



## ***“Truly Blessed in Christ-Part 2”***

**Sermon Date: September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

### **Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon**

*Below is a reference to the section of the Heidelberg Catechism that we went over on Sunday:*

#### **The Heidelberg Catechism—Lord’s Day 39**

104. Q. What does God require in the fifth commandment?

A. That I show all honor, love, and faithfulness to my father and mother and to all those in authority over me, submit myself with due obedience to their good instruction and discipline,[1] and also have patience with their weaknesses and shortcomings,[2] since it is God's will to govern us by their hand.[3]

[1] Ex. 21:17; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; Rom. 13:1, 2; Eph. 5:21, 22; 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-4:1. [2] Prov. 20:20; 23:22; 1 Pet. 2:18. [3] Matt. 22:21, Rom. 13:1-8; Eph. 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-21.

### **Prayer**

As you begin your study this week, spend some time praising God for all that He has accomplished for His people, as revealed in His Word. Thank Him for our redemption that was accomplished, in time, through the blood of Christ. As you pray, consider the following words of this prayer taken from At the Throne of Grace by John MacArthur and make them your own before the Lord.

*“By nature we are corrupt and defiled.*

*Our wills are in bondage to our own fleshly desires.*

*Our very souls are ruined, lifeless, and utterly profane because of our sin.*

*By ourselves we are without strength, without merit, without hope, and unable to lift ourselves up from that fallen condition.*

*But we have found our hope in Christ, who opened the narrow way and ushered us through the small gate.*

*We are grateful recipients of Your abundant mercy and the exceeding riches of your grace, all made available freely to us from the hand of Christ.*

*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished on us unsparingly.”*

## Scripture

### **Ephesians 1:7-10 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, <sup>8</sup> which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

## Handling the Word

1. Verse 3 alludes to the fact that redemption was wrought by a Triune God. **God the Father** has blessed us **in Christ (the Lord)** with every **spiritual blessing**. Referring to the word ‘spiritual,’ John MacArthur states that “*spiritual is always used in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit.*” We could say it this way, the Father planned redemption (vv. 3-6), the Son accomplished redemption (vv. 7-10), and the Spirit applied redemption (vv. 11-14). As we are working through verses 3-14, the work of each person of the Trinity becomes clear. For this week, we will focus on how the Father’s plan is accomplished **by** the Son (refer to the definition of redemption below). Take your time to reflect on verses 7, and 9-10 and fill out the questions below.

### Verse 7

### Verses 9-10

What did Christ accomplish?

How did Christ accomplish it?

**Redemption:** *a financial metaphor that literally means “buying back.” Used theologically to indicate atonement, reconciliation, or salvation wherein liberation from forms of bondage such as sin, death, law, or evil takes place through Christ. (The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms, Donald McKim)*

## Understanding and Applying

1. Last week, we read verses 3-14 highlighting the reality that all the spiritual blessings are freely given **in Christ**. Taking a different approach, read verses 3-14 and note what all these spiritual blessings are **according to**. What is the resounding theme? Why do you think Paul **reiterates** this theme as the **source** of our redemption? There may be multiple answers.

2. Before we dig into the details of redemption, it may profit us to be reminded of **the goal** of redemption. Read the following brief article from Mike Chastain and consider what he believes to be the goal (<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/goal-redemption>). Now read verses 3-14, what is the Father's repeated goal in the plan of redemption? Why is it good for the church to be reminded of **the goal** of redemption?
  
3. Tony Merida rightly states that "*redemption denotes liberation from bondage or imprisonment.*" Given the texts below, what forms of bondage is humanity in outside of Christ? Are these merely figurative or literal representations of man's condition? Please explain your answer.
  - Romans 6:17-18
  
  - Hebrews 2:14-15
  
  - Colossians 1:13-14
  
4. We have been blessed in Christ, for 'in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses' (verse 7). Notice that Paul says that 'we have' redemption, not we could or might have redemption. Are there times when you question your redemption, and what tends to be the reason for and result of your doubting? What are the reasons for and results of having **confidence** or **assurance** regarding our redemption in Christ?
  
5. In verse 7, Paul declares that our redemption was secured 'through his blood,' His blood referring to "*the saving aspects*" of Christ's death. Some attempt to argue that Christ's sacrificial death wasn't necessary. However, based on the Scripture references, why was the death of Christ **necessary** to secure our redemption and what comes to mind as you consider the cost of your redemption?
  - Hebrews 9:22-24
  
  - Hebrews 2:14-17
  
  - Romans 3:21-25

6. Having grace ‘lavished upon us,’ we are let in on a glorious secret, ‘the mystery of His will’ (verse 8). What was disclosed in types, shadows, and prophecies in the Old Testament, has been fully disclosed to those on this side of the cross—salvation is through Christ Jesus, the Son of God (Romans 16:25-27). Why are grace and an understanding of God’s will motivators towards sharing this mystery with those who haven’t heard?
7. In verse 10, Paul expounds upon the mystery of God’s will; in Christ all things are being united ‘in Him.’ Later in Ephesians, Paul focuses this mystery on the inclusion of the Gentiles into the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 2:17-19, 3:4-6). Beyond restored fellowship with God, Jesus is restoring fellowship among man. Why does true unity and love among man depend upon redemption in Christ? If Christ has secured unity among His people, what might explain the disunity that we see in the church?
8. Further, in verse 10, Paul states that all things are being united in Him, ‘things in heaven and things on earth.’ Having accomplished redemption, Christ is head over His church, ruler over all creation, and triumphant over all powers, seen and unseen. Supreme over all these things, Christ is restoring what was lost in the garden of Eden; fellowship with God, unity among His people, and all of this in the presence of God for all eternity in the new heavens and earth (Romans 5:18-21, 8:18-25). Why is this a source of hope as we consider human history? What are some things that detract us from having this end goal in view?
9. As we consider our redemption wrought or the mystery of redemption unfolding, and these things according to God’s good pleasure and grace, we can’t help but give thanks in word and deed. Is there anything in these passages that really stood out to you, that stirs your heart and mind towards the glory of God?

*“It is imperative for us to understand that God’s purpose in salvation dos not ultimately focus on us, but on His Son. The ultimate cosmic glory of the Son is the Father’s preeminent purpose in redeeming sinners. God’s purpose for us indeed is to make our lives complete, but that completeness is bound up with the cosmic triumph of our Head, Jesus Christ.”*

*-Ian Hamilton*