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## Ephesians 2:7

We're continuing our study of the book of Ephesians. Last week we talked about the predestined Person and Place of our salvation, and our acceptance in Him. We talked about coming to know the love of God in the Son of His love.

Today I want to look at Ephesians 1 verse 7, and that is as far as we'll go today. Once again we have so much reality packed into a single sentence. I wouldn't want to move over this too quickly.

It reads "in Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace".

Today I want to look at the reality of redemption, and the forgiveness of sins, both of which I can say I have greatly misunderstood in the past.

Before we look at the redemption and the forgiveness of sins, let's pause just to notice again the Person and Place of both of these realities. They are said to be "in Him". If you miss the "in Him" and what that means, there is zero chance that you will comprehend redemption or forgiveness of sins. Before Paul mentions either of these two realities, He specifies the Person and Place as being in Christ.

Remember that Paul has just told us about our "Son placement". Paul has just dealt with the Ephesians about the eternal, predestined plan of God to have a people in His Son, sharing the life of His Son, before His face. Paul has just told us that we are accepted "In the Beloved". In fact, this is the 5<sup>th</sup> time in seven verses that Paul has already made mention of the reality of being "in Christ". Actually, it is the 7<sup>th</sup> time if you understand the words "heavens" and "love" as the place and relationship of that Son.

I want to say it again, if we have not, by the Spirit, seen something of the reality of being in Christ...if that remains in our brain a theology and not in our soul something of a reality, then we cannot understand salvation. So if you're here this morning and don't feel like the Spirit of God has yet made real in your heart the reality of being in Christ, or Christ in you, I want to simply recommend that you begin to ask the Lord, like a little child, to open the eyes of your heart to see it.

I spent years of my life assuming I knew the reality of being in Christ because I was familiar with the verses and excited about the concept. Well, that was far from knowing the reality, but I simply had no idea. It wasn't until I finally let the Lord show me that I knew nothing at all that there was room in my heart to show me anything. I know I say that like a broken record, but it is the most important thing I know. Humble yourself like a child, and He will reveal His salvation. Think you know something...and you will be ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Ok, having said that, lets begin to look at the reality of redemption. Redemption is IN CHRIST. God has not redeemed you *because of* Christ. God has redeemed you *IN Christ*. And that is because God's plan was the redemption of a Son. The redemption of His firstborn Son. Not the redemption of a bunch of people. But the redemption of His Son, in whom a bunch of people have found redemption. There's a difference.

Lets start with the basics. What does redemption mean? Redemption has to do with purchasing back something that belongs to you. Redemption is getting back something that is already yours, but was somehow lost or stolen or unavailable. You are the legal owner of something, but it will not be possessed by you until some sort of payment is made. It must be redeemed.

So redemption, biblically speaking, has to do with God purchasing back for Himself something that was already His. God had something, somehow it was lost to Him, and He purchased it back.

Now what was that thing that God had, and then somehow lost, and then purchased back for Himself? So much of the church says "its me!". But that's not right. I'm not saying that you are not redeemed by God. But listen, this is so very important. You were born dead in transgressions and sins. Paul says that we were "by nature children of wrath". John the Baptist says that "he who does not believe in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him". Jesus says "flesh gives birth to flesh, spirit gives birth to spirit. It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh profits nothing".

What's my point? My point is that the story of redemption is not a story of Adam being restored to God. The story of redemption is the story of God's one and only Son humbling Himself, taking on the form of man, taking onto Himself, into Himself, the man of shame, as 1 Corinthians says He became the last Adam. The story of redemption is that of a perfect Son becoming a curse, becoming sin, bearing in Himself the first man, the first creation, and all its shortcomings, and bringing those things, in Himself, into separation from God.

**Gal 3:13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone having been hanged on a tree");

The story of redemption is a Son who was lost unto His Father. And then a Son who was redeemed by His Father. Listen friends, this story ALWAYS has Christ, and not man, as the center of it. You reap the benefits of this story. But He always has the leading role.

Redemption has to do with a Son taking on Himself the sin of the world, and then all of heaven turning its back on the eternal Son of God. Jesus drinking the cup of the first man and the first creation. Jesus bearing in Himself the shame "for the joy set before Him He endured the shame". The shame of what? The shame of being stripped and beaten? No. The shame of becoming the man of shame. The shame of becoming the man who ran and hid himself in the garden and attempted, and always attempts, to cover his true nature from God.

"He endured the shame". That's exactly right. What shame? The shame of taking on Himself, into Himself, all that fell short of the glory of God and separating it

permanently from God by His cross. John 12:31 "Now is the judgment of the world...and if I am lifted up, I will draw all men unto myself".

And in that very moment the Son of God cries out something very strange. He cries out something so contrary to everything He'd ever said before. He screamed something that heaven had never heard. He cried out "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?"

You see, here we have a Son lost to His Father. Here we have a Son in need of redemption. Here is a Son that hangs on a cross bearing the shame, bearing the shortcomings, bearing Adam – the man of sin. And after saying "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken Me?". He says "It is finished" and He gives up his Spirit.

Now you'd think He would come out of the grave shouting "it is finished". You'd think that would be something He'd say in the resurrection. But no, He knew that in His death it was over. What was over? The price for redemption had been paid. The purchase price of redemption was paid. Redemption had been purchased. Now it was just a matter of time. Now it was just a burial and a resurrection. Now, just as the Psalmist prophesies, Jesus cries out from Sheol

Psa 16: 10 For You will not leave My soul in hell; You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 11 You will make Me know the way of life; in Your presence *is* fullness of joy. At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Now, as it says in Hebrews 2:14 "through death He destroyed him who had the power of death". And now God can say to death, the price is paid - "**let my Son go**"

To me this is very reminiscent of the Exodus in the Old Testament. Egypt always represents death and slavery to it. God says to Moses "Go tell Pharaoh, Israel is My Son, even my Firstborn, now let my Son go". Notice, God does not tell Moses to say "Pharaoh, let the Israelites go". No, this isn't a picture of the redemption of many. This is the redemption of a lost Son.

Now, it is a lost Son who becomes redemption to many. But we are **redeemed in Him**. He is made unto us redemption.

Our verse today in Ephesians says that "**in Him** we have redemption through His blood".

- Rom 3:24 says "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is **in Christ** Jesus;
- 1Co 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption;
- Col 1:14 **in whom** we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins

And that is part of the story of the Exodus as well. How did those who were redeemed of God escape the land of sin and death? They took the blood of the Lamb, painted it on the doorposts of their house, and went into that death. They went into the death of the Lamb. How did they get out of death? Through the death of the Lamb. Through the blood of the Lamb. "In Him we have redemption through His blood".

The judgment on Egypt that night was death. The redemption was a way out of death, through the death of the Lamb. The day that Jesus died – the judgment on Adam that day was death. The way out of death, for those who were dead in trespasses and sins, was through the death of the Lamb.

Romans 6, once again,

“Or are you ignorant that all who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? (4) Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that as Christ was raised up from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, so also we should walk in newness of life.”

But my point is simply that the Father redeems His Own Son by payment. The Father takes back to Himself He who was rightfully His through payment of the purchase price. First of all, why did He have to? Because Christ was made a curse. Because He became the last Adam.

**2Co 5:21** For He has made Him who knew no sin, *to be* sin on our behalf, that we might become *the* righteousness of God **in Him**.

Payment was necessary because He became sin on our behalf. What was the payment? The payment was His own blood.

**1Pe 1:18** knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, silver or gold, from your worthless way of life handed down from *your* fathers, **19** but with *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;

What was the result? Israel is my Son. A Son redeemed of His Father, raised up by His Father, exalted by His Father. A Son restored to glory. A Son returning to His Father’s house.

**Psa 24:7** Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. **8** Who *is* this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. **9** Lift up your heads, O gates; even lift up, O everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. **10** Who *is* this King of glory? The Lord of Hosts, He *is* the King of glory. Selah.

But not just Christ the firstfruits, but an entire harvest of His Seed. Not just the King of glory, but now also a people who live in and by that King. A people who have been brought with Him, in Him, to glory. Hebrews 2 “He brought many sons to glory”. The firstborn among many brethren, sharing His life. A head opening the womb of death, but joined together with a body, both coming out of death together. A people who are the Son’s house in His resurrection. A people who are NOW in Christ.

**Joh 17:24** Father, I desire that *those* whom You have given Me, that where I am, they may be also, that they may behold My glory which You gave Me, because You loved Me before *the* foundation of *the* world.

And that is what redemption has accomplished. Christ has brought you in Himself into the Father’s house.

Col 3:3 For you **have** died, and your life has **been hidden** with Christ in God.

God has redeemed His Son, and we have redemption in Him. God has redeemed a Son, and that Son has "been made unto us redemption". You see Christ is more than just our redeemer. He is our redemption.

And it is only in Him as our redemption that we have forgiveness of sins. Now we get to the other phrase in our verse. "In Him we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace".

We spent some time in the Friday night group on this, and we got into more detail than I want to get into this morning. It is a bit difficult for me to describe without getting into so much more detail with regard to the Old and New Covenants, and I know I'm going to be misunderstood by some. But I'm going to give it my best shot here.

One day I was thinking about the fact that the first thing we face in Christ is His death. I was thinking about how first there is judgment, the destruction of Adam, the destruction of the old man, and then, when that is faced (in your understanding), you can begin to understand the newness of life. We already quoted Romans chapter 6 "do you not know that everyone that was baptized into Christ was baptized into His death". We could quote dozens of other verses like that. And we have.

But I was thinking about the reality that the first thing we must face in salvation is an end, before we can embrace or comprehend Him as the beginning. I don't mean just turning over a new leaf. I mean the newness of life. I mean that new Life isn't added to yours. New life **replaces** what was there before. Salvation isn't a self-improvement plan, it's a self-replacement plan. It isn't an imitation of life, it is the impartation of His Life, once we have faced His death.

So I was thinking about that, and how it is always that way in the Old Covenant, and then of course, it is that way fulfilled in the New Covenant. It was a people entering into the death of the Lamb that then could come out through the Sea. It was a sacrifice dead and consumed at the altar, before there could ever be incense and light, etc. in the tabernacle. And now in Christ it is the same.

And then it just sort of dawned on me that the way we often teach it in churches is that Adam needs to be forgiven. But that's not true. Adam (that kind, that nature, that seed) needs to die. Adam needs to face death, and then Christ becomes the Life of the believer. Adam isn't forgiven. Adam is crucified. The old man isn't pardoned. The old man is destroyed and buried. We talked about that some when we talked about grace. First He gives you a death you couldn't die, and the other side of that is a life you couldn't live.

But see, then it went a bit further. Then I started to think about forgiveness of sin. And I started to realize that we so often present to the world that they simply need to come to God and ask that their sins be forgiven. Well, the reality of forgiveness is certainly real, but I began to see that we often present this the wrong way. Forgiveness doesn't apply to Adam. Forgiveness applies to those who are in Him. Now here is where I'm afraid I'll lose some people. And if this doesn't make sense right now, come back a little later and listen to this again.

But just listen for now. Forgiveness is IN CHRIST. Look at our verse. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. You see, forgiveness is something we experience IN HIM. But its not how we got in. We got in through death. Again, Adam wasn't forgiven. Adam was crucified.

Forgiveness of trespasses isn't **how** we got in, but what we experience when we've been brought in through death, through justification. In other words, we were not "saved" by being forgiven. We were "saved" by being justified through bearing His death, and we are forgiven in Him for every thing that falls short of Him. We are forgiven in Him for where we break covenant.

And that is exactly how it worked in the Old Testament. God didn't tell the Israelites in Egypt to get out by asking for their sins to be forgiven. No, they got out by the death of the Lamb. They out by painting that blood on their doorposts and walking into it. That's how they got out.

But once they were out, THEN they were in covenant with God. Then they were commanded to become a testimony of Christ in the earth. A testimony of Christ through obeying the Law, keeping the feasts, building the tabernacle, establishing the priesthood, etc. And it was then, after they had come out, after they were in covenant, that they were offered the forgiveness of trespasses.

And everything that they did, knowingly or unknowingly, that was contrary to the testimony of Christ that they were demanded of God to represent in the earth...in other words, wherever there was a trespass of the covenant, they were offered forgiveness through blood.

And that is how it is with us now in Christ. We got into Christ through death with Him. "do you not know that you were baptized into His death", "you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God", "I've been crucified with Christ". "you were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ", etc. But now, in Him there is that blood to be applied to every where we knowingly, or unknowingly, break covenant. There is forgiveness of trespasses for us who are redeemed in Him.

In the old covenant, blood was applied to whatever God's people did that fell short of the testimony of Christ. In the New Covenant, blood is applied (so to speak) to whatever God's people do that falls short of the reality of Christ. Wherever it is still I, and not Christ. Wherever it is still us trying to live for Christ, and not Christ literally formed in and expressed through us.

I am not going to expound on that much right now. Again, we did that in other settings. I set it out there for your consideration, and invite you to come to any of our weekly meetings to see more of this. I try to keep Sunday mornings more "new-people friendly". While I'm mentioning this, I really believe that the small groups that meet during the week (Sunday nights, Tuesdays, Wednesday at the Bradley's, Fridays, Saturday mornings, and the Colossians class) are where so much growth happens. I just invite you all again to any of those groups.

But let me just also say, for your consideration, that I wonder what it would look like if we preached a gospel to the world that was first a death and then a life, like Jesus offered. "He who wishes to save his life will lose it, but he who loses his life for my sake will find it". "If anyone does not hate...his own life, He cannot be my disciple" I wonder what it would look like if we didn't preach so much of an "Adam-makeover".

You know there's a show on TV where they take an old house and give it a makeover. What is it called? *This Old House*? Well, that's what we do with the gospel. *This Old Adam*. We offer him a refurbishing. We offer him 10 steps to a more fulfilled life with Jesus. But the cross offers you death unto life. And only in that life is the forgiveness of trespasses.

We need to teach people that they must face something more serious than repenting for what they did. Repentance is from what we are, and a receiving of what He is in our soul. Grace offers you a death you couldn't die, and a life you couldn't live. And in that life, in that redemption, there is forgiveness of sins for everywhere we knowingly or unknowingly (just like in the testimony) still live in His place. Amen.