

Redeemed with the Precious Blood

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[0 : 0 0] Let's turn for a little today to the chapter we read, 1 Peter chapter 1, and reading at verse 18.

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If you're familiar with Peter's writings, you'll know that again and again he comes back to different elements concerning our Lord and his death and his resurrection.

[1 : 5 9] Clearly it's something that is of vital importance to him and he wants to underline the importance of that as he writes to those scattered abroad because of persecution.

That is the clear understanding of the opening part of this epistle that he wants to write to those who are scattered abroad because of their love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

And in that kind of context he wants to obviously remind them of this great and important element within the Christian faith.

The fact of Jesus, the fact of his death, the fact of his resurrection and focusing in particular here upon this very important element within that whole structure, the blood of the Savior.

As I say, he takes up this idea in various places within this letter. He tells us in chapter 2 and verse 24, he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree.

[3 : 1 6] Again, the emphasis upon the work that Christ undertook to redeem a people to himself. And then, I don't want to go through all the references, but there's another very important reference for us in chapter 3 and in verse 18.

Christ also suffered once for sin, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God. So, Peter wants us to remember, and he wants these believers that he writes to, to remember the importance of Christ.

And I would think and hope that for all of you today who are at his table, that this is your great thrust and thinking. The great importance, the emphasis upon Christ who died for your sins and who rose victorious over the grave.

Because when we extract that one crucial element out of our worship, we lose the whole key point of it.

There are two great elements that, I suppose, form the Christian faith. Two in particular, Christ's death and Christ's resurrection.

[4 : 3 8] And if you wanted to add a third one, the expectation of his people that he will come again. But that third one cannot be possible without the first and the second.

By and large, we emphasize that Christ died and that Christ rose again. And we're told again and again in scripture that there is this great and important element also in this thought of Christ dying.

And that is that he shed his blood. Bible tells us, without shedding of blood, there is no remission. So we're immediately reminded of this essential element that Christ died, that Christ shed his blood to take away, to cleanse me and you from sin.

And that's interesting because he's taken in, in verse 18, that we read something of the way in which we are not. We'll just come to that in a moment. The way in which we are not redeemed or ransomed.

But he's also reminding us in another place that this is the church that is purchased by his blood. And he's not talking about a building.

[5 : 56] He's talking about the people of God. And he says, you are purchased by his blood. You are not your own. You are bought with a price.

And he's reminded too that in another setting we're told that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, what does it do?

It cleanses us from all sin. So you see the importance of this element within, as I say, the Christian structure, the Christian faith.

The importance of the emphasis upon the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Well, let's look first of all at what he says here about what he says in verse 18.

Knowing you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. Not with perishable things such as silver and gold.

[6 : 55] Perishable things that are set against the blood of Christ. And when you read these words, set them against what he says in verse 19.

Set them against the whole reality of the son of God who came into time born in a stable in Bethlehem. Born to die so that we would live eternally.

And you set that against what was held onto in the vain traditions set down in times past. Now, silver and gold obviously have value.

But they're nothing in comparison with the way that Peter views the blood of Jesus Christ. So he's drawing out from these old style thinkings something very much more precious.

And that is the blood of our Christ and Savior. Silver and gold are subject to decay. Change and decay, the writer tells us in another place.

[8 : 02] And all around we see. But there is one who changes not. He is the same yesterday and today and forever. And he's saying these patterns of the past, much as they had people steeped in them and snared in them, they would never suffice for the taking away of sin.

And that's what sets you and I hope me apart today when we come to participate in the supper. We are focusing and we have, albeit a limited understanding, we have nevertheless an understanding of what Christ has done for us.

We have that in our hearts. We have that testimony in our lives. And that sets you apart as an individual belonging to the church of Christ that he has redeemed by his own blood.

And these traditions, many of them were pagan traditions. They were alien to everything that Christ stood for. And he's saying that no matter how entrenched people were in these vain traditions, they would never suffice for the taking away of sin.

Only in and through Christ was and is that still possible. And let me just say in passing to those of you, perhaps who are, as it were, spectators here today, that is the reality of it.

[9 : 47] It is only through Christ and his shed blood that you and I can be redeemed. And that is the one that brings us to his table today.

We are recipients. We have been touched by his spirit. He has made known to us that which was unknown to us.

Or we might have known it intellectually. We might have known it in our head. Wherein lies the difference today? Simply in this, and crucially in this, not only do you have a knowledge of it at an intellectual level, but you have a knowledge of it in your heart, in your soul, in your life, and it influences and governs, or it should influence and govern and control the way you live.

Peter alludes to that also in this letter, reminding us of this great fact. He says you are redeemed, and he says you are called, he says, to holiness.

You are called to be different. You are called out to be separated. And so he's saying you cannot be redeemed by these vain traditions.

[11 : 05] Well, the next thing I want us just to think about is what he's saying here then in verse 19. He says you are ransomed. He uses the word in verse 18 or redeemed from the futile ways in verse 18.

But then he says in verse 19, you're ransomed, and you could say, reading on, you're ransomed with the precious blood of Christ. Well, what is it to be ransomed or to be redeemed?

Well, in a nutshell, it's simply to be delivered. That's the whole picture of it in its original, as it were, kind of form in natural usage.

It was a picture of a slave being set free. And it's marvelous the way that these words have taken on such a theological or a spiritual meaning.

Because what they were and their meaning in their original form is really reminding us of, in the spiritual, of what they can mean by us being redeemed.

[12 : 13] As surely as the idea of being ransomed, that the idea of a slave being set free, of Israel being set free from Egypt, it also comes before us, clearly reminding us of what is true in your life and in mine.

He's saying, you are redeemed today. You have been set free. But there's something that is very, very important within that framework, and it is this. It is being set free through the payment by someone else.

And that is why it is that Peter today wants to remind us of how important Christ is and should be and must be in our thinking.

He's saying to us, you are redeemed, you are ransomed, because someone else, I, Christ, your Savior and your friend, I have set you free, and you have freedom in Christ Jesus, your Lord, your Savior and your friend.

As I touched on a moment ago, it was true in the sense in which Israel was redeemed. The destroying angel went through the land. And what was it that set out freedom for Israel, escape from the destroying angel?

[13 : 36] It was simply and yet so profoundly important, it was the blood on the doorposts and on the lintels. You see, the blood is there constantly, reminding us of the way in which we are ransomed, reminding us of the way in which we are set free.

And when the Son sets you free, you are free indeed. So, when you look at it, you're reminded of this great ransom price, this facility, this God word, this triune facility that is afforded to us to be redeemed, to be cleansed by the precious blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

They're brought, as our catechism tells us, into an estate of salvation by our ransom or by our Redeemer.

And He alone is the only Redeemer. That's what sets it against verse 18, you see. There were many, there were very many vain traditions.

There were many futile ways inherited from the forefathers. But He says, this is the only way. And this is the only way to God.

[15 : 08] No one comes to the Father but through the Son. And so, Peter wants to emphasize, and you know, when you read through Peter's letters, letters, I have always, well, I suppose most times, I have in mind something of the background of this Galilean fisherman.

And it's as if, when you think about Him and what He was and His power and His strength and His self-assuredness, how that was completely broken.

And how, for Him, as He writes these, He's so conscious of the richness and the preciousness of that blood. He who had denied His Lord, He who had forsaken Him, He who had been so bold and so self-assured, it all goes so out of control.

And He leaves that place and He leaves His Lord. And He goes out and He weeps bitterly. And yet, there is this great sense of restoration, this great sense of being set free because the Lord asks him, do you love me?

And He says to him, Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you. And how could He say that? Because He was grasping the preciousness.

[16 : 45] And how can He write like this? Because He's grasping the preciousness of the blood of Jesus Christ. What else does He say about this blood? Well, He tells us to, He says, it is not just simply the blood of Christ.

He uses another word to describe it. He calls it precious blood. Precious blood. And there's a real sense in which we can say, no blood can compare with it.

You remember how often high priests, year upon year, went into the holy place to shed blood.

Why did He go year after year? Because, quite simply, it could never suffice for the taking away of sin.

It was pointing towards, it was symbolic, it was an indicator of what was to come in the fullness of time.

[17 : 54] So that Peter is perfectly justified in saying, here is the comparison again. The massive outpouring of blood that was taking place and the multiplicity of sacrifices that were ongoing day after day and year after year.

and the writer to the Hebrews tells us, let me say it again, they could never suffice for the taking away of sin, your sin and my sin. And so Peter, as it says, perfectly justified in coming to write to these dear Christians and their difficulties and he's saying to them, you're redeemed, you're ransomed by blood that is most precious.

it was the blood of Jesus Christ and it is that blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, that alone and exclusively cleanses from all sin.

And isn't that a marvelous thought for your perhaps sin-troubled soul today? That you are conscious of your own weaknesses, your own failings, of what you've said and done since last you sat at the Lord's table and how you have this sense of complete failure in your life perhaps today and you're saying to yourself, I'm trying to reach back and find my way back to that place that my sins so concern me and so trouble me.

You remember my friend today that it is the precious blood of Christ that has redeemed you and as surely as he has redeemed you in the outworkings of your conversion experience, he has not redeemed you to cast you off.

[19 : 54] He has redeemed you so that you will be his and his eternally. Neither his own inheritance, quit or forsake, will he.

So you've got this great comfort and use it this morning as a comfort for your soul that you are redeemed today. The price and price of your sin has been paid and it has been paid in and through the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

One writer says of this blood, it exceeded the whole world in value. It exceeded the whole world in value.

Precious because it accomplished what none other could do. What these futile inheritances, not their forefathers had, these could never suffice for the taking away of sin.

So it's a ransom, it's a precious ransom, and it's the precious blood of Christ. And I think this is just worthy of pausing for a moment to reflect upon how significant this is.

[21 : 29] Because we're talking, when we talk of Christ, we're talking of God manifest in the flesh. We're talking about God in heaven sending his son, the one who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and takes to himself the mantle of a servant, to serve in the room instead of sinners like you and me.

And how in a sense spectacular this is, that God should manifest himself in the flesh.

Remember what John says when he sees the Messiah coming. he says, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

God presents his son a sacrifice, Paul tells us in the letter to the Romans. God presents his son a sacrifice.

And I think probably in many ways, it's difficult for us to understand. that God and his son would come. And yet, that had to be the way.

[23 : 00] And in a sense, it reveals to us something of God's character that would never have been revealed had man remained in a state of innocence.

And I'm not condoning the fall, but you know, it's showing us something that is, on your excuse the word, spectacular concerning God, that he would choose his son, or that his son would voluntarily, I should say, come to die in our home and in our stead.

So Peter, again, is justified in talking with authoritative language about this Christ, and talking in a dismissive way of these futile ways that man sought to find his way to God.

It's amazing that even today, and perhaps particularly today, man is still trying by so many different avenues to find his way or her way to God.

God, and you know, there's a sense in which it is the sheer simplicity of it, and yet there's an element that is profound within it, and yet it is so simple, that man is a sinner, lost without God and without hope in the world, and yet God, who created man in a perfect environment instead of innocence in paradise, he opens up a way when paradise becomes paradise lost.

[24 : 47] He opens up a way in the very face of the fall, a way that would be fulfilled thousands of years later in the coming of his son, and that is planned from all eternity, as surely as it was planned that you would be one of his precious in his sight, and that you would sit at his table today.

You see, I think we said before, we're so limited in our understanding and our perspective of God. We are very limited, governed by what we can see and what we can experience and what we think we know.

God is, in a sense, inviting us or encouraging us to to this great journey of faith and to see by faith that the blood of Christ is precious to your soul today.

And it's a theme that once, you know, you get for yourself a concordance and run through the amount of times there's reference to the blood in relation to Christ.

It's a recurring theme. It has to be, because as we said it's a crucial element within the framework of knowing and believing by faith that your sins are forgiven.

[26 : 15] You remember how John portrays it in the Revelation? Again and again he takes us to the blood. In chapter 5 he tells us, with your own blood.

Notice what he's saying. Here was John the beloved. and it's a marvelous thing to think that here he is in exile. Exiled away from friends and fellowship.

But he is a recipient of a fellowship that is extraordinary. Because God through his spirit comes and speaks to him. And he says to us there, with your own blood you're purchased men.

And you see how John wants to emphasize the influence of this precious blood of Christ. He says you purchase men from every tribe and language and people.

You see the breadth of this ransom price. You see the breadth of this redemption. You see how precious it is and you see how vast it is and how it influences and redeems and saves and brings people out of darkness into his own marvelous light.

[27 : 36] We have then redemption through his blood. Let me just outline one or two other things and then we'll move on. Well, we have redemption through his blood, not spells of atonement, that we come to be at one with him.

That is your position today as a believer. You are at one with him. There was a time when you were not at one with him, but now you are.

And as this also, you can be absolutely sure of the sufficiency of his blood. who thy diseases all and pains doth heal and thee relieve.

Does it not bring comfort to your soul today? Ah, you say, indwelling sin still troubles.

Yes, I'm sure it does, but you know, you have to get to the sufficiency of the blood. You have to get to the completeness of the blood.

[29 : 01] You have to get to the point where you understand that the blood of Christ fulfills every requirement that God's law asked for.

And I paid the penalty in my place. condemned he stood. Comfort for your troubled soul.

Comfort in the battles of life. And they can be many. Nevertheless, you hold in and you remind yourself that this precious blood of alarm without blemish your spot washes away your sin.

Was that not your experience, perhaps, the hour you first believed? You grasped the consciousness by the Spirit of God illuminating you.

You grasped the consciousness of the reality of your sins being forgiven. Never lose sight of that reality.

[30 : 18] Hold on to it. Let it be your strength. Let it be that which fills your soul and gives you even that strength to say, if I sin, I have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

He knows our frailty. He knows our weaknesses. He knows our potential to wonder, our potential for sin, our potential for backsliding.

And so he opens up an avenue of pardon, an avenue of forgiveness. I'm not condoning sin for one moment, but I'm saying that if your sins are troubling you today, hold to what Peter is telling us here, the precious blood of Christ and the sufficiency of him and the completeness of him, a lamb without blemish or spot.

What greater encouragement can you have today than this and to come and be at his table amongst his people, sinners saved by grace, rejoicing in Christ Jesus as your Lord and your Savior and your friend.

Let's pray. may we be encouraged Lord by the wonder of that blood that cleanses and may we each one of us today, perhaps with our consciousness of our shortcomings, cling to that blood that is so precious and say Lord wash me anew and say with the psalm is creating me a clean heart, renew a right spirit within me.

[32 : 37] We know that you will not cast off. We know that although your anger might come forth against us, we know that though weeping and sorrow may come, joy also comes in the morning.

Bless your people Lord today, fill them with a consciousness of the sufficiency of the blood of Christ. In your name we pray in the pardon of sin.

Amen.