

Jesus as a ransom

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[0 : 0 0] Heavenly Father, we come before you with expectancy, knowing that you have already gone the distance for us, that your desire is to bless us, to grow us, to encourage us, to equip us, to convict us of our sins, to free us from bondage.

Lord, help us to have that expectancy this morning. Holy Spirit, we ask that you will open our eyes to see, our ears to hear, open our minds to understand what you would teach us in your word this morning, in Jesus' name.

Amen. Please take a seat. We'll finish off our summer series on the crucified Messiah this morning, and we'll be looking at Christ dying as a ransom.

Christ dying as a ransom. But before we get into the idea of Christ dying for a ransom, we have to talk about slavery. Slavery is among, if not one of the most detestable evils in the world.

When we talk about evils, evil is bad, evil is evil. There's kind of degrees of evil. Slavery is up there. There are tens of millions of slaves worldwide.

[1 : 1 3] There are Southeast Asians in the Gulf countries that are essentially forced laborers. We have people that are trafficked into all sorts of prostitution in North America, in cities all over the place, maybe even Ottawa.

There are some 30 to 40 million slaves worldwide. I mean, who knows the actual number? But I want to put forward to you this morning that there are many more than 30 to 40 million slaves.

I want to put forward to you that the very human condition is riddled, is one with abject, is a condition that is full on with abject slavery.

The idea of ransoming in the scriptures and in our text this morning, it might bring to mind this idea of somebody kidnapping a rich person's daughter or son and demanding a ransom, \$10 million, or we're going to kill your child.

And although that most certainly is ransoming, the picture that we're going to see in the Bible is actually the ransoming of one from slavery. A slave, a bondservant, was somebody without any rights.

[2 : 3 1] They were owned by another human being. And if they wanted to enjoy freedom, they had to be redeemed. They had to be ransomed. In John chapter 8, Jesus speaks to a crowd of Jewish people.

Some were skeptical, antagonistic. Others were sympathetic. They were believers. But he said this to them, If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.

And you will know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. They, some of the people that believed in him, they answered him, We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say you will become free? Interesting. Just a quick pause. The Israelites were enslaved to people.

They spent 400 years enslaved in Egypt. Egyptian slavery. In fact, every year there is a feast commemorating the exodus from slavery.

[3 : 3 7] It's called Passover. For them to say such a... It's like if you're going to lie, you've got to lie well, right? You don't lie in such a way that is just obvious. That you're not telling the truth.

And Jesus could have totally refuted them in the same way I just did. But instead, he doesn't refute them by reminding them of their ethnic experience.

Instead, he appeals to the human experience. And this is what he says. Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

The slave does not remain in the house forever. The son remains forever. So if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed. Notice. Guys, we do the Passover every year.

No, no, no. He doesn't mention that. He said, if you practice slavery, or if you practice sin, you are a slave to sin. You are in bondage. You are a slave.

[4 : 42] And Jesus said it to a group of people 2,000 years ago. But he says it to us this morning. There is most certainly slavery throughout the world.

And apart from the obvious crazy stuff that I gave a couple examples of just a few moments ago, slavery is ubiquitous in our world in the human heart.

For some of us, this might be hard to accept. It may even be offensive, ridiculous to your ears for me to say such thing. Look at us. We are very free people.

We live in a free society. We have freedom to come and to go, to practice religion, to acquire wealth, to spend things the way we want.

We're free people. This sounds a bit ridiculous. And I can sympathize with that. If this is you, I would say, just stick with me.

[5 : 43] Keep your ears open. Keep your mind open to the truth that scripture speaks of. Because, again, if it's true, it will set you free.

Maybe you're a Christian here and you've heard this, this idea of God redeeming us. And you're like, yeah, I've heard this. Like, for the thousandth time, it's old hat.

This is where you hit the off button. Lights are on, but nobody's home. You're thinking of whatever sports game or what you have to do when you go home. I would say to you, keep your ears perked. Hear this afresh for another time. One more time. Because, again, this is truth, and the truth shall set you free. Let's read our text this morning.

And I'm going to be reading it a number of times. And I want this truth to get deep down. So Matt read 1 Timothy 2, 1 to 7.

[6 : 49] We're actually going to only be in two verses, one sentence. Verses 5 and 6 is one sentence over two verses. And I'll begin in verse 5 of 1 Timothy 2.

justamente 2 verse 6. Again, For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

Our text this morning will show us that our only hope for redemption from slavery to sin is through a ransoming. A ransoming that we have an inability to pay and desperately long for.

It's a ransoming that was done freely and lovingly. It was carried out according to God's will at his appointed time and was mediated by the only one who could ever mediate it, Jesus Christ.

He mediates it between the perfect creator God and the broken, sinful humanity. We are created in God's image and he is reconciling us back to the creator whose image we bear.

[8 : 17] So we're going to look at three things in our text that talk about the idea of ransom and what it means to be ransomed. The first is what are we ransomed from?

The second thing is what are we ransomed for? The third thing is how is this accomplished? So what are we ransomed from? What are we ransomed for?

And how this is accomplished? So I'm going to read one more time. First Timothy chapter two, verses five and six.

For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

What are we ransomed from? I've made mention of being ransomed from slavery to sin, a slavery to sin. We have transgressed against God himself from the beginning and because of the beginning.

[9 : 18] So by virtue of being a human being, you are a transgressor against God's laws. And it's been happening since the very beginning, since we see in the opening chapters of Genesis in the Bible, our first parents, they chose not to enjoy God and his good creation.

They chose instead to put themselves in the place of God, to make their own desires ultimate things and somehow kick God off the throne as if that were possible.

We have chosen, likewise, not to trust in God, but to pursue our own good life apart from the life giver.

We make good things ultimate things. And this is what the scriptures talk about idolatry. This is sin. So for instance, if a businesswoman has as an ultimate thing, a successful business, she may stomp on employees.

She may fudge numbers. She may neglect her family if she has one. Because the ultimate thing has to be achieved. The ultimate thing has to be accomplished.

[10:42] The single person who has the good desire to be married, to be in a relationship, making that the ultimate desire, will pursue that desire.

Again, a good desire in an ultimate way that if they don't get in a relationship, their life isn't, it pales. It's not worth living.

Or if they get in a relationship and a heartbreak happens, devastation, so that life doesn't seem worth living. And I don't mean in the moment when emotions are high, but just all the time.

The mother who is desperately in love with their child, that makes their child the ultimate thing. If the child, God forbid, passes away or goes wayward.

That mother's existence, everything she's put her hope and everything that she's put her identity in crumbles. Making a good thing an ultimate thing. The married man of 15 years who is just, he wants some adventure.

[11:49] And his eyes start to wander. His desires start to wander. Adventure is not a bad thing. But when you make a good thing an ultimate thing, it's sin.

The church planter who puts all his eggs in the church planting basket. And if it fails, he's crushed. That's making a good thing an ultimate thing.

I mean, listen, the shackles of slavery to sin take on different forms, but they're still shackles. If you are a slave to sin, you can say, listen, I'm putting a few more links on my chain.

Look how much freedom I have. You still have shackles on your legs. If you paint your shackles a nice color, beautiful, glitter, if you're so glittery like that, there's still shackles.

Or if you ignore them and say, there is no shackles on my feet. It doesn't change the fact that there's not shackles on your feet. It means you're delusional. Slavery to sin takes different forms, but it's still slavery.

[13:01] But it's not just slavery to sin that we're ransomed from. It's also ransoming from this world and slavery from false religion and false and evil philosophies.

The apostle Paul says in Galatians chapter 4 that Jesus not only saves Christians from slavery to sin, but also sets them free from slavery to the world, false religions, evil religions, philosophies. And he says this in verse 7 of chapter 4. So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if a son, then an heir according to an heir through God. Verse 8, It means that through Jesus, we are welcomed into God's family.

No longer slaves, no longer slaves, but sons and daughters. And that means our previous slave masters no longer have authority over us.

So for the Somali man who comes to the Christian faith, genuine faith, the evil slave master of Islam is no longer over him.

[14:40] The student who is headlong into a philosophy degree, eating stuff up, comes to faith, no longer are they subject to narcissistic or reductionistic philosophies that belittle God, that belittle his creation and him as creator.

That talk about Christ as a fairy tale or as one of many different insurrectionists 2,000 years ago. To the Christian sitting in the pew, it means the Christian in the pew that thinks Christianity, whether consciously or just as a matter of everyday practicality lives the Christian life in such a way that they think good deeds will merit ultimate love from God towards them.

You are no longer slaves to that evil master. Sons and daughters of the living God, God saves us, ransoms us from the world and from slavery to false and evil religion and philosophies.

There is complete freedom that awaits. If you are here struggling with your faith, curious about the faith, true freedom awaits.

We are ransomed. It means we are no longer, again, answerable to our former slave masters.

There is a beautiful scene at the end of 12 Years a Slave when, is it Solomon Northup, this old friend from New York comes and through the sheriff, he is essentially a free man and he is getting in the carriage.

[16:35] And as he is walking, his slave master is calling him names and saying, you are my slave, I paid for you. And he disregards that slave owner because he is no longer a slave.

And that is a beautiful picture of what it means to no longer be in slavery. But we're also ransomed from slavery to death.

Death has touched us all in some kind of way. We have friends or families, family members that have died. I've never met Kobe Bryant in my life. I was bummed out for a long time when he died. Death, it's so final and aggressive and it takes everybody. And all of us will taste death. But we're no longer slaves to death if we are ransomed. Because as Christ has died, but was on the third day rose again from the grave, we are united to him.

[17 : 39] So we too will rise again. Death will not have the final word. Death will no longer be a slave master to us. Ransomed from the grave.

So we are ransomed from slavery, but we are also ransomed for something. God doesn't rescue the Israelites from Egypt and just puts them out in the desert and said, Hey, you're free. He saves them for something. Brings them to the promised land. Blesses them. Makes a covenant with them.

Renews his covenant that he made with Abraham, but also gives them a new identity. So what are we ransomed for?

Simply put, it's freedom. But what exactly do we mean by freedom? Do we define freedom on our own terms? Is freedom simply to live unencumbered from responsibility?

[18 : 54] Well, then I think desire, your desires would take over. You just do whatever you wanted. Then your desire becomes your slave master. You become a slave to your desires.

How about freedom from responsibility? Like complete freedom to do whatever you want, to walk your own path. Well, how about if walking your own path is at the expense of others?

For your freedom to truly exist, it means somebody else's freedom has to be curtailed. Is that really freedom? Is that true freedom? We are ransomed for freedom, but consider this.

The true freedom is to know God and be known by him. It says that, we read this a few moments ago in Galatians chapter 4. To know God and be known by him.

God is our creator and he is good. And his desire for us to bless us can be trusted. And God is, he is not the type of maker who, like a watchmaker, makes this beautiful timepiece, sets the mechanism, and then his job is done.

[20 : 10] God has made creation, and all of creation is upheld by him. He is deeply intertwined with his, excuse me, creation.

That he is active in his creation, and he has created the cosmos, and at the very, at the very pinnacle of all of his creation, is you and I, is humanity.

Because we are made in his image. We are image bearers of God. Male and female, whatever language you speak, wherever you come from, if you are a human being, you're an image bearer of God.

And you are at the pinnacle of his creation. God does not want a relationship with the environment. He does not want a relationship with any kind of animal, or a relationship with the stars.

He wants a relationship with you and I. He is deeply, deeply, deeply, deeply involved in his creation.

[21 : 24] As image bearers, we are made to enjoy this deep friendship with God. God, this is what true freedom is. To live in the way that we were created to live.

When sin, the temptation of sin, comes knocking, we don't have to say yes. When the world tempts us to compromise, we don't have to say yes.

When a false religion, or philosophy, says this is, this is a better way, we don't have to say yes. And when death is knocking at our door, we can laugh in a sense, because death will never have the final word.

We are saved for relationship with the living God, and it means everything. So we are saved from slavery, we are saved for something, we are ransomed for something.

How is all of this accomplished? Let's take another look. 1 Timothy, chapter 2, verses 5 and 6. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

[22 : 45] Our scripture text talks of the ransoming by Jesus of us, but it actually talks of other things as well. It makes some heavy-duty truth claims.

One sentence, this one sentence is so packed, so concise of a deep, deep theology that it is worth memorizing.

At the end of our time together, I'll encourage you guys to memorize this one verse, but it is a packed verse, and there are truth claims intertwined in this sentence so that Jesus ransoming us doesn't work unless there is one true God.

Jesus ransoming us doesn't work unless we truly are sinful and God truly is holy. The ransoming of us by Jesus, it doesn't work if the incarnation is a joke or if it's false.

The ransoming us from slavery doesn't work if God didn't send Christ to freely give himself in a specific time in a specific place.

[24 : 02] These truth claims are very much intertwined. Christine actually helped me with this. I've never heard of this before, but I totally heard of it before. The theory of irreducible complexity and could you put up the slides?

This is a great example of the theory of irreducible complexity because the mouse trap doesn't work unless each of its component parts are there.

So, I'm not talking about a fancy dancy mouse trap. I'm talking about the standard Victor mouse trap, not Victor's mouse trap. I have no idea if Victor has mouse traps.

This is a Victor mouse trap and the Victor mouse trap doesn't work unless there is a wooden board and it doesn't work unless there is a bar that holds the spring down and it doesn't work unless there is a trigger and it won't work unless there is a bit of bait on the trigger and it definitely won't work if you can't set it up.

These things are impossible to set up. I don't know if you guys, that's why people get the clippy ones now. But anyways, you understand what I'm trying to say. You can take it down now. Thanks.

[25 : 10] The theory of irreducible complexity. God ransoming us doesn't work if there are more than one God because if there are more than one God, more than one God, if the God of the Bible didn't scratch my itch, I just find another God with a different set of values.

If this God wasn't perfect and us being sinful, we would need no we'd have no need to be ransomed. If Christ wasn't a mediator and a mediator being one that enjoys the confidence of both parties that are at odds to one another that is a suitable representative of both parties.

So if our mediator Christ Jesus wasn't fully God representing God and fully man representing man, how could he properly mediate for us?

This wouldn't work. The ransoming wouldn't work. If Christ didn't freely give of himself, it would be an injustice and how could that ransoming work?

You guys see the point. For God to ransom us it is this verse, it is the gospel itself.

[26 : 38] It is the gospel itself. This doesn't work if one of the component parts don't exist or is false. So what happens?

God sends his son, God, the son of God, to take on human flesh, fully God, fully man, and to ransom us, but not with a large sum of money, not with years of hard labor, but with his very blood. He spills for you and for I. There's a deep desire in us for reconciliation to God, for the good life, to know no pain, to know true joy in relationships.

All of this stuff points to something. This deep desire for reconciliation to God, but it's very clear we have an inability to achieve this ourselves. What a frustration that must be.

In Psalm 49 verses 7 to 9 and then in verse 15 it says this, verses 7 to 9, truly no one can ransom another or give to God the price of his life. For the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice that he should live on forever and never see the pit.

[28 : 01] And then in verse 15 it says this, but God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol or the grave for he will receive me. Who can ransom one's own life?

God can. And he has. In the book of Revelation, the culmination of all of time is this wonderful picture of Christ on the throne with, I mean, it's really an epic picture of all of creation worshipping God.

And this is what it says in verse 5. And they, this is the four living creatures and the 24 elders, it's just crazy, epic, cosmic scene.

And they start to sing a new song to Jesus. And they say this, worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain and by your blood you ransomed people for God.

From every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth. That at the culmination of all time, there is this new song sung to the king of kings and rate inserted in there is about how he has ransomed you and I.

[29 : 25] Your life is worth something. There's purpose for your life. It's a wonderful picture. I will encourage you guys now to read and read and read and memorize this one sentence and to think about how you were ransomed.

To think about how God is the creator, the one and only creator, how Christ is our mediator between us and God, how Jesus is fully man, fully God, how he ransoms us by his blood freely, lovingly, and how it was done in a specific time in a specific place and it is finished. And read this over and memorize that. Let that form you this week, next week, the week after, your whole life. Here's the thing.

This is why we need to be reminded. If you're not a Christian, if you've never come to a saving faith, today, I've laid out the case for you. Come to a saving faith in Christ Jesus.

Be free from your slavery. But if you're a Christian, don't wander back into slavery. Don't do it. You don't have to. The Israelites are in the desert.

[30 : 42] They know they will be delivered into the promised land. They've seen God's mighty work. And then they start complaining about the stew that they wanted, that they used to eat back in Egypt, and then they want it again.

But God has a whole land for you, flowing with bounty. And you want stew that you ate, this is our problem as well.

We are sons and daughters of the living God if you put your faith and trust and hope in Christ. But all too often you go back to being a slave to sin. You go back to being a slave to the world.

You go back to being a slave to false religion, to false philosophies, to an utter fear of death that is crippling. you go back to being a slave.

But guess what? The shackle is no longer on your ankle. It's gone if you are in Christ Jesus. We need to be reminded of this, refreshed by this, renewed by this.

[31 : 43] That's why the gospel isn't just the doorway, it is the life of the Christian faith. So let's read again 1 Timothy chapter 2 verses 5 and 6. Let's memorize this.

Let it form our very hearts. Let us remember always that we are sons and daughters of the living God.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you so much that you have sent your son to ransom us from slavery. No longer is there a shackle on our ankles, no longer are we free, no longer do we have zero rights, we have been ransomed, not with money that can be spent or a prize that can be spent or some kind of labor that can be spent, but by the very incorruptible blood of Christ himself.

That if we are free, whom the son sets free, is free indeed. Lord, help us to walk in that. And for my friends that are skeptical, or maybe they don't yet know you, or maybe somebody is here that has thought they've known you, thought they've known a saving faith for their entire life, but maybe that is coming into question.

Lord, I pray that they will cry out for your ransoming, for your redemption, for your son to set them free, and that they will live as free men, free women.

[33 : 20] Lord, thank you that Christianity is not a religion of bondage, but it is truly a religion of freedom. Help us learn how to walk as free people.

We pray all these things in Jesus' name. are you our our ■■■■■