 3:18). *The good news of the Gospel is that Christ died for sinners like us.* He offered Himself as the innocent substitutionary sacrifice for sin on behalf of all those who acknowledge their sin. ***He took the guilt of sinners upon Himself*** – On the cross, He bore our guilt and endured God's judgment against it (Is 53:6).

Christ's payment for sin means that God can acquit sin and still be just (Rom 3:24-26). *Christ's offer of Himself in our place at Calvary has fully satisfied the justice of God.* Christ's death obtained eternal redemption (Heb 9:14, 15; 10:14; Jn 17:2). ***Because of the redemption Christ accomplished, God freely justifies the believing sinner.*** When God justifies, He declares a person righteous in His sight (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 4:5-8; 24, 25).

Christ has risen from the dead; the empty tomb is proof that Christ's sacrifice for sinners was accepted by God on their behalf (Acts 17:31; 1 Cor 15:20).

Christ rose bodily from the dead. His resurrection validates the saving power of His death and opens the gates of eternal life and joy. ***Christ's resurrection guarantees the resurrection of the believer (Jn 14:2, 3).*** By the Redeemer's death and resurrection, the sinner may come home to God, where all deep and lasting satisfaction are found (Acts 3:19, 20 ff.; Titus 3:4-7).

A. Christ's redemptive work was an effectual purchase.

Redemption is purchase – it guarantees to secure and obtain what it buys.

When describing the atonement, the Scriptures consistently use the language of efficaciousness. By efficacious is meant that Christ's work on Calvary produced the effect desired by God (Heb 9:14). Christ did not lay His life down for a reward that was indefinite (Is. 53:10-12).

The promise was made to Christ of eternal life to His own *before* the world began (Titus 1:1-3; 2 Tim. 1:9). Had the success of His work been dependent upon the ungoverned will of man, none would have accepted salvation. Had the security of salvation been dependent upon fickle and faithless minds, none would have uniformly held fast so as not to be finally cast out. BUT, Christ did not descend from heaven and pour out His soul unto death on an uncertain enterprise. NO, He had the promise BEFORE He left the Father's bosom that He was entitled to a certain reward for His great work (see Rev 5:9; 14:3, 4).

Application – We marvel that God should take us from defiled dust to immortal glory. As a result, we increasingly magnify the Lord for so complete and great a salvation. The success and certainty of God's redemptive plan is anchored in His eternal wisdom. Scripture indicates that prior to the cross, this eternal wisdom was a MYSTERY, predestined before the ages to our glory! (1 Cor. 2:6,7).

B. Redemption describes one of the key facets of Christ's atonement.

SACRIFICE – An offering by which the sinner is sanctified and made perfect in God's sight (1 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 10:14; 13:12).

PROPITIATION – An atoning sacrifice that turns God's wrath away from the sinner and makes him an object of favor (Rom. 3:25; 1 Jn. 4:10).

RECONCILIATION – The removal of enmity and hostility whereby the believing sinner is brought into the bonds of everlasting friendship with God (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:18; Heb. 2:17).

REDEMPTION – The giving of Christ's life as a ransom purchases sinners out of bondage for God (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:18; Rev. 5:9; Eph. 1:7,14).

The work of Christ in these four aspects of the atonement arise from the sinner's need.

The need for **SACRIFICE** arises from the guilt of our sins and the condemnation that our transgression of God's Law deserves.

The need for **PROPITIATION** is created by our being under the wrath of God (our liability to eternal condemnation under God's settled anger).

The need for **RECONCILIATION** arises from our alienation from God (holy indignation on God's side and enmity on our side).

The need for **REDEMPTION** is born of our bondage to sin, our bondage to Satan and our bondage to God's justice system (we were bound in custody, awaiting punishment).

All four of the above terms used of Christ's work in the Bible have a background in the common language patterns of the day. The Apostles did not come up with terminology that required a new dictionary in order to understand. Salvation terms employed by the Apostles had a place in the vernacular of everyday life. For example, *redemption* is a

term taken from commercial transactions, *propitiation* is from the practice of religion, and *justification* is a term taken from the law courts.

C. The meaning of redemption helps us understand what Christ accomplished on the cross.

The term, *redemption*, is a commercial term. It was the language used in commerce. It means to *buy back* or to *buy out*. Remember, in the ancient world, much of the commerce had to do with the buying and selling of slaves. When used in the context of a slave market, the term takes on the particular connotation that it has in Christian theology. Thus, in the doctrine of salvation, *redemption* means to buy out of slavery or to set the slave free from sin by the paying of a price.

A great illustration of redemption out of slavery is found in the book of Hosea. Hosea's wife ran away, she was unfaithful and she sank down in the social strata of that day's society until she was eventually sold on an auction block in the city of Samaria. God sent Hosea to buy back his wife. Hosea 3:1-5 records the details of Hosea's redemption of his wife. Hosea was the highest bidder. The acceptance of Hosea's bid ended the bidding. The auctioneer declared, "Sold to Hosea."

The prophet Hosea then says to his wife, "Now you shall abide with me many days, you shall not be for another man, you must be faithful to me. You must not play the part of a prostitute and so also I will be true for you."

This is a vivid picture of redemption. This is exactly what happens to us in salvation. We are the adulterous slave sold on the auction block of sin. The world bids for us (with its many kinds of currency) to keep us in its bonds.

Some people sell their souls for sensual pleasure, some for power, others for fame, respectability and wealth, others for manmade religion.

The Lord Jesus enters the slave market of sin and says in effect, "I bid the infinite price of my blood." God the Father is an auctioneer in this illustration. He brings the gavel down and says, "Sold to my only begotten Son for the price of His blood!"

This is why Peter can say, "You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold (from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers), but with the precious blood, as if of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." (1 Pet. 1:18,19).

Application - What kind of redemption would it be if the death of Christ only made redemption possible? What kind of redemption would it be if Christ's work on Calvary allowed the majority of those for whom He died to perish in a state of bondage to sin, to Satan and to divine justice?

It is worth noting that even in contemporary examples of release by payment of a price (i.e. bail bonds), freedom is secured by a payment. The payment is not a potential or hypothetical redemption, when the bail is paid, the incarcerated party is taken out of his cell and released.

D. The Bible speaks of redemption as a triumphant accomplishment.

That triumphant note is as follows. Though the cost of our release is beyond calculation, Scripture proclaims Christ as *having obtained the ransom price for the release of His people* (Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 5:9). The very nature of Christ's mission is to *secure* the salvation of all those who are ordained to eternal life (Matt. 1:21).

A redemption that *secures* salvation guarantees that not one for whom it was intended can be lost. When speaking of those given Him by the Father, Jesus said that it was God's will, "that of all He has given Me *I lose nothing*" (John 6:38-40).

The Bible treats the death of Christ as a *price paid* to make us His own. By redemption, God in Christ acquired the Church (Acts 20:28). The purpose of His death is to form those He ransoms into one body (John 10:16; 17:21).

Because of the efficacy of the payment, redemption is regarded as synonymous with freedom, liberty and emancipation. Freedom constitutes the redemption. Redemption is *deliverance* by the payment of a price or *acquisition* by the payment of a price.

The O.T. concept of kinsman redeemer provides a vivid picture of Christ's redemptive work (Deut. 25:5-10; Ruth 3:1, 9-13; 4:1-11, 14).

The ***kinsman redeemer*** was to be a close relative in order to redeem. Christ took on our human nature (became related to us) in order to redeem us (Heb. 2:14-18)

The ***kinsman redeemer*** was to be free of debt in order to perform the work of redemption. Christ was sinless, He was free to redeem. He had no sinful liability in the sight of God's holy Law (1 Pet. 3:18).

The ***kinsman redeemer*** was to have the necessary price in order to redeem. Scripture indicates that the price our Savior paid was the infinite price of His own blood (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

The ***kinsman redeemer*** was to do his redemptive work in a totally voluntary fashion. He could not be coerced to do it. So also, our Redeemer voluntarily laid His life down for us. No one took His life from Him (John 10:17,18; Phil. 2:5-8).

More examples that illustrate redemption.

There is the example of the expired pawn that is ***redeemed***. EXAMPLE: There was a father and son in England. The boy loved boats. His dad carved a beautiful model boat out of wood. It had fabric sails with rigging and carefully painted features. One summer day, the boy told his father that he was going to sail his model ship in the shallows of the bay. A sudden squall came up and the wind swept the boat out to sea. The distraught boy returned home and told his father the sad news of how the boat was lost. Six months later the boy was walking down town when to his utter amazement he saw his own boat for sale in the window of the village pawn shop! He ran in and told the owner that it was his boat. The shop owner told the boy that it may have been true that it was once his boat, but that the boat would cost him twelve pounds. The next day he returned to the pawn shop with his father. The boy waited outside. He father came out of the store with the beautiful boat under his arm. He had ***redeemed*** it by paying the necessary price that was set.

Application: When the human race rebelled against God in the Garden of Eden, their departure from God placed our first parents under the dominion of Satan. Under Satan's rule, their spiritual darkness was accompanied by bondage to sin. This enslavement to sin was inescapable by human exertion. Only God Himself could affect our recovery. In our hostility and preferred estrangement from God, we are captives behind the window bars of Satan's "pawn shop." Only a ransom of infinite value could produce our release.

Redemption BUYS US OUT of Satan's usurped ownership of us. (Redemption's price is not paid to the devil. Redemption's price is not set by devil. Redemption's price cannot be supplied by sinful man. The cost of redemption is only possible if God in our nature, the nature that sinned, is sacrificed on our behalf.)

How does an efficacious redemption affect our message?

A definite atonement gives us the confidence to boldly preach the accomplishments of the cross. We proclaim a cross that is mighty to save *because* its accomplishments are certain. Too often one hears a watered-down version of the gospel that places all the emphasis upon the sinner's response and little upon the victory of the cross. These diluted offers sound something like the following, "God will do this if you'll do that." "Won't you *add* Christ to your life?"

When Scripture describes the nature of Christ's cross work, it presents it as a triumphant accomplishment. Redemption, reconciliation and propitiation are said to have happened when Christ died. Death was abolished there (Acts 2:24; 2 Tim. 1:10). Jews and Gentiles were made one at the cross (Eph. 2:14-16).

When speaking of triumph of Christ's death, these blessings were *as good as* accomplished there.

The power of Christ's death is such that it will certainly produce salvation in those for whom it is offered. Victory is inherent in our proclamation of the gospel.

The glorious benefits of Christ's redemption belong only to those who repent and trust Him (Mk 16:16; Jn 3:36; 8:24). The person who savingly believes trusts in *nothing he can do* – when he believes, he transfers all trust away from self to Christ alone (Rom 10:9, 10, 13). Saving sinners is the mission for which Christ came to earth (Luke 19:10).

God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). To repent is to agree with God that we have sinned and deserve eternal judgment. To repent is to turn from all known sin and take Christ as Lord and Master in humble obedience. It is to turn from the deceitful promises of sin so as to despise sin our sin natures (Matt 10:38, 39; 16:25, 26).

IV. The Message of Redemption is intended to transform our walk with God and worship of God.

The very nature of Christ's mission is to secure the salvation of all those who are ordained to eternal life. Therefore, the cross is efficacious to produce a pure BRIDE, a bride already known and loved by Christ (Eph. 5:25-27). Christ's particular love for His bride is also evinced in His all wise and loving discipline of her (Heb. 12:6; Rev. 3:19).

Therefore the Christian has every right and duty to glory in Christ's particular love.

The believer reasons as follows, "He specifically set His love upon me from all eternity. He *thought* of me, His heart love for me motivated the atonement. The joy set before Him of being with me forever moved Him to endure the cross (Heb. 12:2). In eternity, He *thought* upon me, 2000 years ago He *bought* me, in time He *sought* me and made me His own."

Knowledge of completed salvation is of special comfort to God's people. It was the heartbeat of the Apostle Paul's faith (Gal. 2:20). Paul rejoiced that his life was bound up in Christ and His work. The Apostle viewed the atonement in a most personal way and so should we. Our life, our purpose, our hope, our future and our destiny are all wrapped

up in Christ. Our security, comfort, praise, love and devotion are by union with Christ. We celebrate the oneness He has with His people.

Application: To be SAVED is to be purchased by God. To be owned by God is to live as His possession. You are no longer your own, you are bought with a price, therefore, glorify God in your body (1 Cor 6:19, 20). All progress in your Christian life is a function of you giving yourself back to God – continually entrusting yourself to God so as to be transformed by His Word.

It is such an immeasurable privilege to be God's own treasured possession – to hold fellowship and intimate communion with the holy, majestic God of the universe so as to know Him better each day. The cost on your side will be a life of dying to sin and self – a life of putting to death your lusts. It will be living unto God and being satisfied with all that He is toward you in Christ.

A plea to come to Christ for salvation

*People who stop short of God's all sufficient remedy for man's ruin by sin can be counted in the millions. The darkness of men's hearts causes them to turn to works, religious deeds and experiences. Let's consider a question that can cut through all of this: **What if God asked you on the last day, "Why should I let you into my heaven?"** What would you say? What is your qualification to be here? The born again believer would whole-hearted answer that his entire right to be in heaven is found in Christ alone, not himself. **Christ is Savior and Lord.** The issue of coming to Christ always deals with the subject of "who will be in charge of your life." Countless people who know the facts of the Gospel assume that they are right with God, yet in their hearts they are not ready to be owned and possessed by God as His property. But there is no salvation unless the person is the purchased possession of God!*