

Only Jesus Can Redeem Us

Colossians 1:12-14

This morning we continue a brand new sermon series that I believe is most relevant today. We live in a culture that is increasingly opposed to the Bible and its claims. For many, the Bible is seen as an archaic book which is out of date and of little use. The claims of Jesus, and the very reason for His existence, then seem to many as unnecessary and perhaps irrelevant. However, I want to state clearly and emphatically that the Bible is God's Holy Word. It is eternal therefore it is timeless. Its message is as accurate and as relevant today as it was the very moment its words were penned and its books were canonized. The claims of Jesus are equally as relevant because like it or not, receive it or not, Jesus' life and actions prove that His claims are all true. He claimed to come from heaven and it was confirmed when God the Father spoke from heaven, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." He claimed to be about His Father's business and this was confirmed when he taught the scholars, healed the sick, and raised the dead. He claimed that He came to give His life as a ransom for many and this was confirmed when He died on the cross and cried out, "It is finished." He claimed that when his body was destroyed in three days He would raise it up again and this was confirmed when, three days after His death, He arose victorious over death and the grave. His claims are all true. However, that doesn't stop people from rejecting His claims. That doesn't stop people from questioning His claims. We see that clearly in our day today. In **John 14:6** Jesus specifically said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." Notice that Jesus specifically said, "I am the way." His statement left no room for any other way. There is no other way to heaven. There is no other way to experience the presence of God but through Jesus the Son of God. However, this goes against the norm of our culture. We live in a culture that doesn't accept absolute truth. Many strive to be accepting of all and believe that what's right for you is right and what's right for me is right. We live in a culture that says there can't be just one way. There are many ways so just do what is right for you and it will work out in the end. We have created a chronological snobbery where we think that we are so wise that we know more than all the generations before us therefore we must be right. However, this line of reasoning is directly opposed to the Word of God and no matter how far we go in rejecting Jesus it doesn't change the fact that He is still the Lord and that one day every knee will bow and confess that He is Lord.

I'm here to remind us this morning that there is only one Hope for all of the world. This hope is not in a preacher or a politician but in a Person named Jesus. Where can we go for answers to life's deepest questions? We can go to Jesus. Where can we turn when life seems to be falling apart at the seams? We can go to Jesus. Where can we run when we realize that we are helpless to change our situations? We can go to Jesus. Where can we go when we fear the future? We can go to Jesus. Where can we go to find unfathomable peace? We can go to Jesus. Where can we go to find unspeakable joy? We can go to Jesus. Where can we go to find unconditional love? We can go to Jesus. Where can we go to find undeserved grace? We can go to Jesus. Where can we go to find forgiveness and healing? We can go to Jesus. Where can we go to find life abundant? We can go to Jesus. All these things and more are found in one Person and one Person alone – Jesus. Throughout this fall semester we are going to see over and over again that the answers to

our greatest need is “Only Jesus.” Last week we learned that only Jesus can restore our desire to grow in our relationship with God. Today we see that only Jesus can redeem us from sin.

Paul clearly focuses on the reality that every believer should give thanks to God. There is much to give God thanks for! Has He been good to you? Has He provided for you and met your every need? Has He held you and led you through the trials and circumstances of life? Has He restored your home and marriage? Has He taken what Satan meant for bad and worked together for good? Is there something to thank Him for? Have you personally received His gift of salvation? Are you personally reading His Word, discovering His guidance, growing in Wisdom, and believing His promises? Friend, if you are then you know it’s true – we should give thanks to the Father. But notice the word before this, “joyously.” Giving thanks to the Father shouldn’t be a bother to us, nor should it be done through boredom. What does “joyous” look like? Envision an excited fan at a game, a young woman who has just said, “Yes,” to a proposal, a dad when he holds his child for the first time. Those same sorts of emotions and excitement should be a part of our expressions of thanks to God. If they aren’t, then chances are that you’ve never experienced these four wonderful truths about Jesus. Paul lays out four reasons that we should praise the Lord:

I. He Alone Can Remake Us (vs. 12)

The direction of our praise is the key to understanding this phrase. The Bible says here that we are to give thanks to the Father. This is a key point here and one that we will look at in much greater detail next week. It is only by God the Father’s grace and mercy that we can become a part of His family and actually call Him affectionately our Father. Our translation says He “has qualified us.” In the KJV it says that “He made us meet to be partakers.” Now think of this for just a moment. The Bible says that there is no distinction of persons, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is not a single one of us righteous in and of ourselves. As a result, we are disqualified from sharing anything with the one who is perfect. We are unrighteous, He is righteous. We do not meet the criteria to share anything with Him or from Him. We all fall short. However, when we could do nothing to change our fallen state God did something amazing. He sent His Son Jesus to give His life for us so that through Him we could be adopted into His family. By believing in Jesus as Lord, He makes us a new creation. By believing in Jesus as Lord, He qualifies us. Notice, this has nothing to do with what we have done. We brought nothing to the table but our flaws and imperfections. God did all the work. ****ILL: Adoption of a little boy from Taiwan.** He was in an orphanage. He had been abandoned. His future seemed futile. He had nothing to bring and could do nothing to change his situation. But then came this family. They had the love of God and a calling from God and they found Him. They made trips, plans, and prayed. They spent time, a lot of money, and much energy. They made great sacrifices and eventually they adopted that little boy. Many once looked at the boy and said, “He is unfit to be with a family. He won’t amount to much.” However, today, because of the love of a father, he is a part of a healthy family. He is growing. He is smart, and his future is bright. What made the change? A father who went out of his way and gave of himself. This, too, on a much grander scale is what God does for every believer. Listen, to the words of **Galatians 4:4-7**, “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born

of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” Therefore, you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.” Please hear me this morning, there is no amount of good deeds that you can do to earn God’s forgiveness and grace. There is no other god that you can turn to. It is only by the grace of the Almighty God that was demonstrated through Jesus that we can be saved and adopted. This word “Abba” was an Aramaic word that had great significance. The slaves of that time were not allowed to address the head of a household with this term. The only ones who could use this term was those who were born to the head of the house. It is better known today as the word “Daddy” which affectionately looks to Him as our Provider, Protector, and Comforter. Every single person who has believed in Jesus we have been remade to a brand new creation and a brand new relationship with God as our Father.

A. Our Privilege

For all who have been adopted into God’s family, God has something especially for us. Verse 12 says that as God’s children He has “qualified us to share in the inheritance.” We know what an inheritance is. It is a blessing, a gift, that is given or passed on to a loved one. It is something that is thoughtfully arranged and prepared. The Bible says that Christians share in the inheritance in Christ. **Ephesians 1:11, 13-14** says it simply, “Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will... In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.” We have all the blessings and riches of heaven given to us through Jesus. Every person who has been saved has already been made partakers of this inheritance, but each blessing is a reminder that we have not yet experienced all that the Father has in store for us when we are with Him in glory. This inheritance is only available through Christ, but it is also important to note that these blessings are permanent. **1 Peter 1:3-4** confirms this truth saying, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.” This inheritance is unlike any earthly inheritance. This inheritance is incorruptible meaning that nothing can ruin it. It is undefiled meaning that it cannot be stained or cheapened in any way. It will never grow old because it is eternal; it cannot ever wear out. In other words it isn’t temporary. Friend everything in this world is temporary but that which is offered by God. Our cars, clothes, homes, they all wear down and are temporary. But our salvation is an eternal, permanent gift of God. Friend, when you trust Christ for salvation your name is recorded in the Lamb’s book of life. You are sealed by the Holy Spirit. The text says that this is reserved in heaven for us. ****ILL:** I don’t know about you, but I have sometimes gone to a hotel only to discover that the reservations have been confused or cancelled. But friend

this will not happen to us in when we arrive in heaven. Our future home and inheritance are guaranteed.

B. Our Partnership

It is important for us to recognize that we didn't earn this inheritance, it is only by the grace of God that we have been made partakers. It is also important to recognize that we, alone, aren't recipients of the inheritance. Mankind has a tendency to promote self and think that we are some great blessing to God. When the reality is that we would be nothing without the grace of God. This inheritance is for all who believe in Jesus. So, while it is true that if it were only us Jesus would've still given His life as a ransom, He didn't give His life only for me. He gave His life for all so that all might be saved. So, all who believe in Jesus as Lord together share the inheritance. In Christ we are all made partakers. We are adopted into His family and are members of one another. This is why Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father." Paul clearly shows us that we belong to one another. **Ephesians 2:13-14, 18-19**, "But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,...for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are FELLOW CITIZENS with the saints and are of God's household." Friend praise God that He has remade us and adopted us into His family to share of His inheritance through Christ.

II. He Alone Can Rescue Us (vs. 13a)

Why should we praise the Lord? Because He has remade us and because He alone can rescue us. We understand the word "rescue". It means "to deliver, to save from danger." We have all had stories of emergency rescues where someone was in imminent danger and someone at great risk to themselves urgently went out of their way to save someone from harm. The Bible says that Jesus alone is the Savior. He is the One and only One who can rescue man from their sin. How many have sinned? The Bible says clearly in **Romans 3:23**, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." That is every single one of us. ****ILL:** A simple test will prove this is true. But the conclusion isn't just that we are sinners. **Romans 6:23** says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." So, all mankind has sinned against God and all are deserving of His judgment. He is holy and just so He can't allow sin to go unpunished. Each of us because we are sinners deserve the wrath of God. This is a true statement. But, listen clearly, God is so rich in love and mercy towards us that He made a way that the payment for our sins could be paid in full. What did He do? He sent His own Son, Jesus, to give His life on the cross. He came to give His life in our place so that we might be rescued and delivered from sin. **Romans 5:8** says it simply, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." **2 Corinthians 5:21** explains why He did this, "He made Him Who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." Jesus' resurrection proves that His sacrifice was accepted by God the Father and is the only way that mankind can be rescued from their sin.

Look closely at Colossians 2:13. We can say that Jesus rescues us from sin, but what does that mean? Paul summarizes it simply, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness.” What is a domain? It is “a realm, a territory governed by a ruler, and a field of influence.” He has rescued us from the domain of darkness. Jesus Himself promised this in **John 8:12**, “Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.’” Listen to **John 12:35-36a**, “So Jesus said to them, ‘For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.’”

(Possibly Acts 26:18)

To be rescued from the “domain of darkness” means that Jesus rescues us from the influence, outcome, and place of sin. We see that in three ways.

A. Rescued from the Power of Sin

All who believe in Jesus as Lord have been adopted into God’s family. We have been made partakers of His divine inheritance. As a result, we have been rescued from the power and influence of sin and darkness. Jesus said it this way in **John 8:34-36**, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. So if the Son (Jesus) makes you free, you will be free indeed.” He came to set men free from the bondage and power of sin. This is why **Romans 6:12-14** tells us, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be MASTER over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” Christian you have been set free from the power of sin in your life. Some might ask, then why do I still have these struggles? First, because we still battle our flesh and must crucify it. Second, because we often allow sin to have power over us by giving it place in our lives. Jesus died and rose again to set us free from the power of sin that it will not be out master. **1 Corinthians 15:56-57**, “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

B. Rescued from the Penalty of Sin

Remember that the penalty of our sin is that we deserved God’s judgment and wrath. The penalty of our sin against Eternal Almighty God is that we would spend eternity separated from Him. But Jesus came to rescue us from the penalty of sin. These two verses sum it up well. **Romans 5:9**, “Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.” **Romans 6:23**, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is ETERNAL LIFE in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

C. Rescued from the Presence of Sin

Please understand that this is not a present reality, but it is certainly our future. Today in Christ we have been rescued from the power of sin. Today in Christ we have the assurance that we will next experience God's wrath because we have received the gift of eternal life. However, today we still must daily crucify the flesh and its sinful desires. Today, we still live in a fallen world that shows the results of the Fall every day. But there is coming a day when Jesus returns to take us to heaven. And in that day He will take us away from this sin cursed world. Praise the Lord He has rescued us from the domain of darkness!

III. He Alone Can Reposition Us (vs. 13b)

I love that the story doesn't end with a removal. When you believe in Jesus, God doesn't just remove you from the domain of darkness. He doesn't just bring you out of bondage and leave you wandering around with no purpose and direction. He brings us out of darkness to bring us into light. He brings us out of sin to bring us into sanctification. He takes us out of a position of judgment and places us in a position of grace. The word used in verse 13, in that culture, referred to the deportation of a people from one country into another. Warren Wiersbe summarized it well saying, "Jesus Christ did not release us from bondage, only to have us wander aimlessly. He moves us into His own kingdom of light and made us victors over Satan's kingdom of darkness. Earthly rulers transported the defeated people, but Jesus Christ transports the winners."

We have a great illustration of this in the Old Testament. God had made a covenant with the Israelites. They were His chosen people. The covenant stated that God would bless them as long as they loved Him and lived for Him. However, if they rejected Him and rebelled against Him there would be judgment and consequence. Unfortunately, over and over again the Israelites went their own direction and abandoned the very One who had shown them amazing kindness and provision. This resulted in great judgment. They Israelites were conquered and taken into captivity in Egypt. They served as slaves there for 400 years. While their situation wasn't good, they were never forgotten. God had a plan for them. He saw their misery, He heard their cries and He moved with compassion. He raised up a leader named Moses and He sent several plagues against the Pharaoh of Egypt. Through this, God delivered the Israelites and set them free from slavery. But, HE DID NOT JUST BRING THEM OUT. He had more in store for them than they could've ever realized. It took them longer to get there because of their lack of faith and trust in God's plan. Still, though, God raised up another leader to lead them to the Promised land. The book of Joshua gives all the details as we see them being repositioned in a new land that was bountiful with fruit and blessings. The point is that God brought them out of Egypt to take them into the promised land.

When we believe in Jesus and confess Him as Lord that is exactly what God does for us. He takes us out of a position as slaves to sin and repositions us in the kingdom of Christ. He brings us out of sin and brings us into the beauty and blessings of salvation. But, please don't forget the key to being a part of His Kingdom. Do you remember Jesus' first message? In Matthew 4, we see Jesus in the wilderness as He is fasting and praying. In Matthew 4, we see Jesus beginning His earthly ministry. Then in **Matthew 4:17** Jesus gives His first message. "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'." **Mark 1:15** clarifies

that Jesus came to Galilee preaching, “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” Jesus’ message is clear. We can be a part of His eternal kingdom if we repent of our sin and believe in Him. However, if we continue to live in our sin and go our own way then we will remain in the domain of darkness. I praise God, that I am no longer in that former place. By His grace I have been repositioned in the kingdom of Christ.

IV. He Alone Can Release Us (vs. 14)

There is a phrase here that was in some manuscripts but not in all. It says, “In whom we have redemption THROUGH HIS BLOOD.” The fact is that in order for redemption to be possible a price had to be paid. The word “redemption” literally means “to buy back.” Wiersbe suggests that it means “to release a prisoner by the payment of a ransom.” It is showing us that a price must be paid. And we know that price was paid when Jesus died on the cross. Listen, Satan is the accuser of the brethren and constantly strives to accuse us and imprison us because he knows that we have all broken God’s law and have sinned. But, Jesus paid your ransom and mine on that cross and because of this we can be free. We will see that in much more detail in the coming chapter. However, for now, there is something specific that we must see. Because Jesus died for us, for our sins, in our place, please notice what is available to us – FORGIVENESS of sins. The word translated means “a canceled debt” or a “release from offense.” One writer said it this way, “The forgiveness we have in Christ involves the release of a sinner from God’s just penalty and the complete dismissal of all charges against us. Jesus took the punishment we deserved, so, when God forgives us of our sins, we are free; we no longer live under that debt. Our sins are wiped out.” **Romans 8:1** says it well, “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

What is the key to experiencing forgiveness of sins? It is that we must believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior. In Acts 10 God is doing something new as He leads Peter to the Gentiles. Listen to the point of His message. **Acts 10:36-43**.

We should certainly praise God because through Jesus we can be redeemed. The key is Jesus. Through Him we can be remade into a brand new creation, rescued from sin, repositioned into His kingdom and released from our sin-debt.

****ILL: Famous artist, “He who gets the Son gets everything!”**

Synopsis: In this message we see how Jesus alone can redeem us from our sin. No amount of good works or noble intentions can earn God’s grace and favor or can change our standing before God. Only by His grace and the finished work of Christ can we experience a relationship with God and the forgiveness of sins.

Tag Words: Only Jesus, Redemption, Forgiveness, Adoption, Cross

Reading List:

Monday: Galatians 4:3-7; Romans 8:14-17

Tuesday: Ephesians 1:7-14

Wednesday: 1 Peter 1:3-5

Thursday: John 8:31-36

Friday: Romans 6:12-14

Saturday: Acts 10:34-43

Sunday: Acts 26:15-18