

Ransom

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[0 : 00] And if you were here last week, you'd know that the crux is a Latin word, which literally means the cross. It also means, we use it to mean, when we're talking about something that is the defining point at hand, the central point or issue at hand.

And so it's really appropriate that we call this series the crux, because we believe that the cross of Jesus is the defining, the central event in the history of the world.

We believe that the cross really defines history. Whether you are a believer in Jesus or not, the cross defines human history. Time magazine called Jesus the man of the millennium, the most important man of the millennium.

We divide history around his birth, BC, before Christ, AD, and Odomini, the year of our Lord. So Jesus really has influenced human history, whether you're a believer or not, beyond what anyone would have imagined during his lifetime.

And for us, the cross is the central event, the most important event, in the most important life that has ever been lived. We saw last week, when we looked at Jesus' death as our substitute, we saw that God is angry at humanity.

[1 : 28] God is perfect, holy, righteous. We as humans are sinful, rebellious, disobedient, stiff-necked. We don't live the way that God wants us to live.

We don't live the way that we ought to live. Rather than loving one another, we hate one another. Rather than serving and loving and being obedient to God, we reject Him. Because God is perfect and we are not, His anger, His righteous anger, the anger that any righteous person feels towards an unjust person, that anger burns against us perfectly.

We saw that when Jesus died on the cross for our sin, He became a substitute for us. That God's righteous anger is coming against us.

We deserve to die. The penalty for sin is death. But Jesus dies in our place as our substitute. He takes the penalty that we deserve.

He dies in our place. We learned a big word last week. It's propitiation. Jesus is a propitiation for us. That means He dies in our place and absorbs God's anger and wrath on our account.

[2 : 40] So that we need not experience His anger, His wrath, His condemnation, His punishment. But rather, we can experience His love, friendship, eternal life.

So that was what last week was about. This week, we're going to talk about Jesus' death as our ransom. We're going to talk about what that means. We'll unpack that as we go along tonight. What does it mean for Jesus to be our ransom? Jesus' death, the Bible says, ransoms us. So that's what we're going to talk about. I'm going to pray for us first. And then we'll get to work on this passage that Georgie just read for us.

Okay, so let's bow our heads. Father, we do thank You so much for Your Word to us in this book, the Bible. We love the Bible.

We love Your Word. We love that You speak to us clearly in Your Word. And we love what it says about Jesus and His death for us.

[3 : 39] His death in our place for our sin. So we pray, Lord, now that You would open Your Word to us. Make it really clear for us. Help us to understand it.

And help our response to Your Word to be one of love and service and obedience and eternal life. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. The statistics, if you want to look them up, for debt in Australia are really pretty staggering.

The average Australian is in \$3,000 to \$7,000 worth of credit card debt. That's not taking into account mortgages, car loans or anything else. That's just credit card debt.

I think the average Australian has four to five credit cards each. And I mean, you can just tally up your mail during the week. The mail that I get, half of it is just offers from credit banks offering me another credit card.

This one's platinum. The other one's gold. The one before was silver. They just kind of rack these things up, right? And every deal is this irresistible deal. It just means that we can rack up more debt. I think one of the reasons we are such a debt-ridden society in our generation is because we've never had a Great Depression.

[4 : 52] We've never had to wait for anything. We've never had to skip and save or do any of that because if we don't have the money, we can just borrow it, right? We have whatever we want, whenever we want, and you just keep racking up the debt.

So that's what we do. And I don't know about you, but I hate debt. I hate debt. I hate the feeling of owning somebody money. Just grind.

It makes me feel awkward. It makes me feel like dirty. I hate it. I hate it. I didn't have a credit card until I got married. That's a little lesson for you if you're single.

Think about it. Financial debt is something that's in our face every day because we get the credit card offers.

We get the credit card slips, invoices, and then we get all those credit card companies, sending us papers. This is a paper with like red stamps on them saying, this is your last chance.

[5 : 57] We're going to take your wife and kids. I've got a few of them. So it's always in our minds. It's always in front of us. We think about financial debt a lot. But I wonder if you've ever thought about the spiritual debt that you owe.

Bible tells us that every one of us owes a spiritual debt to God.

Like I said last week and like I've already said tonight, every single one of us, I don't care who you are, I don't care what you've done, every single one of us owes a debt of sin to God.

God is a righteous judge. We are a disobedient people. We owe God a debt. It's called sin.

And the thing about owing debts that we read about in the Bible, and indeed it's true of life today, is that if you want to get out of a debt that you can't pay, you need three things.

[7 : 03] There are three things I'm going to talk about tonight. What are the three things that you need to get out of spiritual debt? The Bible's clear that this debt that you owe, you cannot pay.

You will never, ever be able to pay it. It's too big. It's too serious. You're never going to be able to work your way out of it. So tonight, I'm going to give you the three things you need to get out of spiritual debt.

First thing you need is a mediator. A mediator. Second thing you need is a redeemer. And the third thing you need is a ransom.

A mediator, a redeemer, and a ransom. We're going to talk about each one of those. So let's start with a mediator. What does it mean for us to have a mediator? Why do we need a mediator?

Another word for a mediator is a middleman. So this is a guy. You're in debt to somebody. It's a debt you can never pay back. He's angry about it.

[8 : 01] He wants it paid. So you get a mediator. A mediator is a middleman who comes in. He represents both the person who is owed the debt and the person who owes the debt.

He represents them both. He's an impartial person. And he sort of brokers a deal by which this debt can be paid off or recompense can be made. Reconciliation can be made. So you see this in many different walks of life.

Mediators, employed. I've got a friend, close friend at the moment. He's going through a terrible, terrible ordeal. Really stressing him out. Basically, he, I won't go into details, but he got ripped off in a big way.

A guy who was fraudulent against him, broke a bunch of laws. And now he is very close to losing everything. House, land, savings, just a lot.

And so he's in a whole bunch of trouble, but he's not a litigious person. He doesn't want to go to court. He doesn't really want to screw this guy to the wall for cheating him. And so what he's going to do is, he's going to employ a mediator who can come in, who can represent both the fraudulent person and him as the victim, who can work something out between them so that this friend of mine is, you know, repaid in some way and reconciliation can take place.

[9 : 25] That's a mediator. The job of a mediator. I've had this in my own experience, my own marriage. Renee and I have seen a mediator, a marriage counsellor at one point.

A few years back, I was being a really, really bad husband. Just a hopeless, useless scumbag of a husband. And I wasn't loving Renee like Christ loved the church, is what I'm meant to do.

Ephesians 5 tells us that. I was being selfish in some certain areas and unrepentant. And so every time we talked, I would become proud. I would become angry.

I would become intimidating. And we just couldn't work it out. Just butting heads. So what we did was we employed a mediator, a counsellor. And so this person was impartial, represented each one of us, sat us down, pointed out that I was being a moron, and enabled us to talk with one another without raising voices or me getting sinful.

And in the end, I saw that I was being a moron. And God really spoke to me. And I repented and changed. And so we're doing really well now.

[10:39] But we might not have been without the mediator. A mediator represents both parties. He's a middle man to facilitate reconciliation.

The problem with your debt, the problem with the debt that you owe, the spiritual debt that you owe to God, is that there is no mediator that can represent both you and God.

In order for there to be a mediator that could represent both you and God, there would have to be someone who was both God and man.

You would need a God-man. See where I'm going with this? You would need a God-man. There is no one who can represent God on his behalf because there is only one God.

There's no human who can represent both humanity and God because humans are sinful, as we saw last week. So what you need is a God-man. And of course, what the Bible tells us is that God, in order to be our mediator, sent himself as Jesus into the world.

[11:54] God took on human flesh, became the God-man so that he could be the mediator between us and God. We saw that in our passage tonight.

1 Timothy 2, chapter 2, verse 5. It says, That's God's answer to the problem.

A better way of saying it, a little bit more old school, but it gets at the heart of what I'm trying to say, is to say that there is one God, there is also one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus himself, the God-man.

He's the God-man. He can represent us. He can mediate for us. So you've got one out of three there.

You've got your mediator. It also says in Hebrews, chapter 9, I think it's verse 15. Hebrews, chapter 9, verse 15. For this reason, Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant.

[13:02] He mediates a new covenant. That's a new agreement between us and God. He's the mediator. The second thing you need if you want to settle your spiritual debt, you need a mediator.

You also need a redeemer. A redeemer is someone who picks up the tab. That's what a redeemer is. Someone who picks up the tab for you.

I love these people. These people who pick up the tab. Do you have friends who do this? They can literally pick up the tab for you. It's a very Christian thing to do. I love it. You've got to love that guy who picks up the tab, right?

Some of you guys have done this for us. Renee and I have taken us out to dinner. Great dinner. Great conversation. Great experience. Then the bill comes. And you've said to us, can we get this? Can we pay the bill? Yes, you can pay the bill. You can absolutely pay the bill. And we can do this weekly. It's a great thing when someone picks up the bill for you.

[14:09] That's what a redeemer does. They pay your debt. They pay the bill. Some of the best shows, some of my favorite shows, and part of me is a little bit ashamed to say this.

Some of my favorite TV shows are about this. This is the whole theme, right? You know these shows. They're not really quality in terms of art, but they are emotive shows.

They're the shows where, you know, you get this family and they can't afford the car and they've just had another child and, you know, the guys just had a really bad injury at work. And then the TV show shows up and says, we're going to buy you the Tarago.

Love those shows. I cry when I watch those shows. It's a beautiful thing when someone picks up the tab. When somebody pays the debt that you can't afford.

It's a beautiful thing. Here's the truth. The truth is that you can never, ever pay your spiritual tab. You can never pay the debt that you owe God.

[15:14] And you can never pay the tab of somebody else either. You can't pay someone else's spiritual debt. Different religions will tell you different things when it comes to paying back your debt.

For some, they have this doctrine of purgatory whereby you owe God a debt. You get to sort of this halfway house between earth and heaven. And there you can pay off your debt through purgatory. It's through this sort of uncomfortable experience of pain or whatever whereby you're purified. Before you can go and meet God.

Your debt is paid. Anything that's outstanding on your balance gets paid off through pain or suffering or whatever. That's purgatory. We don't believe in that. The Bible doesn't teach that. For others, it's reincarnation. So, you can just keep going through life after life after life after rebirth after rebirth. And just as you go along, you can do a few more good things and get a little bit more calmer on your side.

[16 : 15] And that's how you pay off your spiritual debt. It's reincarnation. For other people, and this might be more the way that you think unconsciously or consciously, that you can pay off your spiritual debt to God through good works.

Coming to church, being on the roster, paying people's bills, helping old ladies over the street, whatever it is. All those things are good things to do.

But they're not going to pay your spiritual debt. Your debt is way too big to be paid off with good works. It's not that we don't want you to do good works.

God demands it of you that you be people who are constantly doing good works. But you're not going to pay off your spiritual debt with that. It's impossible.

The truth is that Jesus is our Redeemer. That Jesus picks up our tab.

[17 : 15] That's what the Bible teaches us. You'll see right throughout the Bible, language of redemption. That God redeems His people.

And the ultimate act of redemption is on the cross of Christ. He's paying our debt. So that's two out of three.

Jesus is our Mediator. He represents both God and man. Brokers a new covenant whereby we can be reconciled to one another.

Jesus is also our Redeemer. He steps in when we can't afford to pay the debt of our sin. And He pays it for us. He picks up our tab.

Third one is ransom. Ransom is the price that is paid to settle the debt. Mediator brokers the deal.

[18 : 11] Redeemer pays the debt. And ransom is the price that's paid. It's what changes hands in order to make things right. In order to reconcile the relationship.

You get this language right throughout particularly the Old Testament. But also early 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th century literature when it comes to slavery.

So in the 1st century there was no bankruptcy laws. I reckon this is a better system by the way. This guy that I was talking about earlier who got screwed by the fraudulent guy.

What this fraudulent evil guy did was just screw a bunch of people financially and then declare bankruptcy. And now he's got a new house, new cars, still working.

But because he declared bankruptcy he doesn't have to pay anything back. It's a terrible system.

Terrible system. What they did back in the old days, which is better, is if you were in a huge amount of financial debt and you couldn't pay it back.

[19 : 15] You just had to sell yourself into slavery. So you owe someone a massive debt. You can't pay it back. You sell yourself to that person and you work it off.

Your whole life if you need to. Working off that debt. That's how you became a slave. That's why there were so many slaves back in those days. It wasn't an unusual thing.

This language of ransom and redemption comes out of the slave market. So if you were enslaved trying to pay off your debt and a redeemer came along and paid your ransom, that was how you were set free.

If you had a wealthy friend, an influential friend, they could come along and as your redeemer they could pay your ransom. And set you free. Now if you're going to get out of this situation where you owe an infinite spiritual debt to God, you're going to need a redeemer to come and pay your ransom.

The problem is that no man can pay it for you. No human can pay it for you. Psalm 49, 7 to 8 says this, No one can redeem the life of another.

[20 : 29] The ransom for a life is too costly. No payment is ever enough. Read that again. Read that again. Listen. Psalm 49, 7 to 8.

No one can redeem the life of another or give a ransom to God for his life. The ransom for a life is too costly. No payment is ever enough.

Some of you know I turned 30 last month. And in my mind it wasn't really about how old I am now and how I'm a grandpa and whatever.

My life's over. I'll never play professional sports. All of that did go through my mind. But really, especially in preparing for this series, what I was thinking about was, wow, that's 30 years of sin. That's a lot of sin. 30 years from the womb until now of every day committing sins of commission and omission.

[21 : 42] Commission are sins that we do against God. Omission are things that we should have done and didn't do. Both sin. Both add to our spiritual debt.

I've got 30 years of that banked up now. And my life has been particularly sinful.

Really has been particularly sinful. I want to go into details. I really don't want to glorify what I've done in the past before God saved me when I was 19. But I just, and beyond that.

But I mean, I've just racked up serious spiritual debt through my sin. Many times in my life I've been absolutely evil in my conduct.

Towards people and towards God. Just evil. Stuff you don't even want to think about. 30 years banked up.

[22 : 49] I can't take any of that back. I can't undo any of that. So who's going to pay my spiritual debt?

None of you can. It's too costly. No one can ransom the life of another. Psalm 49 says. So we need a redeemer who can pay a ransom.

The truth is that Jesus is both. He's the redeemer who pays. And he's the ransom who's the payment. That's Jesus.

He's all three. He's mediator. He's redeemer. He's ransom. Mark 10.45 says. Jesus himself saying this. He says.

The son of man. That's Jesus. Did not come to be served. But to serve. And to give his life as a ransom for many.

[23 : 52] Say that again. Look at me. This is Jesus speaking in Mark 10.45. The son of man. Jesus Christ.

Came not to be served. But to serve. And to give his life. As a ransom for many. I wonder if you're one of the many.

You see the same in our passage tonight. 1 Timothy chapter 2. For there is one God. There is also one mediator. Between God and humankind. Christ Jesus himself.

The God man. Who gave himself. A ransom for all. Who gave himself. A ransom for all.

As we come into Easter. And we look at the cross. And we remember Jesus death. From last week.

[24 : 53] In our place. As a substitute. Taking the anger and wrath. And just retribution of God. On himself. In our place. We also see him there.

As our. Mediator. The middle man. Between us and God. Representative of us both. The God man. Who mediated. A new covenant. A new agreement.

A reconciled relationship. He's the mediator. He's also. The redeemer. He picked up our tab. A spiritual tab. It was infinitely.

Costly. He paid it. How did he pay it? He paid it with his own blood. He himself. Is our ransom.

Gave himself. As a ransom. For many. I don't know about you. But. That's enough for me. To worship Jesus. For the rest of my life.

[25 : 52] And for all eternity. I don't know. If you've got someone else. That you've met along the way. Some other religion. Some other philosophy. Some other prophet.

That you could say. I can worship that one. For the rest of my days. I doubt it. There's no one worthy of that.

Apart from Jesus. There's no one else. Who has been your mediator. Your redeemer. And your ransom. Some of you have put your trust.

In your girlfriend. Or in your boyfriend. Some of you put your trust. In your job. In your money. In your toys. Some of you put your trust. In sports. Some of you put your trust.

In. Just buying stuff. I don't know. Is it a house? Is it a pet? All of us put our trust.

[26 : 51] In something. But nothing. Not one of them. Not the most loving. Person. That you've ever met.

Has ever. Been your mediator. Your redeemer. And your ransom. Nor can they be. Easter is a great opportunity.

For us to realign ourselves. With God. Life can knock us off course. Life can lead us away from. Obedience to Jesus. Following Jesus.

But Easter is a great opportunity. Tonight is a great opportunity. For you to get back on track. To make sure that you're following him. That you're worshipping him.

That you're giving your life to him. He's worth it. He's worthy of it. In a minute we're going to celebrate.

[27 : 52] This happening in Rob's life. We're going to be baptising him. And if you knew. If you don't know much about baptism. Then I just want to explain to you.

The way that I was explaining it to Rob. When we met over the past couple of months. And then we'll get up and sing. Before we go ahead and do it. But baptism.

Is a symbol. It's a physical representation. Of what's going on inside of him. In his heart. So it's something public. And visual.

And physical. That represents the reality. Of what's going on in his heart. And I said to him. It's a little bit like a wedding ring. Alright. Remember this. I said.

So this wedding ring. It's a symbol that I'm married. To Renee. Let's people know. Publicly. That I'm married. That I have a wife.

[28 : 49] But wearing a wedding ring. Doesn't make him married. You following me? Anyone can wear a wedding ring.

Without being married. In the same way. Baptism is a symbol. It's a. It's a. It's a. A physical. Way of Rob. Letting you know. That he is a believer in Jesus.

That he's been saved. That he's a disciple. But it doesn't make him a Christian. He became a Christian. Before he got baptized. Not the other way around. So we just need to be clear on that.

Because there's a lot of teaching. About baptism. That's a little bit wider than Mark. So when. We baptize him. That represents something. That's already happened in his heart. It doesn't make it.

Happen. So what we're going to do is.

I'm going to pray for us. Then we're going to take off. And get ready. Get changed. Alright. And then we're going to do the baptism. Together. So. I'm going to pray in response.

[29 : 46] To what God has been saying. Tonight. Through his word. So let's bow our heads. Father.

We do so thank you. For Jesus death on the cross. For us. We thank you. For the reminder. This week. That Jesus.

That Jesus. Has done everything. That needs to be done. In order to make us right with you. He has. Mediated a new covenant. In which we can be reconciled to you.

He's also redeemed us. He's also redeemed us. By paying our debt. The debt that we owed you. Our spiritual debt of sin. Lord.

He's done that through becoming. He's done that through becoming. A ransom for us. He paid with himself. He paid with his blood. Shed on the cross. So what I want to do now Lord.

[30 : 47] Is just ask you. Just ask you. To please. Speak loudly. Into the hearts of people here.

Who. Who've perhaps heard this for the first time tonight. Perhaps they've had other. Different ideas about who Jesus was. That. Aren't really hitting the mark.

There might be people here tonight. Who have been Christians in the past. And have really walked away from faith. And chased other things. That aren't really worthy of their worship. And their time. I pray that you would work in their hearts.

To bring them to know Christ. Who was crucified for their sins. And raised again for their sins. For salvation. I pray this in Jesus beautiful name.

Amen.