

**"Redeemed by His Blood"**  
**Ephesians 1:7-8**  
**Mililani Community Church**  
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Auschwitz was the first German concentration camp to become a place of extermination. The gas chambers were in constant use. Because of the great influx of new prisoners daily, the Germans also began to use firing squads.

One day the commandant selected 10 men from one barrak to be executed by the firing squad. One of those selected was the father of a large family. When he was pulled from his place in line, he fell to the ground, and began to beg for mercy. The Nazi official was unresponsive until the man standing next to the one on the ground, a Catholic priest named Maximillian Colbe, stepped forward to offer his life in exchange for the man on his knees.

Surprisingly, the commandant agreed to such an arrangement. But instead of being led away to the firing squad, the priest was thrown into a tiny, damp cell where he suffered the agonizing death of starvation. Today, Maximillian Colbe is honored by millions of people because he died in the place of one man.

I am deeply moved, as I'm sure you are, by the sacrificial and unselfish love THAT MEN like Maximillian Colbe demonstrate toward other human beings.

But there is an infinitely greater display of love which the Apostle Paul writes about in our text today.

It is the love of Jesus Christ for you and for me that caused him to go to the cross and shed his blood to redeem us from the bondage of sin and all its consequences.

He died not for one man or even for a few men, or even for several. Jesus came to die for the sins of the world.

As we have seen, Paul opens this letter of Ephesians with an outburst of praise to God. He starts by saying, ***"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."*** He doesn't stop to take a breath until he gets to the end of verse 14. Verses 3-14 is one long sentence in the Greek text.

Paul can't stop talking about God. He speaks of all three members of the Trinity: God the Father who planned our salvation; God the Son who accomplished our salvation on the cross; and God the Holy Spirit who applied salvation to us and sealed us for the final day of redemption.

**TRANSITION:** This morning we come to verses 7-8 where Paul states the specific action taken by Jesus Christ to make our salvation possible. He shed His blood on Calvary's cross. And so Paul writes, ***"In him we have redemption through his***

***blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God's grace, which he lavished upon us..."***

In order for us to understand and appreciate this life-transforming concept of REDEMPTION, let's begin by taking a look at....

## **I. THE MEANING OF OUR REDEMPTION (7a)**

A. The word translated "redemption" in verse 7 literally means "to be set free or released by the payment of a price."

1. During NT times there were 6 million slaves in the Roman Empire, and the buying and selling of slaves was a major business. If a person wanted to free a loved one or friend who was a slave, he would have to buy that slave for himself and then grant him his freedom. The Greek word Paul uses here for redemption was used in the 1st century to designate the purchasing of a slave out of the market place by the payment of a price.

2. According to the Bible we all come into this world enslaved to sin. By ourselves we cannot escape this slavery. But through His death, Jesus paid the redemption price to purchase us for God and set us free from the bondage and consequences of sin.

B. In verse 7 we see the PRICE of our redemption described as the BLOOD of Jesus Christ. It cost the blood of the Son of God to buy men back from the slave market of sin. The blood emphasizes the life of Christ poured out in a violent death as an offering for sin to satisfy the Justice of God. Nothing could have been more costly.

We discover the worth and the value of anything by knowing the price that was paid for it. This is a good test of a painting, or a picture, or any work of art. What is it valued at? What is the price that has to be paid before it can be possessed?

The riches of God's grace are seen in the price that was paid for our redemption. Your salvation has been bought at a tremendous price, at the price of nothing less precious than the blood of Christ, the Holy One of God.

Peter puts it this way.... ***"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect"*** (1 Peter 1:18,19).

John Milton once said that "the greatness and sacredness of man's soul is attested by 2 facts: 1st the creation of his soul in the image of the eternal God. And 2nd, by the price that was paid for the redemption of His soul,--the precious blood of Christ.

In the OT when the people of Israel sinned they had to bring an animal to the door of the tabernacle and offer it as a sacrifice. The High Priest would place his hands on the head of the animal that was to be killed as a sin offering. In so doing the sin

and guilt of the person who had brought the sin offering was symbolically transferred to that animal. The animal was then killed as a substitute for the sinner, the blood was sprinkled, and God forgave.

All those sacrifices in the OT looked forward to what God would do once and for all in Christ. In Isaiah 53:6 we read, ***"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, AND THE LORD HAS LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY (WICKEDNESS) OF US ALL."*** That's why when John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him he cried out, ***"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."***

The punishment and condemnation that we deserved because of our sin, and which we could not save ourselves from, Jesus took upon himself. He made the painful payment for what otherwise would have condemned you to death and hell. He provided for your release from guilt and sin before God.

**ILLUSTRATION:** I read a story recently that illustrates this truth. One day a man named Max Walsh left the warm environment of a mountain lodge in the Austrian Alps. The weather seemed fine at first but, as can happen in high altitudes, the weather changed suddenly and dramatically. Max found himself in a blinding snowstorm. Losing all sense of direction, he finally succumbed to the elements and collapsed.

The owner of the lodge, knowing the man had no doubt lost his way, sent his best dog to look for Walsh. Following his God-created instincts, the well-trained dog soon discovered Max, still lying where he had fallen and in a semiconscious state.

Responding to his master's orders, the dog grabbed the sleeve of Walsh's frozen jacket and began to jerk and pull. Responding, Walsh began to regain his senses, saw the dog but mistook him for a wolf. Fear gripped him! Pulling his hunting knife from his sheath, he managed to reach out and stab his would-be savior.

Badly wounded, the dog let go and limped back to the lodge, where he fell dead at his master's feet. Sensing immediately what had happened, the owner of the lodge made his way through the blizzard, carefully following the trail of blood. He found Walsh, once again in a semiconscious state, but was able to carry him back to the safety of the lodge where he survived. Walsh's life was saved because a faithful dog carried out his master's command, literally shedding his blood in the process.

Sometimes we can get emotional over the death of a dog, but we fail to really feel the impact of the death of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This is what He did for us. He laid down His life that we might have life. He found us on the slave market of sin, and he paid the ransom price to set us free.

Some people believe the main purpose for Christ's coming was to teach us that God is love and to give us an example of what we have to do to save ourselves. But Jesus didn't come to teach us how we could save ourselves, He came to **SAVE** us. In Luke 19:10 Jesus says, ***"The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that***

***which was lost.*** In order to save us He had to die. In Mark 10:45 Jesus says, ***"The Son of Man has come not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."***

**ILLUSTRATION:** I am reminded of the story of a boy named Tom who made himself a model sailboat. He was very proud of the boat he had built. One day he decided to sail his little boat on a stream near his house. He carried it to the edge of the stream, carefully placed it in the water and slowly let out the string that he had tied to the boat.

But suddenly a strong current caught the boat. Tom tried to pull it back to shore, but the string broke. The little boat raced downstream. Tom ran along the sandy shore as fast as he could. But his little boat soon slipped out of sight. All afternoon he searched for the boat. But he never found it.

Finally, when it was too dark to look any longer, Tom sadly went home. A few days later, on the way home from school, Tom spotted a boat just like his in a store window. When he got closer, he could see—sure enough—it was his!

Tom hurried to the store manager: "Sir, that's **my boat** in your window! **I made that boat!**" "Sorry, son, but someone else brought it in this morning. **If you want it, you'll have to buy it!**"

Tom ran home and counted all his money. He had the exact price! When he reached the store, he rushed to the counter. "Here's the money for my boat."

As he left the store, Tom held his precious boat in his hands and said, "**Now you're twice mine. I made you and now I have bought you.**"

That's what Jesus has done for us. He made us. Then he bought us.

*What are the results of our redemption?*

## **II. THE RESULTS OF OUR REDEMPTION (7b-8)**

A. Here we see that **the primary result of redemption is the forgiveness of our sins.** ***"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins"***

The word forgive literally means "to carry away."

There is a wonderful illustration of forgiveness in the ritual that took place on Israel's greatest holy day, YOM KIPPUR, the Day of Atonement.

On that day the High Priest selected two unblemished goats. **One of the goats was killed** and its blood was taken into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled before God on the Mercy Seat. Then the High Priest placed his hands on the head of the other goat, symbolically laying the sins of the people on the animal. That goat, called the

SCAPEGOAT, was then taken out into the wilderness so far that it could never find its way back. Symbolically the sins of the people went with the goat, never to return to them again (Leviticus 16).

**Application:** This ritual, as beautiful and meaningful as it was, did not actually remove the people's sins, as they well knew. It was only a **picture** of what God himself would do through the death of Christ. Through the shedding of His own blood, Jesus Christ **actually took our sins upon himself** and carried them an infinite distance away where they could never return. Psalm 103:12 says "He has removed our sins as far as the east is from the west." Micah 7:19--He has "cast them into the depths of the sea." Isaiah 44:22--He has "blotted them out." The forgiveness of God is complete because it completely removes your sin. Jeremiah 31:34 says "He will remember them no more."

Notice finally...

B. The **extent of God's forgiveness** (7c-8)

The gift of forgiveness is given ***"...ACCORDING to the riches of His grace, which He LAVISHED upon us."***

God does not forgive us "OUT OF" His riches but "ACCORDING TO" His riches. There is a big difference.

If you were to approach a billionaire like Bill Gates and ask him to contribute to a worthy ministry, and he gave you a check for \$50 dollars, he would only be giving **"OUT OF"** his riches.

But just think what it would be like **to receive not simply out of Bill Gate's riches but according to his riches**. Instead of \$50 he might give you a magnificent home, complete with furniture, and manicured lawns. Sitting in the driveway might be a Rolls Royce. In your new bank account there might be \$500,000 available for you to spend.

When God gives forgiveness, He does not dig down into a little pocket and dig out a little and say, "there's a little forgiveness, now make sure it lasts"...instead we see in these last words of our text that His grace and forgiveness is **"LAVISHED UPON US."**

What does **"lavished"** mean? Well, when you lavish something upon someone you **heap it on more and more**. Lavished means repeated portions, **again and again**. When God redeems you and forgives you he doesn't give you a tiny bit of forgiveness. **He pours it on**. He gives you a new identity as his beloved child in whom he is well-pleased. Because God forgives you and totally accepts you, you can accept yourself. You are free! There is a wonderful song that describes this. It is on the back of the announcements.

If you are His child you never need to worry that your sin will ever outstrip God's super-abounding grace. Do you ever feel that God has run out of forgiveness or

patience with you? That your sin is too great or your progress too slow? I want you to know that you cannot sin beyond God's grace because he has completely and totally cancelled your sin. I John 1:7-- ***"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son keeps on cleansing us from all sin."***

**ILLUSTRATION:** Donald Grey Barnhouse the former pastor of the historic 10th Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia once preached a sermon on the extent of God's forgiveness.

Throughout the sermon he noticed a 12 year old boy leaning forward and listening intently. When he came to the end of his sermon He summed it up by putting it all into one sentence. He said, "Our sins are forgiven, forgotten, cleansed, pardoned, atoned for, remitted and covered. They have been cast into the depths of the sea--blotted out as with a thick cloud, removed as far as the East is from the West--remembered against us no more and forever cast behind God's back!"

After the sermon the little boy came up to him and said, "Great sermon Doc, we're sittin' might pretty aren't we!" That boy had understood. The forgiveness God gives is complete--it completely restores us to God for all time and eternity.

### **III. APPLICATION OF THIS TRUTH TO OUR LIVES**

When we really understand the love of Christ in providing redemption and forgiveness, it cannot help but impact our lives.

A very unusual story unfolded many years ago over a lengthy period of time. The story began in an artist's studio in the city of Dusseldorf, Germany.

One day an old priest climbed the stairs in a quaint old building and knocked on an artist's door. He came to ask the artist if he would paint an altar piece for the Church of St. Jerome. The artist, whose name was Stenburg, thought about it and finally decided to do it. Little by little a picture of Christ dying for the sins of the world emerged on his canvas.

As the months rolled by, Stenburg began to be restless. Spring had come and the hills were filled with flowers. He decided to lay his brushes aside for awhile. He took his sketchbook and began roaming the hills and valleys.

One day on the edge of the forest he came upon a young gypsy girl. She was sitting in the grass weaving daisy chains. Her beauty captured his heart. He convinced her to come to his studio where he could paint her as a little Spanish dancing girl.

The first day she arrived in the studio she noticed the emerging altarpiece he was painting for the priest. Her mind immediately flooded with questions:

Who is that?

The Christ, he responded rather nonchalantly

What are they doing to him?  
Crucifying Him, Stenborg replied with disinterest.

But who are those people? Those people with all the ugly faces?

Her interest was growing and Stenborg was irritated. He told her to stop asking so many questions and pose for him. And she did.

But her interest could not be stifled. One day she ventured another question.

Why did they do that to him? Was he very bad?

No, the old artist responded sharply. He was actually very good!

He realized that he had to answer the little girl's questions once and for all. So he laid down his brushes and told the story of Christ's crucifixion, warning her at the end of the story not to ask any more questions.

Finally the day arrived when Stenborg had completed his painting of the little gypsy girl. In that final moment before leaving, she took one, long hard look at the picture of Christ. She hardly noticed the coins Stenborg put in her hand for the final payment.

As she turned to leave, she looked up into the artist's eyes and said, "**You must love him more than anything else in this world since He has done all that for you.**" And then she disappeared out the door and down the stairs.

Stenborg was started! Love Him? he asked himself. I don't love Him!

The girl's final words became an obsession in Stenborg's mind. He couldn't forget them.

Every morning when he walked into his studio and saw the picture of Christ, the words surfaced in his mind: "**You must love Him more than anything else in this world since He has done all that for you.**"

He was relieved when the picture was finally completed and it was taken and placed in the Church of St. Jerome. He thought its absence would solve his problem. But it didn't. He found no rest for his heart and soul.

Finally, after days of unrest, he discovered there were some special religious meetings that were being held in a home on the outskirts of Dusseldorf. He thought, "Perhaps I can find my answers there." He made his way to the home where once again he heard the story of the death of Christ.

This time it took on new meaning. He saw that Christ had died for him. He put his faith in Christ for salvation and became a Christian. It was then he was captured

with a new desire. He wanted to do something for his Lord. He now truly loved Jesus Christ.

Stenburg thought long and hard about what he might do to express his love for his Savior. Then one day after asking God for direction, the thought flashed through his mind: "I cannot express the love of God by the use of words, but with His help I can paint it."

The face of Christ on the cross which he had painted for the church was full of agony and pain. But the picture he would now paint would be full of love. The picture slowly emerged. It was beautiful and inspiring. The eyes of Christ held the beholder spellbound. They were full of tender, eternal love.

When the picture was completed, he would not sell it. Rather, he gave it to the city of Dusseldorf and there it was hung in the art gallery. Under the painting he placed the words: "All this I did for YOU; what have you done for ME?"

Thousands came and stood in front of the picture. As they looked, tears filled their eyes. Often he would go to the gallery and from some quiet corner watch the people who stood before it. As he watched he prayed that God would speak to them through the picture.

One day a young woman came into the gallery. She stood before the picture and the artist could see that she was crying. She remained so long that at last he went to speak to her. As she turned to face him, he recognized the little gypsy girl, now a young woman--who had posed for him several years before. "I often come to look at Him," she explained apologetically. With quivering lips she said: "I wish He had loved me like that, but I'm only a gypsy."

Immediately Stenburg asked her forgiveness. He apologized for not having told the story accurately when she first asked her questions in the studio. With the girl's astonished eyes upon him, he told the story once again. But this time he explained the true meaning of the cross. And there in the art gallery, the gypsy girl gave her heart to the Saviour.

The years rolled by and each year added to stories that were told of those who found God through Stenburg's painted sermon.

One day a nobleman entered the gallery and stood weeping before the picture. He was a Christian, but up to this time his life had not counted much for God. The painting with the words beneath sank into his heart. "All this I did for thee; what hast thou done for me?"

That day the nobleman laid his life and his fortune at the feet of the Son of God. **His name was Count Zinzendorf and later he became the founder of the Moravian missions.**

The painting no longer exists. It was burned when the Düsseldorf art gallery was destroyed by fire.

But the influence of the painting will live on and on, just as Paul's words will be repeated throughout eternity: ***"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."*** (Eph 1:7).

With ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels we will sing the song Revelation 5:12, ***"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"***

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion I want to ask you to consider some questions:

1. Have you responded to Christ's provision and accepted His free gift of eternal life? Remember this gift is available to all. Romans 10:13 says, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
2. Have you forgiven others who have sinned against you? This is a very practical application for every Christian. Christ is not only our Saviour from sin, but our example in the area of human forgiveness. Listen to the words of Paul: ***"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievance you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity"*** (Colossians 3:13-14).
3. How has Christ's love for you affected your service for God? Again listen to the words of Paul: ***"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--which is your spiritual worship"*** (Romans 12:1).

## PRAYER

Our Gracious and forgiving God, words cannot express our thankfulness for the redemption that you have given us in Jesus Christ. Cause us to hear your voice speaking to each of us today saying, "All this I did for you; what have you done for me?"

May our renewed awareness of your redemptive love motivate us to respond to you in humility and in the development of Christian character, in acts of service and most of all in worship and praise. For we ask this in the name of our Redeemer and Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.