

Lesson 4: “The Rescue of Redemption” Colossians 1:13-14 Craig Crawshaw**INTRODUCTION TO REDEMPTION**

Paul has greeted the Colossians, commended them and prayed for them in the opening verses of his letter. He now transitions to a stirring exaltation of Jesus Christ, to the ultimate goal of demonstrating that “*in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form*” (v. 2:9).

Colossians 1:13-14 *For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Note the 4-fold progression – from a rescue, to a transfer, to a redemption, to a forgiveness. This will be the “roadmap” for our meditation today, with an emphasis on the marvelous doctrinal truth of what is REDEMPTION, and on the wonderful person of the One who has provided our redemption, our REDEEMER, Jesus the Christ.

There are a number of words we use to describe what it was that Jesus did to bring believers into a relationship with God. Here are a few that we use most frequently:

- √ SALVATION emphasizes that we have been protected from and removed from the power and consequence of sin, snatched from the flames of hellfire.
- √ RECONCILIATION emphasizes the new relationship we now enjoy with God, reunited with Him in a way not known since God walked with Adam in the garden.
- √ BORN AGAIN emphasizes the new life, a spiritual life, in which we now exist by the Holy Spirit within us. We “live, and breathe, and have our being” in Him (Acts 17:28) – Christ in us.

But REDEMPTION emphasizes a transaction enacted by God in order to transfer us from the “domain or darkness” into the “kingdom of His beloved Son.” It was a transaction that involved a steep price to be paid – the precious blood of Jesus in death, and a rescue from certain destruction to provide fully protected eternal life. The payment was not to Satan, as some suppose, for Satan has never had a claim on anyone – only a powerful influence allowed by God. The payment was to God Himself, paid by the willing sacrifice of the perfect substitute – Jesus, the Son of Man. And by that payment redemption was completed in RESCUE, TRANSFER and complete FORGIVENESS of the offender.

That is YOU, dear Christian brother and sister – rescued, transferred and forgiven by the amazing, incredible act of REDEMPTION, fully initiated by God Himself on your behalf. Now let us dig deeper into its meaning and significance.

THE MEANING FROM THE GREEK

“Redemption” = “*apolutrosis*” in the Greek (accent on the “lu”) = the setting free of an enslaved people = deliverance.

The root of the word is “lutron” which is a “ransom” or “payment” so as to set free. So the very root meaning of “redemption” is founded in a ransom payment.

Outside of the Bible, we think of a “ransom” as something to be paid to a kidnapper for the release of a kidnapped victim. A price is paid (ransom) and a release is given (redemption).

Or in the old west a supposed criminal would be hung, unless someone arrived to pay a ransom to the hangman for the release (redemption) of the one to be hung.

In these cases we think of a ransom as “dirty money” or money to bribe a release. But in the Biblical sense, Christ’s ransom is precious and beautiful, and totally undeserved.

Mark 10:45 *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*

This key verse in Mark teaches us that the ultimate purpose for Jesus coming to earth was to pay the ransom to God that would set free the many who would believe and receive the ransom paid was for them. Thus, your salvation hinges upon whether or not you believe and receive that Jesus' death and blood was personally for your ransom, and that consequently His resurrection was your "passport" to life with Him forever beyond the grave.

Thus, "ransom" = (Greek; "lutron") = payment in order to provide redemption.

- √ The payment price was Christ's blood through death
- √ The one paid was God the Father, who required the satisfaction ("propitiation") for justice.
- √ The recipients were the "many" who would respond in life devotion by making Jesus their Savior/Redeemer.

Romans 3:23-25a *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.*

("redemption" = Gk: "apolutrosis" = the application of ransom for release. The Greek prefix "apo" indicates a derivative of that which follows. So "redemption" is a derivative, or result of, a "ransom." A ransom is given, and redemption follows.

Notice in Romans 3:23-25 that "justification," "redemption," "propitiation" and "blood" are all put together, with "faith" being what causes them to come together in transaction.

Henry Clarence Thiessen, former Wheaton College professor, in his wonderful one volume Lectures in Systematic Theology teaches that theologically speaking, Christ's death is 3 things:

- (1) Vicarious = a substitution (for our death)
- (2) Satisfaction = propitiation (of God the Father)
- (3) Ransom = payment by blood for sin, in order to redeem

Other New Testament usages:

Ephesians 1:7 *In Him [Christ] we have redemption through His blood, for forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.*

Again, "redemption" = Gk: "apolutrosis" = the application of ransom for release

Here, "redemption," "blood," and "forgiveness" are put together. Ephesians 1:14 also uses the same word of "redemption" = Gk: "apolutrosis"

In all, the Greek word "apolutrosis," translated "redemption" occurs 10 times in the New Testament, including our passage of Colossians 1:13-14.

THE OLD TESTAMENT TYPES

Redemption is not taught as a doctrine in the Old Testament. The sacrifices of bulls and goats and lambs were not said to "redeem" but to "atone" = cover over sin.

There are, however, two significant types of a redeemer who provided a type of redemption – both pointing to the ultimate Redeemer of Jesus.

1. **Moses** is said to be a redeemer, or deliverer, of his people in Acts 7:35. This was spoken by Stephen as he was about to be put to death.

Acts 7:35 *"This Moses ... is the one whom God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer ..."*

Those who needed "redemption" were the enslaved Jewish people. The ransom payment for their deliverance was the Passover blood spread over the doorposts of the Jewish people. Moses was the "redeemer" or deliverer in that by God's command, he commanded

the blood to be applied, and then he led the people physically out of Egypt. All this was a type of what Jesus was to do as the ultimate Redeemer of mankind.

2. Boaz was the kinsman-redeemer of Naomi and Ruth, as we have seen in our recent study of the book of Ruth. Boaz was a type of Christ who would redeem His bride, the Church. You might recall from our study that to be a kinsman-redeemer there were three requirements:

1. To have the POSITION of a close relative
2. To have the POWER to redeem – that is the money to pay the ransom
3. To have the PROPENSITY or willingness to do so

Boaz had all 3 to redeem Naomi and Ruth, as did Jesus have all 3 to redeem mankind.

YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN FOUR WORDS

1. RESCUE - Do you recall that earlier this morning we sang:

*I once was dead in sin alone and hopeless
A child of wrath I walked condemned in darkness*

Whether you realize it or not, that was your state before you received Christ. And that is your state today if you have not received him. Jonathan Edward's famous sermon from the 1700's is entitled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" and he depicts us pre-salvation as spiders hanging by a thread over the fires of hell. Oh how rescue is needed. And also we sang:

I am complete in You, rescued from the fate of never finding You

Praise God for His rescue by the ransom of Jesus who satisfied the justice of God!

2. TRANSFER - Our text tells us that we were transferred "to the kingdom of His beloved Son." We now live in a difference realm. Though living physically in the world, we are not of the world. Though we exist in this world, we answer to a higher King than any who reign in this world, and His name is Jesus! Colossians is going to teach us that we are now "raised up with Christ" (3:1) and should be "seeking the things above" rather than the things below.

3. REDEMPTION - A ransom of the precious blood of Jesus has been paid to rescue you. Again, earlier we sang:

*You have bought me back with the riches of Your amazing grace and relentless love.
I'm made alive forever; with You, life forever. By Your grace I'm saved.*

1 Corinthians 6:19-20a *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price ...*

4. FORGIVENESS - As a result of rescue, transfer and redemption we have "forgiveness of sins. Oh the precious removal of the guilt and stain of wrong doing and missed opportunity!

Romans 3:24 *Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*

OUR PRECIOUS REDEEMER

"No word in the Christian vocabulary deserves to be held more precious than "Redeemer," for even more than Savior it reminds the child of God that his salvation has been purchased at a great and personal cost, for the Lord has given himself for our sins in order to deliver us from them." Baker's Dictionary of Theology, p. 439