

Drenched By Grace

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 23, 2014 • Pastor Chris Lankford

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ...

~Ephesians 1:7-9 (ESV)

1) Bless Him Who Blessed Us With Every Blessing

- A) Writing in the context of grace and peace to God's people (Ephesians 1:1-2), the Apostle Paul launches into an expansive 202-word blessing (appreciation/favor) for God which explodes in praise and adoration of God, Christ, and Holy Spirit (1:3-14).
- B) While an overt blessing to God of adoration in prayer, Ephesians 1:3-14 also gives a clear vision for all believers to bless God by living as we are truly designed "in Christ" (1:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14).
- C) Those **in Christ** are freely chosen by God as His adopted children for the intentional purpose of accurately reflecting His holy and blameless character. The calling of purpose reveals God's glorious and gracious will of Spiritual praise for God in His Beloved (1:3-6).
- D) While God's rescue plan for mankind has been in place since 'before the beginning' (1:4-5), the extraordinary cost of 'sealing the deal' of praise and glory for God is staggeringly expensive (1:7).

2) The Extravagant Payment Of Our Blood Ransom

- A) The word redemption (1:7) naturally implies two things. First, because the word means "to liberate a slave or captive," there is an implied cost, a price or ransom for freedom. Secondly, since redemption "resulted in release from captivity," the enslavement of people is implied, much like prisoners of war.

- B) However, the ransom payment is “through his blood” (1:7), rather than financial. Freedom does not come through mere association, but by blood, through sacrifice (cf. Leviticus 17:11, Hebrews 9:22, 1 Peter 1:17-19), bound tightly to Jesus Christ (“in Him,” Ephesians 1:7).
- C) The redemptive ransom payment for captivity is Christ’s blood, His violent and sacrificial death on the cross, which extravagantly provides “forgiveness of our trespasses” (or “sins”).
- D) Forgiveness is a direct result of Christ’s blood ransom. Redemption results in forgiveness, clarifying the primary reason for our captivity. We are primarily captives because of trespasses, willful and stubborn violations of the “holy and blameless” character of Jesus.

3) There Are No Words Equal To God’s Amazing Grace

- A) How can it be? It’s almost too much to bear! What could possibly motivate such an extravagantly generous payment for freedom on behalf of people happily and hopelessly imprisoned -- for eternity?
- B) God provides the redemptive blood ransom of His own Son, “in accordance with His great riches of grace” (1:7), poured out lavishly in love and mercy (cf. 2:4-5). There is no limit to the depth of God’s love! There is no limit to God’s riches to save! Where sin exceeds, grace is hyper-abundant (Romans 5:20)!

4) A Great Mystery Revealed By God’s Grace

- A) God’s “wisdom and insight” (1:8) are so incredible and lavish, they also reveal a great mystery of God’s will which has been previously and purposely hidden (cf. 3:5).
- B) God has hidden this ‘mystery’ intentionally (1:9), but Christ’s blood ransom has revealed the mystery, solving a great problem which “brings everything together,” both in heaven and on earth (1:10).
- C) Paul then speaks from his Jewish background (“we”, 1:11), as part of the people to whom the promise of redemption was originally provided (cf. Genesis 3:14-19, 12:1-3), those to whom the Gospel was first presented and received (Ephesians 1:11-12).
- D) But now the great mystery of God’s Gospel has been revealed, not simply to the Jews, but to all men in all places. The Holy Spirit is proof (1:13) of “our” future inheritance, “to the praise of His glory.”