

Ephesians 1-7-10 Salvation in the son!

Scripture reading-

Ephesians 1:7-11 (ESV) — 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 him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Prayer for illumination- please join me in prayer...

Sermon introduction-

Many years ago, I was talking to a coworker who was nominally involved in a very large “Christian” denomination. She said, “Yeah, I believe in God, but I’m not so sure about Jesus. Was he really God?” In Christianity, one must affirm God the Father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit. Why? There are many reasons. One of the most important reasons is found in Ephesians 1:3-14.

Ephesians 1:3-14 is one long sentence in the original language of the Bible. In this long sentence the apostle Paul exhorts us to praise the triune God for his majestic work of salvation. In these verses, it is very clear that each member of the trinity has a critical role to play. Therefore, each member of the trinity must be praised!!!

1:3-6 God the Father must be praised for planning salvation

1:7-10 God the Son must be praised for securing salvation

1:11-14 God the Spirit must be praised for applying salvation

Each member of the trinity must be praised... This morning’s text focuses on the work of Jesus Christ, the son of God.

Why should Jesus be praised? Two reasons....

Jesus redeems

Jesus unites

First, Jesus redeems!

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV) — 7 In him we have redemption...

What does the word redemption mean? Freedom from Slavery!

In NT times, this word referred to the process of paying a ransom price to free a slave or a prisoner of war (Ladd, 474).

For Paul’s Jewish audience, the concept of redemption had its roots in the OT. The greatest act of redemption in the OT was the act of God freeing his people from Egyptian bondage in the 14th century BC.

Here is the key takeaway, when someone is redeemed, they are freed from slavery.

Before conversion all of us were enslaved to sin, death, and the devil. There was nothing we could do to free ourselves from these forces. Ephesians 1:7 highlights our slavery to sin... Jesus confirms this.

John 8:34 (ESV) — 34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

Many non-Christians are not aware of the fact that they are enslaved to sin, because sin is very deceptive.

This slavery takes many forms. People can be...

Enslaved to fear of man
Enslaved to anxiety
Enslaved to eating (having the right body)
Enslaved to drinking
Enslaved to porn
Enslaved to anger
Enslaved to pride
Enslaved to things, hobbies, sex, etc...
The list goes on and on...

So how are we redeemed? This brings us to the next question.

What is redemption? Freedom!

How are we redeemed? Through Christ's blood!

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV) — 7 In him we have redemption through his blood,...

In NT times when a slave was redeemed, they were redeemed by payment of a ransom. The ransom was the price paid to free the slave. We see this in the Mel Gibson movie Ransom... The character played by Mel Gibson had to pay a ransom price to free his boy from the kidnappers. What did God use to pay for our freedom? Our text tells us that Christ paid for our freedom with his own blood.

Our redemption was very, very, very costly! Jesus paid for it with his own blood, (shorthand for his life)!!!

1 Peter 1:18–19 (ESV) — 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, **19** but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Illustration: imagine this scenario... on Jane and Joe's twentieth wedding anniversary Joe gives Jane a diamond ring. Jane says, “Joe this is amazing... you did not have to do this. Besides we can't afford a diamond this big.” Joe says, “Don't worry it only cost me \$50, its fake.” Jane responds, “\$50, wow thanks...” Jane does not feel the love because Joe did not sacrifice a whole lot to purchase the diamond for Jane.

But imagine this scenario... Joe gives Jane a diamond and she says, “Joe this is amazing... you did not have to do this. Besides we can't afford a diamond this big.” Joe responds, “I know we can't afford something this big so I sold my Harley, my boat, my jeep, my guns, my 90 inch television, my golf clubs, and my new chain saw. Plus I got rid of the NFL Sunday ticket cable package to buy it for you?”

How would Jane feel? Highly valued and loved. Why? Because her husband sacrificed nearly everything to buy her a diamond.

Jesus did not sacrifice nearly everything he sacrificed everything to redeem us from the power of sin, death, and the devil.

He paid for us with his own blood, in other words, he paid for us with his life. And we get so much more than a diamond ring. We get freedom.

But what exactly are we freed from? This brings us to the next question.

What is redemption? Freedom!

How are we redeemed? Through Christ's blood!

What are we redeemed from? The guilt of sin!

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV) — 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,...

When Jesus died for us, he redeemed us. That is, he freed us. What did he free us from specifically? Many things, but our texts highlights freedom from the consequences of sin.

Paul's logic works like this. Jesus redeemed us by dying on the cross for our sins. Since he shed his blood on the cross for our sins, we don't have to pay the penalty for our sins. Therefore, we can be forgiven of all of our sins. All of our guilt was laid on Christ, and he shed his blood for us, freeing us from sins consequences.

Since Christ redeemed us, every trespass can be forgiven.

Psalm 103:12 (ESV) — 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Jeremiah 31:34c (ESV) — 34c For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Micah 7:19 (ESV) — 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.

Maybe you are wondering, "I have done some really bad things, numerous times. Can God really forgive me?"

Yes... anyone can be forgiven.

Illustration:

"Albert Speer was interviewed on ABC's "Good Morning, America." He kept the Nazi factories humming throughout World War II... As a result, Speer spent twenty years in Spandau prison.

The interviewer referred to a passage in one of Speer's earlier writings: "You have said the guilt can never be forgiven, or shouldn't be. Do you still feel that way?"

He responded, "I served a sentence of twenty years, and I could say, 'I'm a free man, my conscience has been cleared by serving the whole time as punishment.' But I can't do that. I still carry the burden of what happened to millions of people during Hitler's lifetime, and I can't get rid of it."

The interviewer pressed the point. "You really don't think you'll be able to clear it totally?" Speer shook his head. "I don't think it will be possible." (Kent Hughes)

For thirty-five years Speer, a Nazi war criminal, thought it was impossible to be forgiven.

Can men like him Speer be forgiven? Can murderers, pedophiles, and rapists be forgiven?

Yes... anyone can be redeemed through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

What is redemption?

How are we redeemed?

What are we redeemed from?

What is the cause of our redemption? Lavish Grace!

Ephesians 1:7–8 (ESV) — 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...

Paul writes that we have been redeemed “according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us.”

Why did God send the son to redeem us? Because he is rich in grace. In other words, he loves to give blessings free of charge. He loves to redeem free of charge!!!

Illustration:

Warren Buffet is an American investor, business tycoon, and philanthropist. He is considered one of the most successful investors in the world. (currently the 4th wealthiest man in the world)

He loves to give his money away.

Since the year 2000, Warren Buffet has donated **46 billion dollars to charity**. Making him the greatest philanthropist of all time.

In 2006, Warren Buffet pledged to donate **37 billion dollars** to the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation. This is the largest donation ever made to a single organization.

Buffett gave according to his riches. He gave freely!

This is what God is like. He loves to give freely. He gave humanity his own son, to redeem them. This cost him everything, but it costs you nothing.

Application:

Your redemption was incredibly costly!!!

It cost the son of God his life!!! What is the appropriate response? We must live for his glory with every fiber of our being!!!! Although we must not think of this as paying God back! This is impossible.

Your redemption was given freely!!!
It can't be earned; it must be accepted freely!!! It comes to us by grace.

Your redemption must be received!!!
How does one access God's free redemption? Repentance and faith.

God's redeeming grace will be our song for all eternity!

Revelation 5:9–10 (ESV) — **9** And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, **10** and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

Why must we praise Jesus?

First, Jesus redeems! Why else???

Second, Jesus unites!

In eternity past, God the father developed a plan to unite all things in Jesus. Verses 9-10 describes aspects of this plan. Let's look at this plan in more detail.

The plan to unite all things in Jesus is mysterious!

Ephesians 1:9–10 (ESV) — **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 him, things in heaven and things on earth.

The father's plan to unite all things in his son was mysterious. In Paul's letters a mystery is not a strange or difficult problem that no one can solve. A mystery is truth that was partially revealed in the OT but has now been fully revealed in the coming of Jesus Christ.

There are hints of this plan in the OT for sure... but the full extent of this plan was not made known until Christ came to earth, died on the cross, and rose from the grave.

Here is what I want you to see. The father has a plan. He has always had a plan. This plan was devised between the father and the son, before the foundation of the world. (verse 9c can be translated “set forth with Christ”) It involves uniting all things in his son Jesus Christ.

Application:

Here is the best part. This plan has been revealed to us. Christians are “in the know.” We know where all things are headed.

History is not random. It is all heading in a very specific direction.

There are three major views of history...

Cyclical view of history- history just keeps repeating itself, it is not going anywhere, it is not heading towards any kind of conclusion (Mayans, Aztecs, Hindus, Buddhists- most eastern religions)

Evolutionary view of history- history is controlled by natural forces, which means it is not controlled by anything. An optimistic evolutionist might say that we are improving. But even if we are it does not matter because someday our sun will burn out and there will be no more energy in our galaxy, which means no more life in our galaxy. In the meantime, the rule is survival of the fittest (communism, atheism, secular humanism)

If there is no point to history, there is no point to life!!!

The Christian view of history is a story moving towards a grand conclusion- Like all great stories, it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. It has climax (the cross and resurrection) and is being drawn toward a grand conclusion (the return of Christ). God the father is directing the whole thing....

This means that your life has purpose. It is heading towards a grand conclusion. This is part of God's grand plan.

What exactly is the plan? Let's keep reading...

The plan to unite all things in Jesus is mysterious! In addition.

The plan to unite all things in Jesus is cosmic!

Ephesians 1:9-10 (ESV) — 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 him, things in heaven and things on earth.

God's plan for the fullness of time is to unite all things in Him that is in Christ. The fullness of time is the end of this present evil age.

God the father is moving all of history towards this moment. When Christ returns in Glory, God the father will "unite all things" in Jesus Christ. This is God's grand plan for the history of the universe.

What does "unite all things" mean?

The word for "unite all things" in the ESV is the Greek word *anakephalaioo*. This was the word used in secular Greek, when an orator "summed up" his main points and brought them to a conclusion. This word is used this in a similar way in Romans 13:9.

Commenting on this word, Frank Thielman writes,

"Just as an orator or writer draws together the elements of an argument and shows how they demonstrate the chief point of the speech of composition, so Christ will bring order to the universe. God will use Christ to bring together the disparate elements of creation whether they are 'things in heaven or on the earth.'"

"Christ is the one in whom God chooses to sum up the cosmos, the one in whom he restores harmony to the universe. He is the focal point, not simply the means, the instrument, or the functionary through whom all this occurs." (Obrien)

Many think that Paul's letter to the Colossians is twins with Paul's letter to the Ephesians. In other words, they say a lot of the same things.

Colossians 1:19–20 (ESV) — **19** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Philippians 2:10–11 (ESV) — **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.

In eternity past, God the father chose to unite all things in Jesus Christ at the end of history. In other words, he will bring order and harmony to the universe.

Application:

All things have been torn apart by sin, Jesus Christ will bring together all that has been destroyed by sin!!! He will bring harmony, he will “unite all things.”

Just how cosmic is the plan to unite all things in Christ?

Ephesians 1:10 says that God the father will “unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.”

This reminds me of Romans 8.

Romans 8:19–21 (ESV) — **19** For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. **20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

See also 2 Peter 3:10, Matt. 19:28

This reminds me of the great hymn by Isaac Watts. It proclaims that Jesus “came to make his blessings flow, as far as the curse is found.”

Jesus Christ will bring together, sum up, or unite, all things cursed by the fall.

This means that someday....

There will be no more pollution!

No more war!

No more unemployment!

No more taxes!

No more disease!

No more loneliness!

No more depression!

No more family dysfunction!

No more anger!

No more injustice, poverty, or racism!

The father will unite all things in the son.

Every part of sin ruined by the fall, will be reclaimed by king Jesus.

This is where all history is heading! It will culminate in Jesus Christ!!!

Why should we praise Jesus?

Jesus redeems

Jesus unites

Conclusion:

Let me end by reminding all of us that Paul wrote this letter in his old age. He was under house arrest in Rome, handcuffed to a Roman soldier at all times.

In the state Paul looked way back to eternity past, to the time before there was time (v. 4). He marveled at the fact that he had been chosen by God the Father to be an adopted son.

Then he contemplated the fact that although presently, he was a prisoner in chains he had been freed from the guilt of sin by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Then he gazed way off into the future... and celebrated the fact that God the father would one day unite all things in Christ.

Although Paul was chained, his heart and mind were absorbed with the glory of God spanning all of eternity.

What a perspective? Is this our perspective?

In light of Paul's perspective John Stott asks,

"As for us... how small is our mind, how narrow are our horizons! Easily and naturally we slip into a preoccupation with our own petty little affairs. But we need to see time in the light of eternity, and our present privileges and obligations in the light of our past election and future perfection. Then, if we shared the apostle's perspective, we would also share his praise... Life would become worship, and we would bless God constantly for having blessed us so richly in Christ. (Stott, Ephesians, 44-45)

Let's pray...