

Romans 3:24

Our Redemption in Christ

Romans 3:24, “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

Introduction

“This morning I'd like us to open our Bibles to Romans chapter 3, verse 24. We're going backward, I know, in the book of Romans, but I just see these gems here in Romans 3, and I feel it would be like walking through a stream-bed, and there you see a diamond, and you'd see a big gold nugget, and you'd see a sapphire-and 'Oh, we're in a hurry, we got to go, we got.' No, I would stop and pick them up, wouldn't you? And so spiritually there are these gems here, and so much of what we're learning here is so fundamental to Christian life. It's not like extraneous material, this is basics of the faith. Last week we looked at what it meant, of what propitiation meant. It means the Mercy Seat, we found out what that meant. And this week I want to look at our redemption in Christ. That's our topic today, our redemption in Christ. And we're going to look at **Romans chapter 3, verse 24, “Being justified”-as a gift, or-“freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.”** We need to understand what it means to be redeemed. We need to understand right doctrine. Doctrine is not boring, doctrine is the stuff that Christian life and even Christian excitement is made out of. And I've told you before, and we saw an example in the letter I read earlier in the service, that wrong doctrine can lead to wrong living. And wrong doctrine can really mess up your life, can't it? And so it's important to take the time to study sound doctrine.

I want us to look at our redemption in Christ. It says that we have been redeemed through his blood. **Ephesians 1:17** says, **“In him we have redemption through his blood.”** Paul in **Colossians 1:13-14** says, **“For he delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption.”** Well, what does redemption mean? We're not living in the days of S&H Green Stamps anymore, so nobody

knows what redemption means. But do you remember Mom collecting S&H Green Stamps at the grocery store? We used to go to Pigley Wigly's with Mom, that was the name of the grocery store--Pigley Wigly's---they would give us green stamps for the purchases that we made. And Mom would throw 'em in a drawer, she'd get this big drawer full, and it was our job as kids in the family to lick those stamps, put them in the book the way you're supposed to, and then we would go with Mom to **the redemption center**. I mean, everybody knew how you took S&H Green Stamps books, and you'd take them into the redemption center. And what would you do? You would "buy" something out of that store. The word "redemption" means "to buy". The Lord has bought us. It means to "buy back", "deliver you from something", "to set you free." And so I'll never forget we went with Mom one time to the S&H Green Stamp store, it had been a long time since we visited the redemption center. And so we could get whatever we wanted, just about, in the store. And we all found this lamp. The whole family decided this lamp was what we need. And we **redeemed** that lamp out of that store, and set it free from the shelf it was on, and we took it home!--delivering it from that bondage [laughter]. And you know to this day my Mom still has that lamp, it's that cranberry lamp that she has at home and it's sort of neat to think of redemption in those terms.

What Does Redemption In Christ Do For Us?

What does our redemption in Christ do for us? Now I want to talk about it today, and spend some time this morning looking at redemption. For many of you it's going to be a nice reminder, just enjoy, and may you know a little better what you have in Christ. For some of you though who don't know Jesus in a personal way, and you are interested, that's why you're here--or you were dragged here, or you were paid to be here, I don't know--but maybe you still will get something out of this. And by the time the message is finished, you may desire what I'm saying we have in Christ. And you can have it by asking Jesus Christ into your life. And so you listen, follow with me. Even if you say, 'Awe, I'm not a Christian', even if you're close to interested, then listen because Jesus has some awesome things for you.

Our Adoption: He Bought Us Once For Himself Forever, He Completely Paid The Price

1. Our Adoption: What does redemption in Christ do for us? First of all, **redemption in Christ, delivers us from insecurity.** Because we have been redeemed, we are happy, secure people. I have a song I love to sing, the hymn says, *“since I have been redeemed. Since I have been redeemed I will glory in my Savior's love.”* We are secure in Christ. Because we are redeemed we can be sure that we are saved. Oh, but somebody says, *‘What if I lose my redemption?’* Well if you've really been redeemed you can't lose redemption. Now hang on with me. I know we're coming at this from a whole lot of different backgrounds, a whole lot of different angles. Maybe you've been taught the doctrine of eternal insecurity, you know, where you can never be sure whether or not you're going to heaven -- you never know where you stand with God. You know, one day he loves you, the next day he doesn't. And it's all based on your behavior, isn't it? -- all based on your performance. And as long as you're towing the line and doing right, then God loves you. But when you don't, he doesn't love you so much. [As you recall from the previous sermon, that is just the way it was with the ancient Israelites, before the sprinkled blood of Jesus, Yeshua, covered the Ark. Isn't it interesting what the blood does for us.] Well, I call that the doctrine of eternal insecurity. But I believe the Bible for truly born-again people, people that have been really transformed by Christ and are new creatures, the Bible teaches us that we are secure in Christ. And one of the reasons why I believe this is because of the doctrine of redemption. Jesus when he redeemed us, purchased not just a temporary redemption for us, but the Bible says he purchased **an eternal redemption** for us. Look, would you, at Hebrews chapter 9, Hebrews 9. Go to the right where we are in the Bible, Hebrews 9 and verse 12. I'm going to read it first time through in the New International Version because I want you to know that I am still the pastor of those people with that translation, I love them too, so, **Hebrews 9, verse 12. “And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood he entered the Holy Place once for all, having obtained”** - - what? - **“eternal redemption.”** The King James Version puts it so beautifully and poetically. Let me read it to you out of the **King James Version, “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”** The Bible is teaching us, gang, that Jesus did not just put a down-payment on our

redemption. You know how that works? He put down the big money up front, but now once you've moved in, the redemption, once you're saved, now it's up to you to keep up those monthly payments, right? He mails you a coupon book once a year--oh no, those are the tithe envelopes--anyway, ah, every month you send in your payment on your eternal life. That's the kind of relationship I know some of you are having with the Lord. That's not what eternal redemption is. Others think that maybe he purchased a "*term-redemption plan.*" He's paid for coverage for maybe five or ten years for you, but then after that, he pays less and less, and you have to pay more and more and more, until finally it's all up to you again. The Bible doesn't teach that, **the Bible teaches he bought us once for himself forever. He completely paid the price.** [Any doubts about that, go see "The Passion of the Christ".] Jesus paid it all. "*All to him I owe, sin have left its crimson stain, but he washed me white as snow.*" God has obviously accepted the price that was paid for us. The receipt and proof of payment is an empty tomb, he obviously has accepted Christ's payment because he took Christ up to heaven and has seated him at his right hand. What Christ paid for us is enough. We are saved, and it is an ***eternal redemption.***

God Gives New Wants, He Writes His Laws In Our Hearts & Minds

Now people have trouble with this. They say, '*But, but, Mark, but Mark.*' Would you just get your butt out of it, excuse me but I mean that. That's our problem, you hear the grace of God, but you raise your but's, you know--but, but, but, but, but what about this? --will you knock it off?! Will you listen? God has saved you by grace, and nothing but by his grace. There was nothing in you, the day you were saved, that God thought, '*Oh man, this is a real bargain, this is really gonna make heaven look good.*' '*I need this person in heaven. Boy, how could I ever think.*' There was nothing in you, there was nothing to recommend you to God, maybe except your own need. And he saved you by grace alone, you didn't deserve it. Now you were saved by grace alone. You are **not** kept by works. The same grace that saved you in the beginning saves you all the way through your Christian life. '*But?*' Shut up, keep your butts to yourself for a minute. '*But what about holy living?*' I know, you couldn't be quiet about it, could you? Holy living never is going to save anyone--did you know that? '*Yeah, but if you tell people they're*

saved by grace alone and they're kept by God's grace, why they're going to go out and they're going to live like a bunch of pagan's!' That is always the proof. If somebody raises that question, if somebody complains that's what you're saying, then maybe finally you've really preached the grace of God. You have got to get people to complaining about that before you've really preached the great grace of God. And let 'em complain about it, because it's obvious they're not spiritual people. People say, *'Well, if that's true, then I can go out and live any way I want!'* I can even say yes to that, yes you can, you can go out and live any way you want. The awesome thing is, you see, when you're saved by Christ, he gives you **new** wants. He gives you **new** desires. He gives you **new** goals. He changes you from the inside out, and you've got new desires, you've got new loves, you've got new wants. ***And so if you want to say you can live any way you want, yeah, he gives you new wants.*** You are not kept saved by what you do. If you are, then it's salvation by works, basically. Because it only takes a minute to get saved, it takes a life to keep saved, right? But come on, think gang, if it's grace, it's got to be grace plus nothing. You say, *'Faith, Mark, faith.'* ***"For by grace are you saved through faith, and that faith not of yourself."*** Even the faith is the gift of God. ***"not of works, lest any man should boast."*** So don't brag about your faith. Your faith is there because God said I'll give you faith to be able to accept my grace. So when you get to heaven, you're not going to be able brag about your faith. The only thing we're bragging about in heaven is ***"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain."*** The only thing we're bragging about in heaven is "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain." That's what we brag about.

We Need, For Our Growth, To Know We Are Secure In Christ

You know, modern sociologists and psychologists tell us today, and I think it's true, that children in a family grow best where they're secure. You know, if they never know if mom or dad are gonna leave, or come back, or if they never know if one day mom hates them and the next day mom loves them, it's very confusing to a child. Isn't it? And they don't grow well, they don't mature well, they don't develop well in an insecure environment, do they? And neither do God's kids. We don't grow well in insecurity. We need to **know** that we are loved and hanged onto, and held onto, and he'll never let go of

us. *'Oh, but I could let go of him!'* I don't know why you have to think of these things, it's like, do you want to be lost? Are you looking for a way out? I'm not, man, I've stepped in the ark and I want God to shut the door behind me, you know, just lock me in here Lord. I'm really not that great a swimmer. I don't want to go through the flood. That's an interesting analogy, too, when Noah stepped into the ark, God shut the door and there was no way out. There was only one way out, and that was up, and he couldn't reach it. There was one window in the ark, and that was way up. And anyway, I look at it this way, and I told you this analogy before, it's so real to me as a daddy. I have two girls, one is three and a half and the other is seventeen months [that was about 8 years ago when this sermon was preached!]. And they're just joys and bundles of energy and all of that. And we go for a walk sometimes, and we have this rule in the parking lot, hold our hands, and sometimes I've got both of them in my hands. And I'm holding their little hands, and there are times when I can feel little Ellie wanting to bolt. She's a runner, you know, she just loves to go, go, go-she's a tractor, she's a tank, she's white tornado, she's you know, all of that combined. She just wants to go, and there are times when she wants to let go of my hand, and she has let go. Now I don't say, *'Oh, oh, you have free moral agency, you let go of me, so I will let go of you.'* Free moral agency! And we're walking down some busy road, free moral agency! *'They let go, officer.'* *'Why was your child run over, why's your kid a pancake on the road?'* *'Well, free moral agency, officer, she let go of my hand.'* *'A seventeen-month-old let go of your hand?'* *'Yeah, and so I let go of her.'* *'You're going to jail, buddy, and I hope they slam the door and throw away the key!'* That's what they'd say, and they'd be justified, wouldn't they? What a stupid idiot I'd be if I let go of her, because she in her immaturity let go of me! I know that she doesn't know what she is doing, and so I hang onto her. And then she kicks, and you know how the kids do, they let go, and their legs buckle under them-whump! [laughter] Emily actually dislocated her elbow once doing that. I went to the doctor, and said *"What's the matter? This kid hasn't bent her elbow for 12 hours?"* And the doctor says, *"Oh"* he laughed, and says, *"it happens all the time, it happens to my kids."* And I told him what she did, and he said, *"She's dislocated her elbow, here-pop."* He put it right back in and I said, *'Well, I could have done that.'* But I just didn't let go. And you may get something dislocated doing that to the Lord, and cause pain to yourself doing that to the Lord, **but Jesus is never going to let go of his kids! You are too precious to him. The price paid for you is too expensive. [If you don't think so, go out and see the Mel Gibson movie "The Passion of the Christ", rent it, watch it.]** It's too expensive to say, *'Well, just free moral agency.'* You have free

moral agency for the moment [if you haven't accepted Christ, are not a born-again believer], but you're presented with that opportunity to choose Christ, and you'd better use your free moral agency then. Because after that, the Lord grips your life, and he's not going to let go of you, you don't have a choice out there, once you accept Jesus into your life. And I know of people who disagree, that's OK. If you want to live in the doctrine of eternal insecurity, go ahead. You won't grow in Christ. For all the talk of holiness and worry about people living loose lives, you know where I see the most corruption? In churches that teach that you can't be secure in Christ. I see more corruption in those churches than in any others, because they are the people who throw in the towel. They know they can't be perfect, they know they're not good enough. They know that they can't keep up on these salvation payments. They get so behind that finally they quit making the payments. You know the feeling. They go bankrupt spiritually. Why don't you let God keep you, and hold you, and love you? You say, *'Man, you're sort of hepped up on this, buddy.'* Yeah, I guess I am, because I lived so many years in insecurity. And now I know, he's never going to let go of me, he's stuck with me forever.

Jesus Has Purchased Our Adoption, Total Security In His Family

Another reason why I believe this, is because **redemption is purchased adoption for us**. Look at **Galatians chapter 4**. We'll begin with **verse 4**, **"But when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order that he might redeem those who are under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."** Now Paul shows a term here, and I'll tell you, if he didn't mean what I'm about to tell you, then he really messed up here. He chose a Roman legal term, "adoption" was a Roman word, and everyone reading it in Galatia would understand what Roman adoption meant. When you adopted a child as a Roman, that adopted child had more rights given to him than your natural born children ever had. In other words, you could **never** disinherit, you could never kick out of the family an adopted child. Now you could disinherit a naturally born child. You could. And according to Roman law, your own children according to natural birth you could disinherit, you could kick them out of the family. But if you went through the ceremony and finalized the adoption for somebody, you placed them in your family, and they

could never be taken out legally. Now why did he use the term "adoption" for us if he didn't want us to understand that we have a secure position in his family. I believe that's what the Bible is teaching us. **We as adopted children are absolutely secure, and we'll never be disinherited.** Now I'm talking about real believers, too, by the way. I'm not talking about people who, you know, raise their hand, who walk down an aisle, who've been confirmed, who've been baptized [although baptism was the early form of accepting the Lord into your life in the early church, read the book of Acts--so some groups who use baptism in this manner as a way of accepting Jesus and asking Jesus into their lives, God honors this and places his Holy Spirit in such people who are a part of these churches--I know, I am one of those people.], been a church member, you could have all those things happen to you and not be saved. I'm talking about someone who has really accepted Jesus into their life, you have a living personal relationship with him, you've been born-again, you have a new life in Christ. If that's **you**, and you can look at your life, and you can say 'Hey, there's been a change in my life, the change hasn't saved me, but it's there. It's proof, I know the Holy Spirit, he's in my life.' If those witnesses are there, there's proof, there's a change of life, then God's speaking to you. God's telling you, **you're secure.** And you're going to grow better in security than you ever would in insecurity.

Christ Took Upon Himself The Curse, Penalty Of The Law In Our Stead

2. We're Redeemed From the Curse of the Law: The second thing that redemption in Christ does is redemption in Christ delivers us from the curse of the law. Look at **Galatians 3, chapter 3, verse 13.** **“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, for it is written cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.”** Now if we really had enough time would could go through the whole chapter of Deuteronomy 28, and we could see the curses of the law. Well, let's really quickly turn back to Deuteronomy 28. And let's survey the curses that are pronounced upon those who are disobedient to the law [of God]. This is the curse that Christ became for us. And we'll just survey them. There are blessings and curses given here in **Deuteronomy 28**, 14 blessings, and 54 curses. So a little heavy on the cursing, isn't it. But it says beginning in **verse 16**, **“Cursed if you break the law, cursed shall**

you be in the city, cursed shall you be in the country. Curse shall be the offspring of your body.” Verse 19, “Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed when you go out.” “The Lord will send upon you” verse 20 “curses, confusion and rebuke in all you undertake to do.” Verse 21, “The pestilence will cling to you.” Verse 22, “The Lord will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat, and with the sword and with blight and mildew, and you'll perish.” Verse 23, “The heavens which is above your head shall become bronze [no rain], and the earth which is under you iron [as a result of the no-rain condition-dust bowl conditions].” Verse 28, “The Lord will smite you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment apart.” Verse 29, “You shall grope at noon.” It just goes on and on. Verse 37, “You shall become a horror, a proverb and a taunt among all the people.”

So what I want you to get out of this, is this is what Christ became for you. Read the accounts of his death and his crucifixion, read those accounts [or go see or rent and see Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ"]. And these curses were coming upon him. Why did he cry out **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”**? Well it's because of verse 23, the curse came upon him, the heavens above was like bronze, like he couldn't get through to God. He was cut-off, because he was reckoned to be you, and reckoned to be me. And our sins cut him off from God. He was hot, as verse 22 said, he thirsted, he was bewildered, he was confused. People were wagging their tongues at him, making fun of him. Have you ever wondered why that was recorded in the gospel accounts? It's because that was part of the curse, verse 37 talks about. He was cursed in the city, he was cursed as he was coming out of the city, the sword it says you'd receive, he was pierced wasn't he [by a Roman spear]? All these curses for breaking the Law came upon Jesus. And in fact, even the curse given to man in the Garden of Eden after man sinned were placed upon Christ. God said to Adam, ***‘Adam, because you've sinned, cursed is the ground for your sake, and now you're going to have to sweat to earn your bread, and thorns are going to grow up, and it's going to be easier to grow weeds than it is to grow food.’*** And boy isn't that true. The curse, sweat, the thorns, the thistles--what was he crowned with on the cross, gang? By coincidence, was thorns? No, the Bible's telling us, ***‘Hey, guys, the curse is on him.’*** Why did he sweat drops of blood in the garden? Oh, I wonder why? It's because the curse was ***‘You're gonna sweat!’*** And he sweat as it were, great drops of blood, we're told. He became a curse for us. **God made him to be sin for us in order that we might become the righteousness of God in him. This is the gospel.** He took our place. Going back to Galatians 3 then, you see the verse, what it means. You don't have to have

Deuteronomy 28 happen to you. It sounds like hell as you read Deuteronomy 28. That's because Jesus (Yeshua) took hell's punishment for you. **Verse 13** says Christ redeemed us. **'He delivered us from, rescued us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is everyone who hangs upon a tree.'**

Christ Has Set Us Free From Slavery To Sin

3. Redemption, thirdly, in Christ, sets us free from slavery to sin: Look at **verse 14 of Galatians 3**, **"In order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."** Man, we have, because we've been redeemed, a power now to set us free from slavery to sin. We now have God's Holy Spirit indwelling us when we believe. You know, in the Old Testament, only a **very** few, just a handful of men and women ever had the Holy Spirit in them. But in the new covenant, **every** man and woman and boy and girl who believes in Jesus has the Holy Spirit come into him (or her). And not only that, the Holy Spirit in him seals him, secures him, **Ephesians 1:13 and 14** says, **"unto the day of redemption."** Not only that, Jesus says **"not only will I send the Holy Spirit into you, but I want to send him upon you."** He told his disciples who already were saved and had the Holy Spirit in them, in **Acts 1:8**, he said to them, **'Hey guys, hang around here and pray and wait, because you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.'** He couldn't be talking about the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, because the minute you believe, the Holy Spirit **seals** you to Christ. He's indwelling you the moment you believe. No Christian can say *'I don't have the Holy Spirit.'* Charismatic's are really off the wall when they come to you saying, *'Did you get the Holy Spirit yet?'* Well, if you're a Christian you've got the Holy Spirit, He's in you. **"No man can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit"**, right? So they're wrong in that approach. The Bible teaches us, though, that besides the Holy Spirit coming into us, baptizing us into Christ, Jesus wants us to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Not just into Christ by the Holy Spirit, he wants us to take the Holy Spirit and pour him on us. Not only on the inside, but pour him on the outside of us, so that we can be like Samson in the Old Testament. Remember Samson, the mighty, powerful things he did for God? That happened every time the Holy Spirit came upon him. It says

the Holy Spirit came upon him and he'd slay thousands of people, or he'd pull the city gate off the hinges and carry it three miles away, he'd deliver people, I mean, awesome power happened when the Holy Spirit came upon him. You know, the biggest thing that Christians lack? -- is power. We need power, power to keep our mouths shut, power to say things when we should, power to say "No!" to temptation, power to say "No!" to drugs, "No!" to alcohol, power to say "Yes!" to the things God wants in my life. I need power from God. Thank God Jesus said **"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you."** Note, he didn't say, *'You shall speak in tongues when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.'* That is a gross misconception. It scares people away from asking God for power. He says you shall receive power when the Spirit comes upon you. Do we believe in tongues? Yes. But it's not the evidence of power. I know a lot of carnal tongue-speaking Christians. It doesn't mean you're spiritual. It's my theory that it's those of us that are probably the weakest who receive that gift from God, because it says **'He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself.'** So those of us who really need help God gives that gift to, because he knows we need to be super-edified. But we have tapes on speaking in tongues if you're interested in how to speak in--no I'm just kidding! But we do have tapes on the gift of tongues--what is it? -- we also have tapes on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, what is it? Don't be afraid -- *'I'm afraid to ask for this, I've heard of weird things happening to people when they've prayed for the Holy Spirit to come upon them, I mean, you know.'* Well, wait a minute, Jesus already headed you off at the pass here. In **Luke 11** Jesus said, **"Which one of you guys"** he says, **"if your child came to you and asked for a piece of bread, would you give him a rock?" "No." "And which of you if your child asked for a piece of fish would you give him a scorpion?" "No."** Which reminds me of something that happened last week. Man, I came home, I had just come home from work, and I came into the garage door, and the girls are all there, and Leslie says to them *"Daddy's coming now, act all excited, and go hug him and kiss him!"* I don't know if she does that or if this is for real stuff, but those little girls *"DAAADDYY!!!"* and then come and hug my leg you know, and I can't move. And Ellie came, and Ellie is always a little behind Emily, you know, just a little bit behind. She's 17 months old. And here she comes, *"DAA-DAA"* and she pulls something out of her mouth. And she hands it to me! *"DAAADAA!"* And I thought, *'Oh, what do you have for me, precious?'* And here was an empty caterpillar skin.[laughter]-SHE HAD TAKEN A CATEPILAR AND SUCKED THE INSIDE OUT! [laughter]. I thought, 'I can't believe this!' And I stretch it out, this is a caterpillar, this long! And she sucked out the whole inside, you know. And I said, *'Open your*

mouth! Open your mouth! It's gone! She sort of looked at me like, "Oohm, oohm." And I say "Leslie, she's eaten a caterpillar! Dial 911!" So we dial 911, 911 comes on – "Our daughter has just sucked the insides out of a caterpillar!" And 911 said "GROSS!" and the lady said, "Gross, that's gross!" We said, "We know it's gross. Is she gonna die?" And she said, "Well, wait a minute." And you could tell the lady was taken back. And she says, "Let me call you back!" and she hung up on us. But she had to regain her composure. So she calls back and she says, "I've looked it up" and she says, "there are no poisonous caterpillars in Arizona, but that is **really gross**," she said. But I mean, you don't have to be afraid of the Father giving you a caterpillar, or Satan sneaking one in on you. You know, I was taught man, 'If you pray for the Holy Spirit,' they said, "That's when the demons come, and they sneak in and they'll give you some **experience**." Well, what's wrong with an experience, if it's from God? And Jesus is saying right there, he said, '**Look, the devil can't sneak one in on you.**' And he can't give you a caterpillar when you asked for a piece of fish. He's not gonna give you a rock when you've asked God for bread. And he said, "**If you then**" **Luke 11:13 "know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"** We need power. The church is weak. The people of God are fainting. They're falling. And we need power like we've never needed it before. And because of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, we have the power we need. Yet so many of us **have not**, because **we ask not**.

Redemption In Christ Sets Us Free From A Life Of Emptiness

4. Fourthly, redemption in Christ sets us free from a life of emptiness: Look at 1 Peter 1:18. 1 Peter 1:18 [a very good practice, which Pastor J. Mark Martin has in sermon giving, is to **always** name the Scripture about to be read ***twice*** so people will get it down, especially if they're taking notes.] you go to the right from where you are. **1 Peter 1:18, "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."** We were redeemed from what?--an empty way of life. The New American translates it, "**your futile way of life.**" I'll tell you, people today feel empty--very rich people, people who live on mountains

and have many cars and have all the toys, and they're empty on the inside. People who are very poor, who know, if they could just get those things that the people on the mountain have, they would feel satisfied, and you know what? They're empty. People who live in the valley between the two, they're empty. Because there is a God-shaped space in your life, and until you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, you are empty. Life is futile, what's there to live for? If this is all there is, this sure isn't very neat. You just get older and start losing your hairs. I was talking to brother Manning awhile back about losing his hairs, and I said, "*Brother, you used to have wavy hair, now all you've got is beach, you know, the waves are gone.*" [laughter] But, ah, he can take it. But you live your life, and life's so short, you can miss out on so much. What is there to life? And then you are redeemed, and when you are redeemed, I tell you, I've got so much to live for now. In Jesus Christ, I have so much to live for. My frustration, the thing that gets me down sometime, is there's so much that's so important now in Christ, that I can't get to it all. I can't do it all, I don't feel like I'm living to my potential in Christ. Whereas before Christ [came into his life] it was like, '*What am I going to do?*' -- life is so dead.' When you come to Christ, you're going to find the emptiness filled with him, with his truth. We've been redeemed from the futility and emptiness of life and finally.

Redemption In Christ Sets Us Free To Live Our Lives With Glory

5. The fifth thing, redemption in Christ sets us free to live our lives with glory [and redeemed from a sinful way of life]: Look at Titus, you go to the left now, in Titus chapter 2, verses 13 and 14. **Titus 2:13-14**, says, "**That we are looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.**" By the way, I don't know what groups that don't believe Jesus is God do with that verse, do you? He is our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. So Jesus is God. **Verse 14, "who redeemed us for himself" -- why? -- "that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good deeds."** See, we'll get to the good deeds, but you got to be redeemed first. Don't put the good deeds before the redemption. You won't get saved that way. Good deeds flow out of redemption, good deeds follow redemption, good deeds are the *evidence* of redemption, the result of redemption, the

bi-product of redemption--but they're not the cause. Nothing you ever do will cause you to be saved. The doing has already been done!--by Jesus Christ at the cross. ***Now, since I'm saved, I want to serve him. I want to serve him because I love him. I want to serve him because I don't have to be here, but I want to be here.*** You see, it's working from the inside out. In the Old Testament, when a slave could go free, and it was the year of jubilee, and they would be set free. But if he [the slave] loved his master and didn't want to go because his master's house was a good place to be--his master supplied all his needs out of his riches--his master loved him and never forsook him--his master cared for him. He thought, ***'I don't want to leave my master, I want to continue on and be my master's slave.'*** ***'I know I could be free, I know I could be doing something else, but I want to serve my master for the rest of my life.'*** Then he and his master would go to the judges and they would meet with the judges and he would make it official, write it out, and then they would take him and they would walk to the master's door and he would put his earlobe against the master's door and the master would take a little awl and he'd pierce a hole through the slave's ear. And then they'd put an ear ring in. When anyone looked at that slave, they would say, ***'He's not just a slave, he doesn't have to be there, he's a slave out of serving, out of love. He wants to be there, he wants to be in his master's house.'*** And you know, that's what we are, we are bond servants, that's what he came to be called, a bond-servant. We're bond-servants. We've gone to the cross, and we've let Jesus pierce our ear and said, *'Lord, now we're going to hear from you. We're going to do what you want to do. We just want to get our directions from you, Lord. We want to have an ear for you, Lord, and you alone.'* We realize, I'm not my own, I've been bought with a price, the precious blood of Christ. How could I ever say *'I want to go a different way.'* Not when I look at the precious blood, not when I look at what I have in Christ. I tell you, sure, I could go. But I can't go. Do you understand that? I'm free to leave. I'm free to walk out of the Master's house, but you know what? I can't, I love him too much. It's too good here. It's too blessed. I'm loved here, I'm secure here. I have the Holy Spirit indwelling me here. May God help us to see, that we have a song to sing since we've been redeemed. [An interesting cross reference, as I type this up on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread, the day the Israelites walked through the Red Sea, where the water was a wall unto them, on their left and on their right, and Pharoah's army was drowned in the sea. They had a song to sing, a song of redemption. It's found in Exodus 15, the song of Moses.]

How Do I Become A Christian?

Perhaps you are here, and I know it's not by accident. And you've heard about a love that you never thought God had for you. You've heard, for perhaps the first time, that God would accept you right where you are. And inside there's a hope that's being kindled, and it's like you've listened. You didn't think you were going to get through this time, but you've listened [or read], and you feel your heart drawn to Jesus, the one who loves you, who has provided redemption for you. And I told you, that what you heard about could be yours. I told you that at the beginning. It could be yours, **if** you would ask Jesus [Yeshua] to come into your life, and to be your personal Savior. The Bible says that we must ask him, we must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved. It doesn't say you must be confirmed, it doesn't say you must be baptized to be saved [although baptism and the laying on of hands was used as a method of calling on the Lord in the early church, as recorded in the book of Acts], it doesn't say that you must join the church to be saved. It says you must believe, you must call on the name of the Lord to be saved. *'How do I do that?'* You pray. Jesus said, ***'Behold I stand at the door and knock. And if anybody hear my voice, and would just open the door to me, then I'll come into your life, and I'll be your friend for life.'*** (Rev. 3:20) That's what he says. Now you can open the door of your life by praying a prayer. Now what's prayer? It's just talking to God like you talk to a friend. You don't have to use flowery language or anything. In fact, I'll help you in a prayer asking Jesus to come into your life, this morning. It's not by accident that you're here. You could leave here, if you ask Jesus into your life, you could leave here knowing your sins are forgiven, knowing that you are saved and that you're going to heaven when you die--having the emptiness and futility of your life finally filled with Jesus Christ. Hundred and hundreds and hundreds of people in here have done this. And we can testify to you that Jesus is alive, he will come into your life if you ask him, and he will give you eternal life, and you'll be a new person. We can testify to that. Let's ask him today. He's given you a moment now to chose. This is the time when you have free choice right now. Call upon the name of God right now. I want you to pray with me. Let's bow our heads right now. Let's close our eyes, pray for those around you, guys. Pray for those who have a Divine appointment today with Jesus Christ. Pray that God would set them free now to believe, that God would give them the gift of faith, that they could believe in Jesus. "Lord, we ask that you would now move by your Spirit and you do your work, by

your grace, and call to yourself those that you would save today." If you want to ask Jesus into your life, with heads bowed, eyes are closed, pray this simple prayer of accepting Jesus with me. Pray from your heart, and you will have your sins forgiven, your guilt washed away, the emptiness filled. Pray with me now, right now, you don't have to pray really loudly, but pray loud enough so that you know what you're saying--ok? Pray with me right now. ***"Lord Jesus, I ask you into my life. I believe you died for me. I know I'm a sinner. I accept you as my Savior. Come into my life, Lord and forgive my sins. I want you, Jesus, to fill the emptiness inside of my life. Redeem me, Lord. I believe you died for me. You rose again for me. I accept you as my Savior. I open my life up to you. Save me Lord. In Jesus name I pray."***

Continue please to keep your heads bowed, your eyes closed, pray for those around you. I want to talk to you if you prayed that prayer, because this is the most awesome thing that could ever happen to you. Jesus Christ has come into your life. You are redeemed. Maybe you even feel a peace coming upon you. That very often happens. Maybe you feel, Ahh, relief. You can believe everything God said and now the Holy Spirit dwells in you. You **are** Jesus' possession now, he's never going to let go of you. And you can begin to live a different life because there's a new power in you. The Bible says that it's very important for you to know that you're in a spiritual battle now, that you have an enemy. You've switched sides now. You're no longer on Satan's side, the devil's side, you're on Jesus' side. So Satan's going to try to hurt you. But the Bible says ***"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."*** But I still want to pray for you, as a brand new baby Christian. I want to pray for you this morning that Jesus would just protect you, that he would encourage you in your new walk. I'm going to ask you to do something very bold. Jesus said if you will confess me before men, I'll confess you before the Father. He said if you won't confess me before men, then I won't confess you before the Father. Jesus died publicly for you. And I'm going to ask you, not to come forward, but I'm going to ask you wherever you are, so I can pray for you and see your decision for Christ--don't be ashamed of him, he's not ashamed of you--I want you to raise your hand if you prayed that prayer wherever you are, so I can see and pray for you. Wherever you are in the auditorium, raise your hand. Let's pray. 'Lord I want to pray for these men and women, and boys and girls who've raised their hands, saying 'Lord I want you to redeem me.' Thank you that you've done that. Now Lord, strengthen their lives spiritually. Lord we pray that there will be many strong Christians coming out of this group that have given their lives to you today. Encourage them, Lord, protect them from Satan's fiery missiles, shield them in your hands, Lord. And may they know they are loved, accepted and

forgiven, in Jesus name, Amen." [a transcript of Pastor J. Mark Martin, Calvary Community Church, P.O. Box 39607, Phoenix, Arizona 85069]

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