

1 Peter 1:17-19 – Part KK

1Pe 1:17 (NKJV) **And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; ¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**

We continue this morning to address the issue of what it means to be “**redeemed**”. What we saw in our last study is that the word “**redemption**” is one of four words that is used in association with what we call “**salvation**”. The difference is that the word “**salvation**” is used in a very broad sense to cover all aspects of what God has accomplished for the believer. At a high level, we can define salvation as a work of God where he delivers us from the power of sin and from the penalty of sin. Salvation restores us to a right relationship with God and imparts eternal life to us. In salvation we are given the full forgiveness of our sins and the actual work of salvation has been fully accomplished by Jesus Christ. From beginning to end, salvation is and always has been a work of God. It cannot be obtained by any ritual, any program, any process, or any special prayer. Salvation is fully embedded in a divine Person.¹ That is why [1 John 5:12](#) declares,

1Jn 5:12 (NKJV) **He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.**

When we get to the word “**redeemed**”, or “**redemption**” in particular, what we are talking about is the actual means by which our salvation was secured. It was secured by the payment of a ransom, or the actual life of Christ. What we understand about our present salvation is that it has not yet been fully manifested or completed. For instance, [Ephesians 4:30](#) talks about a specific “**day of redemption**”.

Eph 4:30 (NKJV) **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.**

What this phrase is dealing with is the fact that the redemption that Christ has secured and applied to the life of a believer by the indwelling and sealing of the Holy Spirit will on “**the day of redemption**” be brought to its conclusion when our actual physical bodies are redeemed. [Romans 8:23](#) says it this way,

Ro 8:23 (NKJV) **Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.**

One of the most important aspects of what Christ’s redeeming work has accomplished for us is the “**forgiveness of sins**”. [Colossians 1:14](#) says,

Col 1:14 (NKJV) **in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.**

This is why we call Christ our “**Redeemer**”. It is because He has purchased salvation for us at a great and undefinable cost to Him personally. The magnitude of what He did when He left heaven and died in our place simply cannot be calculated or determined. The extent of what He not only suffered, but also what He gave up eternally to be our “**Redeemer**” cannot be measured. When I think of salvation, I often think of it in terms of being rescued from some terrible tragedy. In our case, Christ has literally

rescued us from sin and from an eternal death that is indescribable, and He has rescued us so that we can be in a right relationship with Him.

Certainly there are many areas of Christ's redemptive work that we will never fathom or understand. All of the intricacies and nuances of decisions that the Trinitarian God made in eternity past to the Incarnation to the suffering of Christ and His resurrection were not because God the Father was angry with everyone. To the contrary, God the Father does not love us simply because Christ died for us. Rather, Jesus Christ died for us because the Father loved us. The love of God for His people is not the result of Christ's death, but is the cause of His death. [John 3:16](#) aptly declares that **“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...”** Stated another way, Christ dying for our sins is the ultimate expression and demonstration of how very much the Father has always loved us.²

Now, if we are ever going to understand and appreciate the actual word **“redemption”**, then we must appreciate how the Scriptures actually describe our condition prior to salvation. It is really a very bleak picture. Men are guilty of sin because they have deliberately and consciously chosen to sin against God and to continue in that sin. The unfortunate part is that the lost man apart from the work of God in their life literally has no inclination, desire, or ability to turn away from their sin.³ Sin is just a very normal part of their life from which there is no escape and generally something of which they are unaware and unwilling to accept. Men are actually offended when someone calls them a **“sinner”**. Different words that describe the lost individual are **“ungodly”**, **“evil”**, **“wretched”**, **“enemies”**, **“unrighteous”**, **“debased”**, **“haters of God”**, **“inventors of evil things”**, **“unforgiving”**, **“unmerciful”**, **“violent”**, **“immoral”**, **“wicked”**. **“evil minded”**, **“deceitful”**. The list is really endless. Those are just some of the terms that God uses to describe the spiritual condition of the lost man. No wonder **“redemption”** was necessary. Listen to the ugliness of man and the glory of Christ in [Romans 5:6-10](#) when it says,

Ro 5:6 (NKJV) For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

The contrast between our condition and God's salvation is utterly clear in that passage. Our spiritual condition prior to salvation is described as being spiritually **“dead”**. [Ephesians 2:1](#) says,

Eph 2:1 (NKJV) And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

So, the problem that the lost man has is that he has no idea of the extent of his spiritual condition. I have said it often, but the most difficult people to work with are those *“who don't know that they don't know”*. That is the problem that the lost man has. It is not only that he does not know his condition, but also that even when he is told what his condition is that he will not accept it. He can certainly recognize that there is something innately wrong with men, but he is much too ignorant to understand what the actual problem is. Rather than accepting his spiritual condition, the lost man actually sees himself as being good and in no need of salvation. The problem is that even if the lost man could correctly and accurately identify his condition, there still would be nothing that he could do about it. Yet that spiritual condition that leads

only to eternal damnation and judgment is the very condition for which Christ actually died. In simple and understandable terms, sin is rebellion against God. We must be clear whenever we communicate the gospel to people who are lost that God in His absolute and utter holiness will judge sin in the unbeliever's life. The terms that the Bible uses to describe the inevitable result of man's sin is that the **"wrath of God"** abides on them. [John 3:36](#) says,

Jn 3:36 (NKJV) He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

No matter what someone may think about that clear statement, it is not a good thing. [Romans 5:9](#) provides God's clear solution to man's dilemma when it says,

Ro 5:9 (NKJV) Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

The key phrases in that verse are **"by His blood"** and **"through Him"**. If there is any deliverance from sin and its devastating impact on a sinner's life, then it is imperative that they understand what that deliverance is and how they can obtain it. God's deliverance from sin is a Person, and only a Person. The testimony of Scripture is clear that Jesus Christ is salvation and all who have a God-defined relationship with Him are saved, and I might add saved from the **"wrath to come"**. [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#) says,

1Th 1:10 (NKJV) and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

So, every aspect of God's relationship to us as believers is connected to our relationship with Christ. From the counsels and determinations of God in eternity past before time began to every relationship that we have with God in this life to our final and ultimate fellowship with God in eternity, it has all occurred because of our relationship to Christ. The primary phrase that delineates this for us is the phrase that we are **"in Christ"**. It speaks of the fact that we are now united with Christ. If an individual is **"in Christ"**, it means that that relationship is the means by which that person receives and enjoys all of the benefits of salvation that God has provided.⁴

Everything that we need for salvation, for life, and for eternity is found in the person of Christ – **"in Christ"**. Based on what translation that you have, the phrase **"in Christ"**, or a similar expression like **"in Him"** or **"in Christ Jesus"** is used over 216 times in the New Testament. Look with me at [Ephesians 1:3-14](#) as just a sample of the importance of this phrase.

Eph 1:3 (NKJV) Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He

purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him. ¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

[2 Timothy 1:9](#) says,

2Ti 1:9 (NKJV) **who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,**

Just think for a moment of all of the things that Christ has done for you and of all of the things from which He has redeemed you. [2 Corinthians 5:21](#) says,

2Co 5:21 (NKJV) **For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

[1 Peter 2:24](#) says,

1Pe 2:24 (NKJV) **who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.**

[1 Corinthians 15:3](#) says,

1Co 15:3 (NKJV) **For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,**

[Romans 6:6](#) says that our “old self”, our “old man” was crucified with Christ,

Ro 6:6 (NKJV) **knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.**

When Christ died, we died. When Christ was raised, we were raised. When Christ was taken into heaven, we were taken into heaven. [Galatians 2:20](#) says,

Gal 2:20 (NKJV) **I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

What this verse says to us is that Christ is the One who gives us the power to live the Christian life. The single element that determines if someone is truly saved is whether or not they are “**in Christ**” and whether or not “**Christ lives in**” them. Our union with Christ is not only critical to our actual salvation experience, but to actually living out the Christian life. There are many who really handle this passage in a kind of mystical and experiential way. They would interpret it in such a way where the believer has

to become fully surrendered to Christ in order to experience the life of Christ. I would not argue the point that there is in reality a major component of obedience to the success of the Christian life. I have never met a very disobedient Christian who was experiencing the blessings of God on their life. God is too good of a steward to be rewarding people for disobedience. However, what this verse reveals though, is our position in Christ. We were “**crucified with Christ**” before we were even born, and now “**Christ lives**” in us personally. That is our spiritual position. So, the power of our union with Christ is released when we trust by faith the reality of our spiritual position in Christ and commit ourselves to it.⁵ It is understanding the spiritual reality of who we are and what we have that ultimately impacts our practice.

[Ephesians 2:4-6](#) takes it to another level,

Eph 2:4 (NKJV) **But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,**

[Colossians 2:9-14](#) says,

Col 2:9 (NKJV) **For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. ¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 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, 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 cannot read passages like these without developing a deep awareness of and appreciation for all of the things that God has accomplished for us “**in Christ**”. What Christ did for the lost sinner who had no ability to ever recover from his sinful nature is overwhelming. We cannot read about these kinds of spiritual outworkings being performed in a person’s life and somehow come to the conclusion that a person can be saved, yet have no evidence of it in their life. Here is what I want us to see. When a person is “**in Christ**”, there is a very real and dynamic indwelling of Christ and the Holy Spirit in that person. Being “**in Christ**” is real, personal, and spiritual. It is NOT that a person simply agrees with God about Christ or even that they believe some of His truths – not at all. It is the reality that Christ lives in the believer! He literally becomes their life and everything for which they live.

What all of these kinds of verses clearly communicate is that when God saves a person that their being “**in Christ**” is the means by which the Holy Spirit brings about the life-transforming changes in their character that salvation creates in a person’s life. Whatever blessings someone may believe that they have, those blessings are clearly embedded in the person of Christ and are found nowhere else.

[Ephesians 1:3](#) simply puts it this way,

Eph 1:3 (NKJV) **Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,**

Because all of God’s blessings are “**in Christ**”, the more that we leave Christ out of our life, the less of His blessings we will experience. All of God’s blessings are “**in Christ**”.

ENDNOTES

¹ Akin, 686.

² MacArthur, 516,

³ Akin, 686.

⁴ Grudem, 840-841.

⁵ Akin, 691.

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