

Ephesians 1:7-12

Ephesians  
*You Can Be Set Free*

The commercial began with a military drum roll, introducing the subtitle "Monday 7:58 AM." A well-dressed teenager is getting ready for school wearing a shirt emblazoned the Pepsi Cola logo.

The drum roll sounds again as the subtitle reads "T-shirt 75 Pepsi points." As the teenager finishes getting ready the drum rolls and subtitles keep coming: "Leather Jacket 1450 Pepsi points," Shades 175 Pepsi points."

And so Pepsi introduced their 1996 promotion. Drink Pepsi products, save points, get stuff.

But then the commercial switches to the school building and the boy sitting on the front steps with two of his friends. Suddenly papers are blowing, a noise increases, the wind strips a teacher down to his boxers, and from above comes a Harrier fighter plane.

The teenager says, "Sure beats the bus," and the following words appear on the screen, "Harrier Fighter 7,000,000 Pepsi points." The music plays, the words change to "Drink Pepsi - Get stuff." and the commercial ends. By the way the sticker price on a Harrier is \$23.7 million.

Inspired by that commercial a young man named John Leonard set out to get himself a Harrier jet.

He quickly released he'd never be able to drink that much soda, or he'd die trying. But John Leonard was a determined young man so he read the fine print from Pepsi and found out you could buy Pepsi points.

If you had 15 original points you could purchase as many more additional points as you wanted for ten cents each.

Amazingly Mr. Leonard was able to hit up enough of his friends and family that he raised \$700,000. On March 27, 1996 he submitted an order form, 15 points, and a check for \$700,008.50.

At the bottom of the order form he wrote, "1 Harrier jet, 7,000,000 points.

On May 7, 1996 John Leonard received an envelope from PepsiCo containing his check and a nice letter saying the Jet wasn't in the catalog so he couldn't order it. They also sent him some coupons for free Pepsi products.

Undaunted Mr. Leonard filed a lawsuit against PepsiCo, which he eventually lost after three years of judicial wrangling.

Here was an offer of redemption. Pepsi said you could redeem your points and John Leonard tried his best to accomplish that goal. If he would have succeeded, he would have been a very rich man.

The dictionary defines "redemption" as "the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt."

Redemption might not have worked out for John Leonard, but redemption is at the heart of God's purposes for us.

According to the Bible, redemption is the basis for real freedom.

Last week we started a study of the New Testament Book of Ephesians. Ephesians was penned by an Apostle named Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome for his Christian faith.

The letter is addressed to a church which was located in Ephesus, which in modern day Turkey.

Ephesus was called "the first and greatest metropolis of Asia." It was known for the Temple of Artemis (Diana), who had her chief shrine there, for its library, and for its theatre, which sat 25,000 spectators. It had one of the most advanced aqueduct systems in the ancient world.

The population of Ephesus ranged somewhere between 400,000 to 500,000 inhabitants making it one of the largest cities of the day. It was also the home of a thriving congregation which had started under Paul's preaching.

As God inspired this letter Paul wrote in his usual style taking half the space to talk

about who God is and what He's done for us, and then using the second half to give direction for life.

Before we can forgive others, deal with anger and bitterness, really love the difficult person we might be married to, speak words of encouragement when we don't feel like it, and love other people in the church with God's kind of love we need to be aware of and really understand the spiritual blessings of God that will allow us to do the things He's called us to.

Ephesians is a book about living differently than the culture around us. It's a book about having real freedom in life. Ephesians is a book about supernatural living.

**Turn with me this morning to Ephesians chapter 1. Today we want to pick up in verse 7. pg 1038**

Harrier jets are exciting, but were going to look at something that's more thrilling than a Jet that can hover. We're going to look at something that's worth infinitely more than a mere \$23.7 million.

Today, we're going to see what God has to say about the beautiful truth of redemption. When you leave this service today, my prayer is that you'd leave with a unique sense of what it's like to experience God's ultimate freedom.

### *I. Redemption's Present Results*

#### **Read vs 7**

Ephesians chapter one is just one powerful statement of spiritual truth after another.

Verse 7 is like a high point in the midst of a series of high points. It's a summary of the whole essence and content of the Christian faith. It's the charter for freedom.

Martin Lloyd Jones was pastor of Westminster Chapel in London and he loved the book of Ephesians. He loved it so much that he wrote a 7 volume, 2800 page commentary on the book.

This is what he says about verse 7, "There is a sense in which one feels that when such a verse as this is read, nothing further is needed."

In other words, he's saying "This ought to clear up all the confusion over how a person becomes a Christian, what God is doing in the lives of His people, and how we tap into His spiritual blessings."

It's like, this verse is so clear it shouldn't need any explanation.

But then he goes on to say, "But just look around you at the cults and the confusion. Look at church history. Listen to various people's ideas about God and eternal life and forgiveness and you'll know that isn't true."

The problem is, we're sinners, living in a sinful world. Our perceptions of truth are blurred and distorted. Especially spiritual truth.

Here's some benefits of getting rid of God from an article called The Good News of Atheism by Mark Smith.

*As Atheism cures tithing, you'll get an instant 10% raise in take-home pay.  
Hell becomes as phony as the boogie man.  
The celestial "Peeping Tom" who watched you ceases to exist.  
Premarital sex no longer causes "guilt hangovers" the next morning.  
You can be honest and really hate those you hate- no more pretend Christian "love".  
You can now sleep in on Sunday mornings.  
Families are no longer divided over petty religious squabbles.  
You no longer have to stay married to people you've grown to hate.  
When you hit your thumb with a hammer, you can now swear like a sailor.  
You can lust as nature intended you to without apologies or self-induced guilt.  
You'll never miss another NFL game due to long winded preachers.  
And you're now free to think & question without fear of angering some insecure deity.*

What a deal. We can get rid of God so we can practice destructive behaviors without the nagging problem of guilt to warn us of the destruction.

It's so easy to see what we want to see instead of understanding truth.

So we need to be accurate in our grasp of spiritual things, especially a verse like Ephesians 1:7 that tells us about such a foundation spiritual concept as redemption. If we get this one wrong then everything else in the Bible becomes irrelevant.

Louis Sperry Chaffer, in his systematic theology, gives this definition for redemption.

“Redemption is an act of God by which He Himself pays as a ransom the price of human sin which the outraged holiness and government of God required.”

Here's what that means:

God put a price tag on sin. That price was death and separation from His holy presents. But then Jesus Christ paid the price by dieing on the cross. By that act He bought our freedom from Divine condemnation.

Here's a cartoon from an atheist publication that had the caption “Scary thought: This makes sense to a lot of Christians.”

The guy is standing before God saying, “But I'm forgiven! You died on the cross for the world's sins! I believe in You! Jesus Saves!”

And God's on His throne saying, “That's absurd. Why would I need to sacrifice Myself to Myself to allow me to change a rule I made myself?”

The Bible says that God did sacrifice His Son. But not to change a rule. He did it to justly keep the rule. The Bible says, “The soul that sins shall surly die.’

We deserve death, but Jesus Christ died as our substitute so God's law could be kept but at the same time God could be free to show His love to us. To redeem us.

Redemption always has to do with buying something.

In very picturesque imagery, the Bible portrays us as slaves to sin and it's consequences and declares that it took the blood of Christ to liberate and deliver us from sin's power.

In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel is a redeemed nation. In fact out of 143 uses of the words redeem and redemption over 120 are in the Old Testament.

So the theme of redemption is very much a part of scripture. For example, turn with me to the Old Testament book of **Leviticus chapter 25 pg 114**

God established a principle in the Mosaic Law, of the kinsman redeemer.

**Lev 25:25, 47-48**

If a Jewish person sold himself in to servitude or sold his property to get out of debt, a near relative could pay off the debt and the land or the individual had to be set free.

There were certain requirements for the person who acted as the redeemer. As it turns out these requirements foreshadow our redemption.

1) *The redeemer had to be a relative.* For Jesus Christ to redeem us He had to enter the world as a human being. That's the purpose of Christmas. The second person of the Trinity was born to Mary. He was one of us.

2) *The redeemer had to be able to pay.* You could have plenty of kinsmen but if they were as poor as you were they couldn't pay your debt. Jesus Christ, the spotless Lamb of God could pay for our sin.

3) *The redeemer had to be free from the same calamity.* The redeemer couldn't be enslaved himself. Jesus Christ was sinless. If He wasn't, then he couldn't take our place. He would have had to pay for his own sins.

4) *The redeemer had to be willing.* There was no stipulation that anyone had to buy the person's freedom back. Jesus said, *I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.* John 10:17-18.

5) *The redeemer had to pay the full price.* The Bible says *The wages of sin is death*, and so Jesus had to die. Nothing less would do.

God always was and always will be the redeemer.

Psalm 19:14 *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.*

Isaiah 43:1 *But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.*

Isaiah 44:22 *I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.*

Twenty seven times in the book of Isaiah Jehovah God is called the redeemer.

That brings us back to the New Testament.

In the New Testament there are 3 different Greek verbs that are translated by the English word “redeem.”

Each one of them has a significant nuance to them that takes the Old Testament concept and expands on it.

The first is the verb *agorazo*. The noun *agora* meant the open market. We call the fear of open places agoraphobia.

*Agorazo* meant “to purchase in the market.” The idea is a slave standing in the first century Roman auction block in the center of the market place. This would have been a common site in this time.

Romans 7:14 says we were sold under sin, so *agorazo* means that Jesus Christ went into the market and paid the pice to purchase us. He paid the wages of sin, which is death to buy us out of the place of bondage.

The second word that’s translated “redeem” is *exagorazo*. Ex means “out” (you go out the exit.) So *exagorazo* means to purchase out of the market.

*Agorazo* only implies paying the price. *Exagorazo* ads the thought of removing.

Once the price has been paid we’re taken out of that slave market. The slave trader dosen’t have any authority over us any more.

The third word, and we have the noun form back in Ephesians 1:7 (**Turn back**) is *lutroo*, which means to set free. This is like the culmination of all the words for redemption.

Jesus didn’t transfer our bondage from one slave master to another. He’s gone into the slave market, paid the full price, brought us out, and set us free.

We’re free from the law, free from the power of sin, free from the penalty of sin, and free from the dominion of Satan.

There's only one way this could have happened and Ephesians 1:7 explains it: *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.*

If you have trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. If you have trusted Him, and his death on the cross then you can claim God's redemption.

See I told you this was better than a Harrier jet!

Now there are some results of redemption that are immediate.

1) Verse 7 is the forgiveness of sin. Forgiveness cost God everything. Forgiving sinners was like the ultimate problem for God.

Think about it, it really was a simple thing for God to create the heavens and the earth.

All God had to do was say "Let there be" and there was. When you're omnipotent creating stuff is really simple. You just do it.

But when it came to our forgiveness God couldn't just say, "Let them be forgiven."

God is all powerful but He can't contradict His own character. He can't just ignore that which violates His holiness.

That's why the Son had to leave the splendor of the heavenlies, lock Himself in time and space, and suffer the ultimate indignation at the hands of His own creation.

It was the only way. That's how hard it was for God to redeem us.

It was Christ's blood according to the riches of His grace.

William MacDonald writes, "The measure of our forgiveness is given in the words 'according to the riches of His grace.' If we can measure the riches of God's grace, then we can measure how fully He has forgiven us. His grace is infinite! So is His forgiveness!"



So the first immediate result of redemption is forgiveness for sin. The second is an understanding of God's will.

### **Read 8-9**

The word translated "abound" in verse 8, means to overabound and the word "prudence" has to do with understanding.

In other words, God has graciously shared His plans with us.

Here's what He wants. He wants us to have intelligence and insight when it comes to His plans for us and for the universe.

You might say, He's let us in on something. He's taken us in to His confidence.

Because we're forgiven, because we're redeemed God's revealed to us the great goal toward which history is moving. God has a plan for this world. God has a plan for you and me and He hasn't kept it a secret.

God hasn't left us to stumble and drift through life. We don't have to wonder, "What's it all about? How do I fit in? What's my purpose?" He's made known to us the mystery of His will and His purpose is wrapped up in the concept of redemption.

So what is God doing in our world? It looks pretty chaotic out there. What is God's final purpose? What did He purpose in Himself to do?

*I. Redemption's Present Results*

*II. Redemption's Future Results*

### **Read vs 10**

God's ultimate purpose is to bring unity and harmony to that which He's redeemed.

The dispensation of the fullness of the times is when God's work is complete.

It's the time we read about in the book of II Peter which says, *Nevertheless we,*

*according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. II Peter 3:13.*

This is after Christ rules from David's throne in Jerusalem for a thousand years and on into eternity itself. God will ultimately bring about total harmony. All things will be united in Christ. That should mean something very practical to all of us.

Let me ask you something, and I want you to answer honestly. Do the things that are happening in our world become frightening at times when you really think about them?

When you read that a couple was planning to use their 6 month old baby's bottle as a bomb to blow up an airliner, does that cause you to feel unsettled?

It does me. The war with radical Islam is huge.

But here's what's so exciting. A believer in Jesus Christ can say with all; confidence, "God's at work. Things might be wild and wooly in our world. The danger level might be heading off the charts. But God has a future plan for peace and unity for the planet.

What does that have to do with redemption?

*Listen to this: For it pleased the Father that in Christ all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Colossians 1:20*

Jesus Christ not only delivered us from bondage, but His death ultimately delivers the whole creation. Redemption extends to everything that's touched by the curse.

Now listen to this. This is from Romans 8, I'm reading from The Message translation:

*The created world itself can hardly wait for what's coming next. Everything in creation is being more or less held back. God reins it in until both creation and all the creatures are ready and can be released at the same moment into the glorious times ahead.*

*All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. Romans 8:19-22*

Talk about exciting. Three aspects of creation will be gathered together in one: All of the people of God. Everyone down through history who was redeemed by faith in God our Savior, The angels who gather around the throne in worship, and the heavens and the earth itself.

Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Then, out of this truth of God's purpose comes 2 very significant, practical applications.

1) Mankind won't destroy the earth. We may abuse it but there will never be a total destruction of human life. There's no weapon, bacteria, or meteorite that can ever annihilate everyone.

2) The only things that have lasting value are the things that can be summed up in Jesus Christ.

In the end that's all that really matters. Everything else is temporary. In the way we live, in our every day life, we have a standard to go by.

I Corinthians 10:31 *Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

What kind of citizen we are, how we do our job, how we raise our kids, how we handle our relationships, all of life needs to be done in a way that honors the God of redemption.

So, redemption's future results, first of all, guarantee the all things are brought together in Christ.

But there's one more future aspect of redemption here in Ephesians 1. **Read vs 11a**  
*In Him also we have obtained an inheritance...*

The verb used for "obtained an inheritance" *kleroo*, means to receive an allotment.

In Jesus Christ we are allotted an eternal inheritance.

We're back to redemption again. Once we were separated from God, now we're in His family. Once we had nothing but the little temporary stuff we could grab in this life. Now we have a limitless divine inheritance.

But how can we be sure we'll receive this inheritance? How do we know we won't get cut out of the will for some reason?

What if we mess up and God disinherits us?

Doris Duke was unbelievably rich. She was heir to a fortune from tobacco and died leaving a \$1.3 billion estate. Her only heir was an adopted daughter. She and the daughter had a falling out so she cut her out of her will.

What if God cuts us out? **Read 11b-12**

Last week we saw that predestination has to do with God guaranteeing that something will be accomplished. the Greek word *proorizo* means "to mark out or determine beforehand."

In verse 5 we saw that God predetermined that all believers in Christ would be placed as adult members in the family of God.

Now we find that God has predetermined that all who trust in Christ will be to the praise of God's glory.

God, who works all things after the council of His own will, the one who redeemed us, guarantees our inheritance.

God's at work in our lives. He's redeemed us through the blood of Christ and every day He's at work in our life using everything to make our lives more like Jesus life.

And you know what? He's going to get us there.

You say, "I don't know. I've got a long way to go to get to that point!" Join the club.

But God predetermined in eternity past that believers would be to the praise of His glory and what God predetermines always happens.

And the Bible says there's coming a day when we leave this earth that God will

finish that transformation for good.

Redemption is a beautiful truth. Our world is jam packed with religions. You'll only find the splendor of redemption in Biblical Christianity.

Have you experienced redemption? Have you received the forgiveness of your sins? Do you have purpose and direction in your life?

God did the hard part. Now He says come as a little child with simple faith and believe that what was accomplished at the cross was accomplished for you.