

6.02.19 ~ Ephesians 1:7-8 Redemption, the Forgiveness of Sin...

Read Ephesians 1:7-8... Christians have been redeemed and forgiven, according to the riches of God's grace in and through Jesus Christ.

What is redemption? (Gk *lutroo*- paying a ransom in order to release someone from captivity or bondage.) It was commonly used in reference to the freedom given to a slave whose debt or value had been paid.

To free someone from slavery meant to pay their total debt or bondage value, as set by their master; and to receive written certificate of redemption or purchase. Christ's death paid the price necessary to redeem sinful mankind for Himself. He freed us from our slavery/bondage to sin (see **Galatians 1:3-4, 3:13-14; Colossians 1:13-14**). .

Christ gave His life to rescue ours; He redeemed us, providing forgiveness for sin, so that we could be free from punishment and condemnation (cf. **Romans 3:23-24; 6:23; 8:1**).

We all deserve punishment, no one is good except God (Mark 10:18), Jesus said, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone."

Neither good nor free men need a redeemer; but there are NO genuinely good or truthfully free men, women, or children of age; for it is only those who confess their need to be made "good" and "free" from sins curse, who will be counted as justified before God and granted eternal life.

Isaiah 53:6, "All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth."

Jesus Christ served as God's Sacrificial Lamb, as John the Baptist declared when Jesus was approaching the Jordan River (**John 1:29**), "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

How did Jesus take away our sin debt? Paul tells us (**Ephesians 1:7**), it was "through His blood," for God required that sin be paid for in full, by a perfect and holy sacrifice, His own Son (see **Hebrew 9:22, 27-28; 10:1-10**).

The shed blood of bulls and goats left sin unpaid for, unpunished; but the sacrificial death of God's Own Son made full payment for all sin, for all time, freeing us from our slavery to sin, and from the condemnation that we should receive because of sin in us.

Jesus Christ served as God's Lamb, fulfilling God's requirement that blood be shed and a perfect sacrifice be offered, in order that the curse of sin be removed. The sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection of God's Son, paid "in full" our debt for sin, for all time, freeing us from sin's condemnation, making it possible for us to know and to serve the Holy God of Creation.

Christians are redeemed and forgiven (**Ephesians 1:7-8**) *"in accordance with the riches of God's grace," "that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding."*

Redemption provides forgiveness and eternal life to all who believe and receive Christ. We also receive **wisdom** (*Gk. sophia*),. this is knowledge of the things of God: life/death, sin/salvation, heaven/hell, eternity past & future. This is God's wisdom, not man's.

God gives us **understanding** (*Gk. phronesis*), this is intelligence and insight that allows the appropriation and application of God's truths in guiding decisions & actions in everyday life, expressing God's good, pleasing, and perfect will in all things (**Colossians 3:17**), "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Christians can understand and apply the wisdom of God, but those who reject God are fools, lacking any understanding (see **1Corinthians 1:18-31**).

The godless philosophies & practices of this 'world' are void of God's wisdom:

1. parenting The WORLD says, "don't say NO to children, it is negative and hinders their development; don't spank them, for that is criminal and barbaric, use time-outs; let them freely express themselves and develop into who they really are; direct and train them according to their own unique ways or bents."

GOD says (**Proverbs 13:24**), "He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently," (**22:6**), "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it," (**22:15**), "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it." (**29:15**), "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother."

There are only two "ways" a child, for for that matter, an adult, can go: either the way of the wise, or the way of the fool; the way of God or the way of those who reject Him! Our natural tendency is to sin, it is only through the presence of God that we are able to do anything good (**Ephesians 2:10**), "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

2. gay rights The WORLD says, "homosexuals should be allowed to marry, even to adopt and raise children, for this is a bonafide lifestyle, a new venue of "sexual orientation," and there is nothing morally or ethically wrong with it," in fact, anyone who disagrees with it is branded considered to be intolerant, unloving, chauvinistic, sexist, or homophobic.

Well, God calls it sin: sexual immorality, unnatural, degrading, indecent, depraved, reprobate, godless! Anyone whose life is characterized by this will not enter heaven, for God accepts and gives us freedom to express our sexuality in one union, and one only; that being a husband and a wife, one male and one female in a heterosexual and homogeneous relationship that is ordained by God. This is not up for debate or vote, for God says any other sexual relationship is sin!

3. drug & alcohol abuse The WORLD says, "it is a disease, you are born that way, you can't help it, it is not your fault, therefore you are not responsible."

God calls it drunkenness and links it to lust, envy, brawling, debauchery and immorality! God says it is sin, leading to destruction, not a disease out of our control or a pattern of behavior we are unable to confront and make changes to.

Romans 13:13, "Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy."

1Corinthians 6:9-11, "Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

1Corinthians 10:13, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."

James 1:14-15, "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."

4. pro-choice vs. pro-life The WORLD says, "abortion is a woman's right, after all it is her own body and an embryo isn't really a human life, it is only glob of tissue, like a tumor." About 900,000 babies were aborted in the US last year.

God calls it the murder of a human -- it is not a women's right to do with as she pleases; it is not the removal of a glob of tissue, but is an individual living being created by God.

Psalm 127:3, "Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward."

Psalm 139:13-16, "For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them."

The people of the world will not accept God's wisdom, for they are incapable of understanding His truth. Apart from the redemption and forgiveness that comes through Jesus Christ, unbelievers will remain lost and ignorant.

But God's people have no excuse to believe or behave in such ignorance (see **Ephesians 1:3-8**).

We should expect the people of the world to live as if they do not know God or understand God's truth; but we, God's people, have received forgiveness, wisdom and understanding through Christ, our Redeemer; let us bring honor and glory to God, as we humbly and boldly serve, as witnesses of **HIS G-R-A-C-E!**

Pastor Mike
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