

Worshipping Our Savior Who Redeemed Us

Colossians 2:13-14

In Revelation 5, each of us who are born-again believers: are seeing ourselves in the future; and what is it we are doing, when God lets us see ourselves?

Singing praises to ***our Redeemer***, the only One who could and did pay the debt of our sins!

Biblical Worship always focuses upon the Redeemer, always praises His redemption, and always comes from the Redeemed.

Redemption is the Theme of Our Worship in Heaven

There are few times that God's Word allows us to actually see what we will be doing in Heaven; and each of those views always involve us worshipping the True and Living God and His Son ***our Redeemer***.

Notice what we are focused upon in Heaven—a Redeemer who died in our place!

As we begin chapter 5, we are coming to the fourth element of true Biblical worship taught by God, in these two chapters. Do you remember the other three? Let me just sketch again, the first three, to reinforce our memories.

And where better to see that theme than the way we will be—singing the new song of our worthy redeemer in Revelation 5.

Redemption is central to everything God is doing, so to get ready for our part up there, with Bibles open and following along, please stand with me, and listen and feel this truth:

Point One: True Biblical Worship Centers Upon the Cross of Christ's Redeeming Sacrifice

Revelation 5:1-9 (NKJV) And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and

to loose its seals?"³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, **stood a Lamb as though it had been slain**, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before **the Lamb**, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

⁹ *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; **For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood** Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,*

Pray

Point One: True Biblical Worship Centers Upon the Cross of Christ's Redeeming Sacrifice

The content of True Biblical Worship is focused upon redemption in Heaven.

In the Old Testament God is the merciful, gracious, and longsuffering One.

In the New Testament we see that His Mercy is because of Christ's sacrifice, and that is why He allows us into His presence.

Jesus Christ as God's Lamb was our substitute that was sacrificed to take the penalty of our son. This guiltless, sin-bearing sacrifice by Christ is remembered in Rev. 5:6:

And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a **Lamb as though it had been slain**, having seven horns(*code for Omnipotence, all powerful*) and seven eyes(*code for Omniscient, all seeing and knowing*), which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Redemption is a word that speaks of:

- debts being paid,
- freedom being purchased; and a life going in a completely new direction from the point of redemption onward.

Application #1: Redemption Should Always Remind us of How Unworthy we are of the Price Christ Paid

The wonder of Christ's redemption, and our utter unworthiness to merit such love, needs to be is always kept before us.

When Charles Wesley (1707-1788) wrote down his personal meditation on redemption in 1738, it took the form of a hymn called "And Can It Be".

Please turn there with me, it is hymn #203:

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain—
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

He left His Father's throne above
So free, so infinite His grace—
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For O my God, it found out me!
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For O my God, it found out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray—
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

Application #2: God Has Provided The Only Way of Redemption

Open with me to Colossians 2:13 and watch Paul masterfully take those saints from Colosse and the world they lived in each day and transport them before the Holy God of Heaven and then back with a clear understanding of Christ's work on their behalf.

*Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He has made alive together with Him**, having forgiven you all trespasses,*

We were dead, guilty, convicts, headed to the just recompense all of ours sins deserved.

Redemption is all about the debt our sin that has piled up before God.

So Christ died for sinners, saves sinners, and redeems sinners out of their sin by His precious blood.

Application #3: We All Are Convicted Debtors to God

The legal obligations of debt, was an illustration Paul liked to use. When Paul wrote to the Colossians, he was writing to a church he had never visited. When he explained to them salvation he used a picture they would instantly recognize and never forget.

The rule of law reigned in the Roman Empire that surrounds the New Testament.

Each time a person was convicted of a crime: the law courts that convicted them also produced a "certificate of debt" that listed the exact crime; and the punishment that had to be paid before the criminal would be freed.

The convicted criminal or debtor would have to sign the certificate, and acknowledge the debt or punishment for the crime was rightfully his.

This certificate of debt was then nailed to the door of the cell where they were imprisoned,(or to the cross if it was a capital crime and they were crucified): until their sentence was completed and the crimes were "paid" for.

Look at that phrase in v. 14 "handwriting" that was against us: now, doesn't Paul's imagery leap from the page? Can't you see the sign over Christ's head?

That is how redemption should touch our hearts, reminding us that our list of sins that was our personal guilt, were taken off from us and placed on Christ!

*Colossians 2:14 having wiped out **the handwriting of requirements that was against us**, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

We need to thank Him for our redemption, and declaring the truths of our redeemed lives. There is a wonderful, modern hymn we can sing to seal this truth of redemption to our hearts and lives:

There is a Redeemer

There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son.
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Ho----ly One.
Jesus my Redeemer, name above all names,
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, O for sinners slain.

CHORUS:

Thank you, O my Father, for giving us Your Son
And leaving Your Spirit 'til the work on earth is done.

This is precisely the legal imagery that Paul draws upon in Colossians 2:13-14. The word 'handwriting' in v. 14 is the exact word for the list of crimes and/or debts the person was responsible for. Jesus took each of those "Certificates of Debt" upon Himself as He hung upon the cross.

The doctrine of redemption means that: "Believers' sins were all put to Christ's account, nailed to His cross as He paid the penalty in their place for them all, thus satisfying the just wrath of God against crimes requiring punishment in full"¹.

So that leads us to:

Application #4: When Jesus Died Sin's Debt Was Paid in Full

So as God the Father looked down at Christ He saw your sins and mine. John calls it "the sin of the world"; and it was the totality of the sin of all humans that was nailed on Christ's Cross.

The Cross was Jesus declaring that He was willing to plead guilty before the Father for every sin for everyone of us who would ever live.

Now turn to the record of Christ's death upon the cross. The climactic end of Christ's redemption as the Lamb of God was captured by John as he stood at the foot of the Cross. Looking up through the darkness he heard and recorded Christ's one word.

*John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**"*

¹John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997, in loc.

And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

In English we say: "it is finished"; but in Greek those words are summed up in the single word that John heard Christ gasp on the cross—**tetelestai**.

Tetelestai was Jesus declaring to God His Father that the price of salvation was paid; and the debt of the sin of the world was paid; and the work of redemption was complete.

This word was a word that was very familiar to those of the New Testament times. This word **tetelestai** should burn into our hearts and minds because it was exactly the same word that a Roman judge would write on a criminals certificate of debt when he was released from prison—**tetelestai**, your debt to the Roman law is paid in full.

It is the same word that would be written on the certificate of a slave who had been enslaved to pay off a debt—**tetelestai**, your debt is paid in full, you may now go forth as a free man!

Paid in full is what Jesus cried from the cross of His redemption as the work of salvation was once and for all time completed; and paid in full is what He declares each time we come to Him confessing our sins.

Paid in full is what Jesus our advocate says while standing before God the Father as Satan the Accuser points out yet another time we have sinned.

Paid in full, redeemed, bought by the blood of the Lamb, and redeemed—that is what we shall forever sing in Heaven around His Throne.

There is one great word that captures the essence of our salvation this morning, and that word is redemption.

Redemption involves the blood of Jesus shed as He died on the Cross to pay the purchase price of our salvation.

So redemption sums up Christ's death, His blood shed, His life given as a substitutionary sacrifice.

So if any portion of salvation can be ranked as any more vital than any other—redemption would be at the top of the list.

Communion is when we celebrate our Redeemer.

We need to thank Him for our redemption, and declaring the truths of our redeemed lives. There is a wonderful, modern hymn we can sing to seal this truth of redemption to our hearts and lives:

There is a Redeemer

When I stand in glory I will see His face-----
And there I'll serve my King forever in that holy place.

There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son.
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Ho----ly One.

Thank You O my Father, for giving us Your Son
And leaving Your Spirit 'til the work on earth is done.
And leaving Your Spirit "til the work on earth is done.