

Redemption Through His Blood

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Date: 22 November 2009

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[0 : 00] Turn back with me to Ephesians chapter 1 and we'll take up the reading again at verse 7. Ephesians chapter 1 page 1174 and reading at verse 7. In him we have redemption through his blood.

The forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ.

As a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

[1 : 03] I'm quite convinced that one of the great problems, one of the classic problems on the Christian life can be boiled down to a failure on our part to know what God has done for us.

And it manifests itself, that failure, in a stripping away of our salvation to the bare minimum.

And I believe that all of us are guilty to some extent of doing that. We minimize what God has done for us. The Bible tells us that God has done everything for us.

He has given us every blessing, spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. That's part of what we looked at last week. Blessed be the God and Father, says Paul, of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. And there's an extent to which the apostle Paul, I think, deliberately uses that in opening his letter to the Ephesians.

[2 : 23] In order to encourage them to think and to meditate and to remember and to explore and to unpack and to study what God has done for them in Jesus Christ.

Lest they make the mistake of minimizing, stripping it down to one or two little words. For example, you hear people saying today, and in every age you hear people using the bare minimum.

They say, well, are you saved or are you lost? Now, of course, that is the essential difference between a person who's a Christian and a person who isn't. The person who follows Jesus is saved and the person who isn't is lost.

And yet, surely, we need to go much, much deeper into that. We have to explain what we mean.

We have to try and absorb what that means by being saved and being lost.

And there's a whole list of ways in which we fall into the same trap of minimizing. Now, here's the danger. And here's why I believe that the Apostle Paul was quite deliberate in beginning his letter with these words.

[3 : 32] Blessed be the God who has blessed. I want you to know, he says, that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.

Now, in so doing, he sets them a challenge to go away and to think about what those blessings will be, what those benefits will be. And when you think about them and the more you get to know them, the more you're made ready for all the difficulties and the challenges of the Christian life.

The more you know, the more prepared you'll be. I guess it's a little bit like being in a house. If you move into another house, you start living in the house before you discover its dimensions and where the fuse box is and where the main switch is.

But you know, if the electricity goes off and you don't know where the main switch is, you don't know where to go. You're at a loss. You don't know what's happening. You can't do a thing.

You're completely unprepared for this difficulty and for the darkness if it happens at nighttime and for the fact that you can't cook and you can't get warm. So it's after you begin to, and this is a house that you've lived in.

[4 : 41] And I've seen this happening with ourselves, you know, when there's a leak in the bathroom and you don't even know where the main tap is. And you're trying desperately to find out. You've lived in the place for a year or two years.

You know the house. You've lived in the house. You're familiar with where all the rooms are. And yet there are essential elements of that house and you don't know where they are. So if you had known where they were, you would have been prepared.

And it's the same with the Christian life. You're a Christian. You follow Jesus. You're saved. And yet there are still elements that you don't know. You don't know the extent to which God has blessed you with every spirit.

Now, Paul is setting the Ephesians a challenge. He knows the kind of how vulnerable these men and women and boys and girls were in that first century church.

He knows that they are prone to slip or to slide back into paganism. He knows that there are false teachers coming in and sowing the seeds of doubt in their minds.

[5 : 42] He knows all the dangers that they're in, that some of them might fall into temptation. And yet he doesn't give a list of all these dangers and temptations. He says, here's the first thing.

If you know what God has done for you, then you'll be prepared. Then everything else will fall into place. And this whole chapter of Ephesians is all about unfolding what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

In order for us to be strengthened and prepared and encouraged. And in order, in every age. It doesn't matter what era we belong to. The Bible is the same.

The Bible is all we need to prepare us and to strengthen us. And to give us every resource we need in order to face the challenges of an unbelieving world.

He says that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. And of course, he begins not with the day he was converted. But he begins by going all the way back to before the foundation of the world.

[6 : 46] So that these people will understand that their conversion was not some kind of afterthought on the part of God. It's not that God created the world and then when the world fell, God had to think of some emergency plan to put into place to rescue what he could of the world.

That's not the way our salvation was. If that was the way it was, God wouldn't be God. But God is supreme. And his sovereignty lasts from eternity to eternity.

Now this is what we can't understand. And we were trying to unfold this a little bit last week. We can't understand it. And yet, for God to be God, he knows every single molecule and detail of everything that takes place in this world.

And he has planned, and we went into that to some extent last week, he has planned and purposed the salvation of those who were going to be his. But then, the time had to come when he had to put that plan, and he chose to put that plan into operation.

And we could go through the Old Testament and say what we said this morning, about the Old Testament saints, the men and women of God, who God chose and who God used and led and guided.

[8 : 00] Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness and so on, and on to the coming of Jesus Christ, when God himself, and in order to implement the plan of salvation, God himself, no less, had to become man, to become one of us, to take our nature upon himself.

And he had to be born into this world so that he could represent sinful man, yet not having been a sinner himself, but so that he could be a representative of the human race.

And even then, going further, laying down his life on the cross, rising again on the third day, and then making sure that the gospel was spread into all the world.

Now, what has God done for us? Well, he's forgiven our sins. He has justified us. He has adopted us. That's why Paul makes a point in verse 5, of saying that he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.

Every Christian, furthermore, has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian has the promise of everlasting life. Every Christian knows that he can face death straight in the face, and know that for him, death is but the beginning of everlasting life, life that will never end.

[9 : 29] So these are just a taste of the spiritual blessings, every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him. Now, in this chapter, it's as if Paul is approaching the same salvation from several different angles.

And last week, we saw how he approached his salvation from the angle of predestination. And we tried to unpack some of the difficulties that there were, and some of the arguments that there were.

Now, I want to come away from that. I want to approach it again from verse 7. In this time, the word, last time, the word was election. This time, the word is redemption.

Redemption. In him, he says, in verse 7, he says, we have redemption through his blood.

Redemption through his blood.

Now, this is not the only place where this word is used to describe everything of what God has done for us in saving us. It's not just one element of our salvation.

[10:33] Redemption covers everything. But the word itself means something that's familiar to us in every age, and none less so than today. Even yesterday, we saw that poor couple that had been kidnapped by pirates somewhere off the coast of Somalia.

And they captured them, and they have made a video in which they're demanding an enormous sum of money, which, if that money is paid, they're promising the release of that couple. And if the money is not paid, then they intend, they say, to hand them over to a terrorist group.

And you can't help feeling so helpless and so sorry for a couple like that, who are enjoying a holiday or whatever together, and they are kidnapped by pirates. And who knows what's going to happen to that couple.

It happens in all kinds of different situations and circumstances where people are kidnapped, and a ransom is demanded. And it happened in the Old Testament times as well, where a person in Bible times, if you were a slave, another person could come along, and if the slave master was willing to set his slave free, he could sell him to the other person for a ransom price.

In other words, there's always, in redemption, something that is trapped, or something that is kidnapped, or something that is caught, imprisoned, either by way of slavery, or kidnapping, or whatever.

[12:01] There is always, in redemption, a price that has to be paid for the freedom of the person who's caught. That's the way that God chooses to describe our redemption.

It's not just the Apostle Paul, but in several places in the Bible, in the New Testament, our salvation is described as being ransomed.

In 1 Peter chapter 1 and verse 18, for example, he says this, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. In 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 30, Paul, once again, he says this, because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

You see that word cropping up again. 1 Timothy chapter 2, Jesus gave himself as a ransom. Jesus himself said it. The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

So you see in which this picture is emerging of our salvation, as those who were, at one time of our lives, held captive, and we are now set free by Jesus.

[13:11] We are now set free. Now, as he unfolds, he begins to elaborate on this redemption that he talks about. And he says this, that it consists in the forgiveness of sins.

Verse 7, in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses. And now we're beginning to unfold. He, first of all, explains to them the means, the price that was paid for our redemption, for our freedom.

The pirates yesterday are, I think it's several million pounds there, they are demanding for the freedom, and for the, and of course the government have said that, as usual, that they will not negotiate with terrorists, they will not pay any price, and of course, you can understand why any government would say and adopt such a policy, because once they do it, if they ever capitulated on that, then everybody would be getting kidnapped all over the world, and they would have to be paying out enormous sums of money for people being kidnapped.

So, of course, there's a higher principle there. But you imagine that you are the relatives of those poor people who have been caught, or imagine that a close relative of yours was kidnapped, and the kidnapper said, look, if you give me all the money in your savings bank, everything that you've got saved up, well, you wouldn't question it, would you?

You would give it right away for the safe release, as long as you knew that your loved ones were going to be released. It's a matter of love. Paying the ransom price is a matter of love.

[14:42] And you would expect that, wouldn't you? I guess if you were in the position of having been kidnapped, if your mother or your father said, I'm not paying anything for his release, there would be something far wrong with that situation.

And I'm sure it would break your heart if that was the case. Well, so it's one thing for a government to refuse, another thing for a family member to refuse. It's an act of love in which you were. Well, look at the price that has been paid for our redemption.

It's summarized in these words, in his blood. That's the price. In his blood. You have been redeemed through, rather, in him, redeemed through his blood.

Now let's stop there. You have to stop there. You can't just pass that by. Too often, we pass these sentences that encapsulate for us what God did for us.

This is one of the many, many verses in the Bible which explain to us to a greater or lesser extent what it was, how it was that Christ came into the world and said, whenever you read about in or through his blood.

[15 : 50] You know, of course, that it wasn't anything to do with the substance of the blood that was shed, but it was the death in which Jesus died for our sins in order to redeem us and to set us free.

In other words, what the Apostle Paul is saying here, he's going all the way back to Calvary. He's talking about the death at Calvary of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and he is saying that you have been redeemed through the ransom that Jesus has paid when he laid down his life.

It wasn't a matter of cost or money, it wasn't, our captivity could never be reversed by anything except one thing and that was the death of Jesus at Calvary.

So he's saying that it was through the death of Jesus that he was never let's lose sight of that death because that death was the death in which the Son of God died.

Plenty of people died at Calvary. Plenty of people were crucified. Plenty of people laid down their lives for other people. You hear it even today, people who are prepared, you heard it tragically this week, of a policeman in Cockermouth who was, who was, who, well, I'm sure it wasn't deliberate, I'm sure he didn't know that the bridge was going to give way under him and if he had the choice, of course, as anyone would have done, he would have, and yet, there's something very special, isn't there, every time we hear of someone who has died in the course of saving other people.

[17 : 36] There's something really precious about that. You hear about it from time to time. But of course, if you know anything about those instances, you'll know that if those people had the choice, if there was any other way, then of course they would have taken it.

But with Jesus, there was no other choice. There was no option. In order to save us from our sins, he absolutely had to die.

Without the shedding of blood, the Bible says, there is no forgiveness. forgiveness. He had to go all the way. And it was something that even he and his human nature struggled with in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Father, if it be possible, take this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done. It was a horror even to him.

Never let us think that because Jesus was God, that somehow the death that he died on the cross wasn't the most horrific, experience. There was no more horrific experience that anyone experienced in this world than the death at Calvary that Jesus experienced.

[18 : 49] And it wasn't, of course, simply the matter of the pain of the nails and the pain of the thorns and the awfulness of the exact method as to which people were put to death by crucifixion.

it was the dereliction in which the presence of his father was removed from him. My God, my God, he said, why have you forsaken me?

That's what Paul means when he talks about redemption through his blood. And of course, we could go on all evening talking about the death of Jesus Christ at Calvary, but we can't just pass it by.

We can't just ignore that little phrase that describes all of those moments through the mocking and through the agony of Jesus Christ in which he willingly gave his life for us.

Well, we'll come to that again in a few moments' time. But as he unfolds that great word redemption, not only do we have the price that he paid, but we also have the nature of that redemption.

[19 : 55] Because Jesus died and because by so doing he accepted and suffered the wrath and the anger of God that we deserve, our sins are forgiven.

And once again, I don't want us to assume that we know what that means. I don't want us to just look at this as if it was ten a penny. It's not. The forgiveness that God offers and he gives is a

completely unique forgiveness and I'll tell you why.

I've said this before, I'll say it again. That when someone sins against you or wrongs you in some way, you can say it's okay to that person, but you can never remove the guilt of what that person has done.

The fact is that if any of us do something wrong, sinful in this world, we become guilty. We're guilty anyway. But the more we commit wrongdoing, the greater the guilt is.

And there's nothing and no one that can remove that guilt, only God himself. Now, here's the thing. When God forgives a person, then that guilt is taken away, it's sent away.

[21 : 08] There was something literal about that word forgiveness that meant literally God is removing it from us altogether. another. And the Bible makes it very clear that that's exactly what happens when a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ.

Have you stopped this evening? How often do you remind yourself? We say it so often as God's people, we say it so often that I'm forgiven, but have we stopped to realize what it means to be forgiven?

It means that every wrongdoing, every sinful, evil, dirty thought, every time, every instance where I ought to have been thinking something and I failed to do so, or I ought to have had one attitude and I failed to have it, it's forgiven, it's taken away.

God is pleased to take it away, to remove the guilt from my past, present, and future. That means that even if tonight you are aware as a Christian, particularly aware of one area in your life in which you fail time and time again by looking in faith to Jesus Christ, you can say, I am clean, I am made clean, I'm washed in the blood of Jesus.

His death has removed the guilt, the stain of my sin. And don't let the devil tell you otherwise. You are in Christ, you are connected to Jesus Christ.

[22 : 33] That's what the Bible tells us. And that can, what a confidence that can give us, that does and should give us as we come to worship him. If you're weighed down by this thought that somehow or other God is hesitant or somehow or other God has forgiven you up to a point, up to the point of your conversion God's forgiven you but no further.

Or up until the point where you were ten years a Christian but no further. Or up until the point where you backslid as a Christian but no further. How can God have any more forgiveness for me? He can, He does. God's complete forgiveness is beyond our expectation.

God does in us and for us more than we can ask or even think and that's why we can say I am forgiven, I am cleansed tonight by looking, by trusting and by resting in Jesus Christ as our Saviour. Now look, it goes even further than that. Through his blood and as we unfold it, it becomes greater and greater. we see more and more of what God has done for us. By according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, we have there how that forgiveness came to us, how we came to discover that forgiveness in the gospel and we also have something of the nature of God in giving us his gifts.

First of all, we're reminded in those words that salvation is a gift. God lavished. He lavished that upon us. And then we have also the nature of the love of God, the extensiveness, the generosity of the love of God.

[24 : 20] And sometimes in our thinking of God, we all, we very often think our conception of God is so often wrong, isn't it? Either we have a grossly distorted concept.

I guess we all have a grossly distorted concept. That's why we need to come back to the Bible in order for that understanding of God to be a balanced one.

God is perfectly holy. God is to be feared tonight. If you're not in Jesus, he is to be feared. If you are in Jesus, he is to be feared.

But when we're in Jesus, there's that blend of fear and yet joy. Consciousness of who God is and yet that joy in knowing that God has given me, he has bestowed.

Look at the word that Paul uses. This tells us something about God. Lavished. Lavished. There are no half measures with God. There's no hesitation with God.

[25 : 18] That's why I can confidently talk about God's forgiveness to us tonight. And that's why I can confidently say that even if you're backslidden, that there is nothing stopping you coming back.

And certainly God is not stopping you from coming and to be restored. What does God do? He restores my soul and makes me to walk in the paths of righteousness.

What does he do? He takes me from the fearful pit and from the mighty clay and he puts a new song in my mouth and he establishes my goings. He does.

He that spared not his own son and has given him up for us all, how shall he not also freely give us all things. God is the giver. He loves to give.

He loves to love. And his love goes away beyond, way beyond our love. Because our love is very often conditional, isn't it? As humans, when we talk about love for one another, we always talk about conditions, don't we?

[26 : 18] There are always limitations. Perhaps there shouldn't be. But there are no limitations with God. God's love, as we saw last week, sent him out after the lost sheep and he hasn't stopped until he finds the lost sheep.

When he finds it, he lifts it up on his shoulders. When we saw what we saw last week, the prodigal son coming back to the father and you would have thought that the father may have said to him, well, okay, you can be a servant in my house.

He would have been happy enough with that. That's what he asked for. But not at all. When the son came back, the father was not prepared to make him a servant, but he was prepared to restore him as a son.

Quick, he said. Bring the best robe. Have you ever looked at that? The best robe. Kill the fatted calf. Rejoice for this son. Logically, that makes no sense at all.

The son had wasted. He had blown all his father's living, or at least that proportion that he had got. He had blown the whole thing. There was nothing left. He was there in his rags, confessing to his foolishness, and yet the father throws his arms around him and he says, this son was dead and is alive again and is lost and is found.

[27 : 29] That's the father's love. Have you experienced it? Have you experienced that kind of love? Maybe, maybe you're afraid of that kind of love. I reckon there are some people and they're scared of the gospel because they can't cope with that kind of extravagance.

They prefer to think of God as judge. It makes logical sense for you to stand before God tonight and for God to condemn you. And there's a sense in which you can cope with that. But you can't cope, you can't understand for God to forgive you and to say that everything has been made clean, everything has been made right.

It's a marvel. It's a wonder. It's a mystery. That's why Paul talks about it as a mystery. Something that we can't understand why God should deal with us the way we do.

Because we sometimes, there are people who hate themselves. They look in the mirror and they say, I hate myself.

And you, you know why you hate yourself. Because your mind is full of all the disgusting, awful things that you've done. Maybe things that nobody knows about.

[28 : 45] And the thought of going to God with all that, that filth that just, you can't cope with it. And there's no way you can bring yourself to think of God actually, actually loving you.

That is what the gospel is all about. Why don't you let God love you? Why don't you come and take him at his word rather than your own logic?

And say with the son, I will arise and I will go to my father. And I will say, father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

But not make me as one of your higher servants. That's what the boy said. But make me your son.

That's what Paul says. He has an adoption here. Predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ. And even as Christians, even as God's people, we hesitate to say God loves me. Don't we?

Because we can't bring ourselves to accept it as we ought to. We see ourselves in terms of our own failure.

[29 : 50] And of course, we are to examine ourselves. We're to be honest with ourselves. We're to face up to what we are. But that's what makes the love of God all the more marvelous. Because he takes us as we are.

And he loves us with a love that is generous. It goes beyond what we even dream lavish. That's not a word we use very often in Scotland, is it?

We don't use that word lavish. I don't know what the Scots equivalent would be. Heaped. Piled.

That's the quantities that God talks about.

God doesn't ever talk in small quantities. He talks in enormous quantities. In which he lavished upon us. According to the riches of his grace.

The Bible tells us that God, that this is the grace of God, that he who was rich, Jesus, became poor so that we through his poverty might become rich.

[30 : 55] Now the time is going. The time is going. Let's move on. How did God bring all this to our attention? The Bible tells us that we were blind and dead in trespass and sin.

That means that we had absolutely no interest in this gospel whatsoever. But God knew how to get through to us. He knew how to work within us and open up our hearts and to bring us to a knowledge of ourselves and to show us the true condition in which we were just like the prodigal son.

And sometimes, sometimes there are people and God has to strip away everything that they depend on in this life in order to drive them back to himself. I don't know if that's what the Lord has done in your life.

The Lord works in different ways in different people's lives. But he always makes known to us his gospel in a way that draws a person, draws a person to himself, making known to us the mystery of his will.

Now, here's the point that I'm coming to. I said at the very beginning that redemption was a collective term. It meant not just the forgiveness of sins, but it's a term that encompasses everything, the whole of God's plan.

[32 : 14] So when you read these verses, what you discover is that redemption is a word that means the plan of God from before the foundation of the world that doesn't just include our forgiveness, but it includes beyond our forgiveness.

It doesn't just include our adoption and we brought into the family of God. It doesn't just include what he was going to give us and do for us and restore us and teach us and show us throughout the Christian life and how he was going to lead us and guide us into all the truth.

That's what he's done for us. But it goes beyond that. Redemption is a word that goes beyond the here and now. It extends into the future. That's because the future, whilst it's unknown to us, it's known to God.

It's known because God has planned the future. The gospel is not just some emergency measure that God put into effect in order in which he hoped to save some people.

The gospel is secure. I will build my church, said Jesus, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. In other words, everything is known and planned and done and everything is secure.

[33 : 30] Not just with us, but with the generations to come and with the church and with the world. We might think that we live in a world that's out of control. There is no such thing.

God is in control of everything. Every government, every institution, every business, every society, he knows. And it's not just as if he's kind of allowing things to happen, but he's in control.

In a way in which we don't understand, he's in control. And not only that, but he is moving this world towards the fulfillment of his, but he has a plan for this world.

And here is how he describes this plan. And I want you to look at it carefully with me in this verse. According to his purpose. His purpose doesn't just end when we are converted.

His purpose goes on through the generations and will extend long after we are in the grave. His purpose will go on and will be fulfilled, which he set forth in Christ as a plan.

[34 : 32] God's plan never fails. Our plans fail sometimes, but God's plan never fails for the fullness of time. Now look at what he's saying. See if you understand this. Chapter, verse 10.

As a plan to unite all things in him. Things in heaven and things on earth.

I said this morning I was going to leave you with something to think about. The blood of Abel. Here's something else to think about for the rest of the day and I hope into the week. What does this mean?

What does this tell us of God's purpose? Not just for us. Not just for Stornoway or Stornoway Free Church. But for the whole world. I would go as far as to say the whole universe.

Not just the world. The whole universe. God has a purpose. Not just that goes beyond what we, where we are today.

[35 : 37] And I'll prove it to you. I hope I'll prove it to you as well. It includes the whole of his creation. Romans chapter 8. And it tells us this. These mysterious verses.

Verse 21. Listen to what Paul says. That the creation was subjected to futility. Now this is what happened at the fall. Genesis chapter 3. Not willingly but because of him who subjected it.

In hope that the creation itself will be set free. Listen to this. The creation itself. You want to know what the creation is? Then you go outside and you look at what's around you.

That's the creation. That the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

And not only the creation but we ourselves who are the first fruits of the spirit. Now look at this. The parallel passage in Colossians and chapter 1. It tells us exactly the same thing.

[36 : 39] He is the image of the invisible God. The firstborn and all of all creation. And he is before all things and in him all things hold together. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him.

Now listen to this. Through him to reconcile to himself. Here's God's plan again. All things. Not just souls. Not just people. But all things.

Whither on earth or in heaven. What does that mean? It means that God's plan encompasses not just people but the creation itself.

What does the all things mean? He tells us here that all things will be united in him. Now does that mean everyone who has ever lived? Does it include the angels that have fallen?

Does it include demons? Does it include Satan? Does it somehow or other that God is going to restore everything no matter what they've done and no matter what they are and how they've lived in this life?

[37 : 42] No it doesn't. Because the Bible makes absolutely clear that there is to be condemnation for the devil and his angels. There is also to be condemnation for all those who have lived and died refusing the gospel.

So very solemn thought. Very very solemn thought. What does the all things mean? It means that whilst as the world as we know it is full of tension in which Paul tells us it groans there is conflict.

There is restlessness within the creation itself there will be an end to that restlessness. It also tells us that God will bring heaven and earth together.

Things in heaven and things on earth together. What does that mean? Well I believe with a number of eminent people that I've read including Lloyd-Jones and Calvin that it means that there will be a reunification of the things in heaven and the things on earth one day.

Now you say well how can that be in a sinful world? Ah God is going to wipe away the earth in its present form. Nevertheless there will be a new earth.

[39 : 13] Revelation tells us I saw a new heaven and a new earth. And what he tells us is that literally heaven comes down to where earth is. Very often we talk about heaven as being a land far away.

I don't think it's a land far away at all and I certainly don't think it will be far away. The Bible seems to indicate that that when the resurrection happened and when sin and evil and corruption will all be wiped away the earth will be renewed and creation will be restored to the perfection with which God created it in the first place.

That means there will be a reunification between angels and human beings. There's a separation just now because of sin. We don't know the angels.

We don't know much about them apart from what we read in the Bible. Don't know what they look like. Nobody has seen an angel I don't think. And yet we know that they're there. We know that they're an intelligent created order which God has created.

We know that they're around the throne. But Revelation tells us that angels and humans are around the throne in heaven. So there's a reunification. There's a restoration between angels and men.

[40 : 33] In other words I believe that that when heaven comes when God reestablishes his new heaven and his new earth there will be a relation communication friendship between angels.

And it's hard to think of that isn't it? But that's what I believe. That's what I think that this chapter tells us. It tells us that we are quite simplistic when we think about and we must never ever think about heaven as floating around in some cloud somewhere in the sky.

That's not the picture that the Bible gives us at all. It's a far more realistic picture. It's a picture of creation. God's creation. And there will be a physicality about heaven.

It'll be a glorified physicality. Its form will be different. It'll be glorified. No longer will there be the possibility of it falling. When God created the heavens and the earth he created them perfect but there was the possibility of creation falling as it did.

But when God creates his new heaven and new earth there won't be that possibility. It'll be infallible. There's that promise that never again will there be any sin or disobedience or corruption.

[41 : 43] And yet the Bible talks about in chapter 21 verse about heaven coming down as the bride adorned for her husband.

A new heaven and a new earth. And Lloyd-Jones goes on to say he doesn't see any reason why there won't be wild life.

It won't be wild anymore. That doesn't mean that your dog or your cat will be in heaven. Animals don't have souls. And so please don't think that the Bible teaches that when our dog dies it will go to heaven.

That's not what the Bible teaches at all. And yet, why not? If God is promising, if God is promising a new heaven and a new earth, what is to stop there being?

The glorious life forms that he created in the first place in order to glorify his name. Why are we so averse to thinking that God is going to do far more and far above than we expect him to do?

[42 : 56] Our vision is so limited. I put that to you. You may not agree with me. But if you don't, then bring me your scripture. All things in heaven and on earth.

His creation. On earth. Restored. His creation in heaven. Restored. Brought together. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb.

The leopard shall lie down with the young goat. The calf and the lion and the fatted calf together. And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze.

The young shall lie down together. The lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the whole of the cobra. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain.

For the earth. The earth. Shall be filled. With the knowledge. Of the glory of God. As the waters.

[43 : 57] Cover. The sea. A perfect earth. An earth at peace. Peace with God. Peace with itself. No groaning. No more sighing.

No more hurt. Everything reconciled. Everything brought together. As it should be. Are you going to be there?

Let's pray. Father in heaven we give thanks oh Lord for the promise of your word.

We thank you for the certainty of who we are and what's been done for us in Jesus Christ. And we ask Lord that we will put our faith and our trust in your word and that we will see with the eyes of faith that this is real.

And everything that we put our trust in and rest in in this world will come to nothing and give way to your new creation. A reconciled creation restored to the right relationship in which Jesus is given his central place in a perfect world.

[45 : 17] In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.