

Blessing #2: Redemption

Ephesians 1:7

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, November 17, 2019

Well, good morning everyone. Before we get started this morning, I kind of just want to share something from my heart. I don't know if any of you feel distracted when you come to church. Can anybody identify with that? Maybe I'm speaking to the young parents here, but every day this week for me started at 5:30 when my youngest son's door creaked open, and it's been a distracting week. It's been a good week. God is gracious, but a lot going on. I think on Thursday I had eight phone calls, and so I tried to make this sermon make sense in the midst of eight phone calls.

But I say all that because if you had a distracting week, if it's been kind of crazy for you, I'm right here with you. And also, to say, that that's why we come to church. Amen? We actually come to church to put the distractions on hold for a moment and focus on the things of God. If we didn't do this every week, what would your week be like? I mean, it would be distraction upon distraction, worldly things. And we come in here in this place to put the distractions on hold, to throw the iPhones out the window, and open up our Bibles and talk about the things of God, which is very important. And I know that's why you're here.

And with that said, if you would, open your Bibles with me to a book that helps us put the distractions on hold. It's a book that helps us to remember the things of God like no other book in the Bible. And that is the book of Ephesians. So, if you would, turn with me in your Bibles to the book of Ephesians.

One commentary that I've been reading on the book of Ephesians is called "In the Heavenly Places" because this is a book that takes us from the things of this earth and puts us in heaven, which I'll talk about in just a moment. It's a wonderful book to put the distractions aside and talk about things that really matter.

And if you're joining us for the first time today, we're in the middle of this series on the book of Ephesians called the "All of God" series because that's what this book is about. It tells us that our salvation is all of God, all the blessings and riches and treasures of the Christian life come from His hand and not from us. Which is something, I want to tell you, that is very important to our church. This is a passion of ours. We want people to know that salvation is all of God, and we want them to know that all the blessings and riches come from His hand and not from us.

I'm coming up on my third year anniversary with the church; I came in January of 2017. And when I first came, I told my wife, I said, "We're coming to Chilliwack to see something that God alone can do." I said, "We're packing up our bags, moving our family, coming to Canada because we want to see something that God alone can take credit for." In 10 or 20 or 30

years, I don't want to look back and be able to explain what God did because He is the one who deserves all the glory.

And we would all say that, Amen? Is that why you came to church today? You came to church to see something God alone can do. And that's what the book of Ephesians is about. Not only is this about what God can do, but this is about what God has done for us in Christ. And it's written in an unusual way. If you've ever read this book before, you'll know that the book of Ephesians is written in a very original manner.

One author says this, he says,

The epistle to the Romans has been called the most important document in the New Testament, and the purest expression of the Gospel. And in many ways, that's true. However, if Romans is the purest expression of the Gospel, then Ephesians has to be the most majestic expression of it. Because here the standpoint is wider, is bigger and it takes more in. There are passages in this book where Paul is carried over and above himself and he loses himself in wonder and praise, because he looks at salvation from the vantage point of heaven. In all his other epistles, Paul explains the way of salvation from the earth. He explains it from the perspective of men looking up, but here he explains it from the perspective of God looking down. Paul writes this book as if he is sitting in heaven or in the heavenly places.

Isn't that good? That sums up the book of Ephesians. This is a book where Paul is writing from the perspective of God. He's writing as if he's standing in heaven looking down to say- This is what God has done for you. This is how you are saved, God does it all. This is how you get to heaven. This is how you have a right relationship with Him, God takes you there. You don't pull yourself up, you can't do that. You don't bring yourself up to heaven; God comes down to you, which means that He gets all the glory for this. All the credit goes to Him.

Which is important to mention because as I've said before, we often forget this, don't we? We often forget that God gets all the glory for our salvation. We get this mixed up. We think the Christian life starts with man and it moves upward. We think it starts with us standing on the earth and we pull ourselves up from there and we don't. Paul says, "It all starts with God."

I was meeting with someone the other day who told me that this series on Ephesians was kind of tough on them because they didn't feel like they had all the blessings in here. We're reading about all these blessings in chapter 1, and they were just being honest and they said, "I'm just not experiencing all this. I don't feel blessed."

And I said, "I know what you mean. I get what you're saying, but isn't it good to know that this is not based on your feelings? Isn't it good to know that all this stuff in here is not based on your experience? It's based on God, which means that you can have this, whether you feel it or not." Feelings are fickle, they go up and down. You eat chocolate cake the night before, you wake up in the morning and you feel bad. This is not based on whether you ate chocolate cake or not. This is based on the character and the person of God. You can have a very bad

day and have all this stuff in this book. Amen? Isn't that encouraging? Even when you're distracted.

And Paul says this several different ways in here just to kind of walk you through the book a little bit. You can see this in several different things that he does. For one, he does this with several key words in the book. Words like "glory" and "fullness" and "riches" are repeated over and over again to say that this is what you have in God, this is what you have in Christ. You are full and rich of His glory.

You also see this in the outline, in the way the book is laid out, because the first three chapters tell you about your position in Christ. And the next three chapters talk about your practice. That's the outline of the book. Ephesians 1-3 give you your position. They tell you that God has predestined you, He has made you alive in Christ for by grace you have been saved. And then the next three chapters tell you your practice of that. They tell you how you can experience this in your marriage, in your home, in your work life.

But if you notice, the doctrines come first and the feelings come second. Your position is first in the book and your practice comes later. You can't miss that. That's very important. Wouldn't it be awful if it was the other way around? Wouldn't it be awful if Paul wrote, "Well, you can be blessed and you can be saved, but you got to fix your marriage and your home life and all that stuff first. You can go to heaven, but you got to have good kids first." Oh boy - that can't wake up at 5:30 in the morning.

Paul starts from the perspective of heaven and then he goes to the perspective of the earth. That's what this book is about. And it leads to what we want to talk about this morning; it leads to the next blessing in the list. And if you read in verses 1 through 7 - let me just read this to you. Our focus is on verse 7 here. But if you read, it says,

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.

Just to explain this a little bit, you see the word "blessing" repeated several times there in verse 3 because this is what the chapter is about. This is the theme of it. This is about blessing. This is all about God and the wonderful things he has done for you in Christ. And to explain that, Paul says in verse 4 that you were chosen and predestined, which means that this is where your blessings begin, this is where they start. They start in heaven, not on earth. And then verse 5 mentions "adoption" because that's the first blessing. God adopts you, which means He brings you into His family. He makes you part of His household.

And in order to do that, in order to adopt you, verse 7 says, He redeems you. That's the next blessing in the list. It's the blessing of, you see the word there, "redemption." "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses." That word, we'll talk about it more in a minute, but it refers to the act of buying something back. When you redeem something, you buy it back. It's an economic term that comes from the world of finance because it refers to the practice of losing something or selling it due to hardship, and then you buy it back from the new owner.

Now, we don't really use that word much today, but we do the same thing in pawn shops. You guys ever been to a pawn shop or visited a pawn broker? I used to, when I was a kid. I would sell my CDs and then have a change of heart and have to go back and buy it back for a higher price. Nobody ever done that? Sell your watch or your pen or your knife or something, and you go back and you haggle with the guy, "Wait a minute, I sold it to you for five bucks, you're selling it to me for 10."

It's the same idea with the word "redemption." In order to adopt you, in order to bring you into His family, God had to restore the relationship. You had a relationship with Him. It was broken due to sin, and in order to bring you back home, He had to do this, He had to buy you back.

If you notice in verse 7 (the interesting thing about this verse), He did not buy your pens or your CDs or your knives, in verse 7, it says, He bought you. In Him we have redemption. God made us, He created us so that we belong to Him, but we were lost due to sin. We went astray and now through the blood of Jesus, He has bought us back, which is the theme of our passage for today.

The story is told of the time, King Richard, the Lionheart of England was captured during their crusades and he was held for ransom. His enemies sold him back to England for a hefty price. You've heard of a King's ransom before. That's where the word comes from. They sold him back for millions and millions of dollars. But at the same time, what some people don't know is that another one of his subjects named Sir Grimold was captured and the price that they demanded for him was greater than that, because they demanded his wife's hand, literally. They asked her to send her hand back to them in a basket to save her husband's life, which she did. She immediately cut her right hand off and sent it away.

And I mention that because Paul says here in this passage that the price for your soul was higher than that. The price God paid for your life and to adopt you and to bring you home and forgive you was greater than your wife's hand. It was greater than a King's ransom. God paid the life of His one and only Son. It cost Jesus everything He had to save you, but He paid it because He loved you. He paid it because He cared for you in order to redeem you, which is what we're going to talk about today.

So if you're taking notes this morning, in Ephesians 1:7, we're going to talk about two reminders about our redemption in Christ. This will be a two-part discussion. We're going to talk about this next week as well. But for today, we're going to look at two reminders about our redemption in Christ. Have you ever wondered how much God loves you? Have you ever

wondered how much He cares? This is how much He cares, Paul says. This is how much He loves you, enough to redeem you.

Do you feel blessed this morning? Did you walk in here feeling these blessings in Ephesians chapter 1? My prayer is that you're going to walk out feeling them after you study this passage. This is how much God is blessing you, enough to die for you and redeem you with His precious blood. And let's talk about that with two reminders about this.

The first one is this - let's talk about what the word means. To get things started here and to set the stage for this, let's talk about what the word “redemption” means. Because like I just said, it's not a common word today. It's not used very often. So let's back up for a moment and talk about what it means in some detail. And to do that, if you read in verses 5 through 7 in your Bibles, it says,

5 In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption (there is the word redemption) through His blood.

To give you a review of this, I've told you before, Paul does something unusual in the beginning of Ephesians. He does something kind of strange because he gives us the longest running sentence in the Bible. He starts the book by giving us a sentence that goes from verse 3 all the way down to verse 14 without a pause, without a break. And he does this with one big thought in his mind, and that is the blessing of God like we just said. These are the blessings you have. You have adoption in verse 5, and now you have - it says, “In Him we have redemption.”

That phrase “In Him” is another way of saying “In Christ” or “In Jesus.” You see it several times in this chapter to say that all of these blessings come to you through Him. They're all given to you based on your relationship with Him. You're not blessed through yourselves. That's not the way this works. You're not blessed by just being a good person. You're blessed because of Christ. This is all through Him.

Redemption is a compound word from *apo* – away, and *lutrosis* - to be loosed. And it means “to be loosed away from your chains.” That's what this word means in Greek - to be loosed away from your bondage. Not only are you loosed of it, but you're loosed away from it. It's kind of an exaggerated term. Not only are you freed from your chains, but you're freed far, far away from them, so you can't even see them anymore. Your chains are taken out of sight.

This is in the continuous tense in Greek to say that not only did God do this in the past, but He's still doing it today, or you still feel the effects of it today. Every time you sin, God is losing you from your sin if you're in Christ. Like I said earlier, we don't really have this today, thank the Lord. But we have it in some parts of the world, but it's not too common in Canada. But the ancient world was full of slaves.

I remember walking through the airport in Chicago, Illinois one time and seeing a sign that says, “We're opposed to human trafficking.” Well, in the ancient world, nobody was opposed

to human trafficking. As a matter of fact, human trafficking was just a way of life for them. There it was full of people in chains. Some estimates said that a city like Rome would have been about one third slaves. I mean, they didn't have modern inventions like the dishwasher or the washing machine. Can you imagine that? But what they would do to replace that is, they would use human people. And you wouldn't go to a pawn shop and buy a washing machine or a dryer. You'd go to a pawn shop and buy a life. That was the way the ancient world worked.

And it was very strange the way they would fall into slavery. It was not a racial thing per se. It wasn't being black or white or a different race. It happened for other reasons. It happened because of bankruptcy. That was a common cause of slavery. If you were bankrupt and you couldn't pay your bills and you had nothing else to sell, you would sell yourself, or you would sell your wife or your children. And sometimes you would do that with the intention of getting them back after a period of time. You would sell them for several years, sometimes not, you would sell them for a lifetime. But that was one cause of slavery.

Another one was war. If you went to war in a foreign land and you lost, you were captured, they wouldn't just send you back on an airplane with a bag of peanuts. I mean, they would kill you or they would sell you. And when that happened, when you were sold into slavery like that, they would hold you for ransom, and at that point you could be redeemed. It's what Paul is describing here, that's the background for this word. At that point, someone could step in and buy you back.

The philosopher, Aristotle, used to refer to slaves as animated instruments or breathing tools because that's all they were to him. They were just property. And as such, they could be bought and sold like property. And in the Old Testament, the person that would buy you back was called a "kinsmen redeemer." We read about that yesterday in the book of Ruth. Our guys were so excited to read a four-chapter book in the Old Testament. They were just thrilled.

Well, the book of Ruth talks about the kinsmen redeemer Boaz; that was the person who in the family was responsible to buy you back if you fell into slavery. It could be your uncle, could be your cousin. In the New Testament, they were called "your deliverer" or "your saviour," and they could be anybody; a relative or a friend. But it was their job to meet the new owner, haggle over a price and try to save you. And Paul says, "God did this for you. Jesus did this on the cross. He saved you, He rescued you. He went into a foreign land and He bought you back."

It's been said that Jesus is the priest and the offering in the Bible. He's the priest because He presents you to God and He's the offering because He's the one that is killed for you, same idea here.

John 8:34 says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." It means that everyone who commits sin is in sin's chains. They are bound up by it and God bought you back from that. He loosened the chains. If you're a Christian in this room, you know what this is like - you didn't loosen the chains yourself. You didn't do it in such a way

you could take credit for it and pat yourself on the back because you're just a wonderful person. God did that. God saved you. That's what this is referring to.

One Bible dictionary explains it this way, it says;

Whenever men by their own fault or through some superior power have come under the control of someone else and have lost their freedom, redemption refers to the act whereby they can become free again by the intervention of a third party. It refers to the act of someone else's stepping in to advocate on their behalf.

And that's what God did. That's what Christ did. He was His own third party, He advocated for us. Our sins were dragging us to hell, they were ruining our life. Try as we might, we could not pull ourselves up, so God came down to us and He saved us. Jesus went down to the pawn shop of sin and He bought you with His own blood.

And I don't want to look at too many passages about this for this morning, I want us to keep our attention focused here. But just to get a perspective on this, it might be helpful to talk about a few texts. You can just write these down in your notes. Jim just quoted from one a moment ago; Galatians 3:13, and this is very important. It's very helpful. But Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us."

There you see what we were redeemed from. You see what Jesus saved us from. It says He saved us from the law. The law says, "Cursed is everyone who sins. Cursed is everyone who breaks My commandments." We did that and Jesus took our curse on Himself. He paid for our law breaking. He couldn't pay for His law breaking because He didn't have any. He paid for ours.

Titus 2:14 is another helpful verse. Titus 2:14 says, "Jesus gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify us for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds."

There you see what we are redeemed to. Galatians showed us what we were redeemed from. This is what we're redeemed to - to purify us for Himself. Jesus redeemed us to make us zealous for good deeds. And we can talk about other verses that explain this very well. 1 Peter 1:18 talks about this: "You were redeemed with precious blood." We'll say that in a minute.

But this leads to a couple of things here. If you think about it, there are several ways to apply this to your life. For one thing, this means you are free now. If you get your mind around what this text is saying and the implications of this one is that you are free, because Jesus did not halfway do this. He did not halfway redeem you, He redeemed you all the way. Your sins are paid for, they're bought and sold. Now you're free.

1 Peter says, "His blood is more precious than silver or gold. It's more costly than precious jewels," which means that this has paid for everything, you are free.

I meet so many Christians who don't get this today. They don't understand what this means because they live like they're still enslaved to sin. They live like they still have the same old master. They can't get over their lust or their pride or their anger, they can't get past their depression or their guilt or their anxiety. When Paul says, "Jesus has already gotten over it, Jesus has paid for it, you just need to trust in Him."

Some of you have read the book "Pilgrim's Progress" before, and you remember in the book, Pilgrim starts off with a burden on his back, doesn't he? John Bunyan had a tinker trade, and the tinker trade, it sounds like a silly job, but he actually would carry a 40-pound anvil on his back place to place to place. And he would hammer stuff as his job was to hammer things on the anvil. And with that in mind, he talks about Pilgrim starting off the book with this 40-pound anvil on his back and he can't get rid of it. Whatever he does, Pilgrim can't get the load off his back that he carries, until John Bunyan said this, he said,

He came to the place of the cross and below it was an empty tomb. And I saw in my dream that just as Pilgrim came to the cross, his burden came loose from his shoulders and it fell off his back. It began to tumble and continue to do so until it came to the mouth of the tomb. It then fell into the tomb and I saw it no more.

And in the rest of the book, you see the burden no more. It never comes back. He sins, he struggles, he battles, but the anvil does not get back on his back. Some of you are living the Christian life as if you're still carrying this 40-pound weight around everywhere you go. Go to work, here comes the burden. You carry it with you. Come into church, there's the burden. You bring it with you. Paul says, "You don't have to do that anymore. You're free now. Your sin has been paid for."

Which leads to another application of this and that is your sin is finished. What did Jesus say? His last words on the cross; it is what? It is finished. You are redeemed. It's been paid for so you don't have to pay for it again and again and again. You don't have to go home and carry the anvil with you because it's already been bought. It's in the tomb and you just need to leave it there.

Corrie ten Boom said, "God has buried our sins in the depth of the sea and he has put a 'no fishing' sign over them, so don't go fishing for them anymore."

Some of you guys, what's the time of year when Canadians go ice fishing? I've been looking for that in Chilliwack, I haven't seen it yet. You don't have to do that. This is one of the things that led to the Reformation. If you remember your church history, this is one of the things that split the Protestant and Catholic Church. Because the Catholic said our sins are not paid for. They said, our sins have not been taken away. You need to pay for them yourself with the seven sacraments and penance and confession, and the mass and all of that. And the Reformer says, "No, Jesus has paid for it all. It's finished."

Which leads to one more application, and that is that you should have joy over this. This should bring you joy in your heart. You should be excited about a doctrine like this. There was no greater day than when a slave was redeemed. No greater day. He would remember

that the rest of his life, because now his chains are gone. Now he has a different life. He's free.

To illustrate this; the Romans used to have a tradition where they would return from a battle and they would throw a big parade for the whole city of Rome to show all the treasures that they took from the enemy. All the spoils, and they would have gold and silver. They would have exotic animals. If they went to Africa or somewhere, they would bring back camels and different things.

And at the front of the parade, the most interesting part, I think, was they would put all the Roman soldiers that they had captured and brought back from the enemy. They would start the parade with them. They had fought and lost somewhere in a foreign land. They had fought and been defeated and sold into slavery and now, they had been brought back. They were the recaptured captives - they called them. They were caught twice. And the reason they put them at the front of the parade, was because they brought the city so much joy to see them coming back.

Paul says, "You are a recaptured captive this morning if you're in Christ. You have been brought back from a foreign land, and you should have joy." I mean this should thrill your heart. You're free, your sins are paid for and there's no greater truth than that. Amen?

Which leads to the next point we're going to consider this morning, the next reminder for our redemption. Again, we're going to talk about this next week and dive more into this doctrine. This is so important. But we've talked about what the word means. The word "redemption" means to be "brought back" or "loosed away from something." It means to be loosed away from your chains, loosed away from a foreign land, a foreign master, brought back home to God.

It brings me to another point in this passage, a second reminder for our redemption that we're going to look at today, and that is what this leads to. We have looked at what the word means, but we've talked about this a little bit a moment ago, but let's talk a little more about what this leads to. Okay, we're redeemed, we're bought back, Jesus has gone to the pawn shop of sin and paid for our lives. So what? What does that mean practically? And that means (Paul says in this passage) that you are forgiven. That's the point of this. That's where your redemption leads. It leads to forgiveness.

If you read on in verse 7, Paul says next in the passage, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses." You see the word forgiveness there. Just to walk you through this a little bit like it was with the word "redemption," there's a couple of words in this passage that we need to talk about. Just because of the way Paul writes Ephesians chapter 1, the words are very important here, and they're some very unusual words, at least the way he uses them.

So let's talk about that a little bit. The first word to talk about is the word "blood." "In Him we have redemption through His blood." That's a very strange thing to read because you might expect Paul to say, "In Him we have redemption through His death or through the

cross or something like that.” But the reason he puts the word “blood” here is because it encompasses all of that. The word “blood” covers all of these terms. In the Bible, the word “blood” is a synonym for life. Your blood represents your life. It represents everything inside of you. Just as your blood touches everything inside of you, so it represents all of that.

It also represents violence. It's another thing blood represents here in this verse. To spill someone's blood means to kill them violently or savagely in the Bible. If someone died of natural causes, you would not say their blood was spilt. If they died of a beheading or a crucifixion, you would say that. That's what this word means. Jesus did this to save you. He did this to buy your redemption. Not only did He die, but He died violently. Not only did He give part of Him, but He gave all of Him. That's what this word means. Jesus was not just punched in the face for you, He was put to death. And that's the idea, Paul says here - for your redemption, in Greek, which is a synonym for “redemption.” They mean the same thing. So you could translate this verse, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the redemption of our trespasses.” And Paul says this to say, “Don't you see you have this? Don't you get it? God has redeemed you of everything. It's already been done, it's already been paid. Don't you see the magnificence of what He's done?”

And then you have the word “trespass,” which means “to miss the mark” because that's what you've been redeemed of. That's what you've been forgiven of - you've trespassed, you've failed. We put a “no trespassing” sign on property when we say, “Don't go past this line.” I'm from Tennessee, so I can't relate to ice fishing, but I can relate to shooting stuff. And this is the time of year when people shoot stuff and it's very serious to not trespass. Paul says, “You have trespassed. The law said go here and no further, and you went further and further and further, and that's what Jesus paid for in His blood.”

Galatians said, “He went to the cross to become a curse for you.” That's what this is referring to. And Paul says this here to bring home the point that God has taken care of everything for your salvation. You have sinned and He redeemed you. You have messed up and missed the mark, and He paid for that in the blood of His Son. Remember, this is not about you reaching up, this is about God reaching down. And Paul says, “God reached down to the very core of your life and He saved you there. God is the initiator here, God is the Redeemer. This is God-centered religion, all you did was sin.”

To say it another way, we could say it like this; God is very serious about your salvation. That's an important lesson to remember here. It's an important point to take home with you. God is serious about saving you. He's not messing around. This is a serious offer, this is a serious redemption. He is serious enough to kill His one and only Son for this.

It gets a little more serious when blood gets involved. I mean, we talk about adoption and that's kind of cute. I mean, we adopted two little ones and they are really cute when you adopt them. There's nothing cute about redemption. The cuteness has gone here. This is violent, to show you how serious God is about this. I heard it was once said that, “Many men have tried to become gods, but only one God became a man and He did it for this. He did it to die for your sins.” And the question you have to answer this morning is do I believe it?

That's the one thing Paul keeps going back to over and over again in our passage. The question to answer is, do I believe this with all my heart? All this is yours. You can have all of this full and free, but do you want it? Will you receive this free gift?

It's been said that you don't get into heaven in groups, you get in one at a time. So will you believe this this morning and be saved?

In his commentary on Ephesians, Martin Lloyd Jones says,

If we say that we're not good enough to call ourselves Christians, it simply means that we do not understand what salvation is all about. The first principle of salvation is to realize that God has done it all. He has redeemed us to Himself through the blood of Jesus Christ. While we were yet sinners, while we were yet His enemies, while we were going directly to hell, our salvation was accomplished by the death or by the blood of Jesus. The Christian is a man or a woman who believes this and knows this and accepts this in their heart. They rejoice in the fact and they say, "I have redemption through His blood."

I don't know where everyone's at this morning, but I'm guessing some of you are probably coming in here saying, "I'm not good enough to be a Christian." Well that means you don't understand what Christian is. Christians are bad people. Amen? That's what this text says. We're so bad, God had to bleed in order to save us, which means you can be a Christian today. You can be saved if you would believe this.

In one of the preaching magazines I read, the story was told of a little boy who made a boat and then he lost it. He built it and then he couldn't find where he put it, until it turned up in a store window. Someone had found his boat and put it up for sale. And so the little boy thought about it for a minute and he went home, got all his money together and he bought his own boat back. He went to the store and he paid the money and he took the boat home and he said, "Now you are twice mine because I made you and I bought you."

The Bible says God has done the same thing for you. If you are in Christ, if you would believe it - if you're not in Christ and if you would receive it, He can do the same thing for you today. He's formed you with His hands, He has created you, and now He's offering to buy you back from sin. If you would trust in Him, you can be His recaptured captives. And like I said, we're going to talk more about this next week, but for now, let's close in a word of prayer, and thank the Lord for doing this for us.

Father, we thank you Lord for our redemption. We thank you for the precious blood of Your Son that was poured out like this freely and graciously. We could even say violently because this is how passionate You were to save us. Our sins demanded violence and that's what You gave so that You could save us. We thank you for that, Lord. We worship You for it, for the cross.

And as we come to the Lord's Table this morning, would You be glorified as we remember what You have done as we take the bread and take the juice. Lord, would You be honoured as we remember the Lord Jesus Christ who has redeemed us. And if there's any here today who

have not believed that, I pray they would for the first time. For those who are saved, may we rejoice and go out of here rejoicing at what you have done. Thank you for this blessing. We pray in Jesus name, amen.