

# CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

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<b>Series:</b>	<b>The Heidelberg Catechism</b>		Pastor/Teacher
<b>Number:</b>	<b>17</b>		Gary L.W. Johnson
<b>Text:</b>	<b>Ephesians 1:7-10</b>		
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## Of God The Son

### 11. Lord's Day

#### **Question 29. Why is the Son of God called "Jesus", that is a Saviour?**

**Answer:** Because he saveth us, and delivereth us from our sins; (a) and likewise, because we ought not to seek, neither can find salvation in any other. (b)

(a) Matt. 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Heb. 7:24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Heb. 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (b) Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 1 Tim. 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Isa. 43:11 I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. 1 John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

#### **Question 30. Do such then believe in Jesus the only Saviour, who seek their salvation and welfare of saints, of themselves, or anywhere else?**

**Answer:** They do not; for though they boast of him in words, yet in deeds they deny Jesus the only deliverer and Saviour; (a) for one of these two things must be true, that either Jesus is not a complete Saviour; or that they, who by a true faith receive this Saviour, must find all things in him necessary to their salvation. (b)

(a) 1 Cor. 1:13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 1 Cor. 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 1 Cor. 1:31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Gal. 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. (b) Heb. 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Isa. 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Col. 1:19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; Col. 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. Col. 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have

fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. John 1:16 And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

B.B. Warfield, in an address to incoming students at Princeton Theological Seminary, argues that “there is no one of the titles of Christ which is more precious to Christian hearts than Redeemer.” Warfield went on to say that this is so because it “is the name specifically of the Christ of the cross. Whenever we pronounce it, the cross is placarded before our eyes and our hearts are filled with loving remembrance not only that Christ has given us salvation, but that he paid a mighty price for it.”<sup>1</sup> Of course I need not tell any of you the glorious significance of the name *Redeemer*. The name of this church is a constant reminder of this central feature of the gospel.

We have been examining the manifold blessings with which our blessed God has blessed His people. These include election, holiness, adoption and glory – these are founded upon the sovereign grace of God and are bestowed merely upon our relation to the Son. When the Apostle comes to unfold to us the blessing of redemption and forgiveness of sin, these he links directly to Christ’s blood. This is an expression that always has reference to Christ’s work as Redeemer. “Wherefore,” said Calvin, “whenever we intend to seek God’s favour and mercy, let us fasten the whole of our minds on the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may there find the means by which to appease God’s wrath.”<sup>2</sup>

## I. REDEMPTION STATED

Redemption, observed Thomas Goodwin, “is larger than forgiveness of sins; for redemption reacheth to glory also. Glory was to be purchased anew. And why? Because, though we were predestinated to glory in our relation unto Christ’s person as our head, yet we forfeited it all, and it must therefore be bought again; and therefore the glory of heaven, in Luke 21:28, is called redemption. ‘Lift up your heads, for your redemption draws nigh,’ saith Christ, speaking of the latter day. You have the like place, Rom. 8:23, ‘We groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies.’ And Tit. 2:14, sanctification itself is called redemption, ‘Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.’ Redemption is a large word; for Christ was fain to buy all that God intended us, because we lost it.”<sup>3</sup> There are *three* important terms used in the New Testament to express redemption. The first is AGORAZŌ. It comes from the marketplace and means “to buy or purchase” and always involves the thought of a transaction.<sup>4</sup> It closely parallels the Hebrew GAAL, “to redeem,” (Ruth 4:1-8) and KOFER, “a ransom price,” (Psalm 49:7). The second term is EXAGORAZŌ. As you can see, this is simply AGORAZŌ with the prefix EX and conveys the thought of buying *out of* the marketplace. The third word is LUŌ (and its derivatives LUTROŌ, LUTRON, LUTRŌSIS and APOLUTRŌSIS); it means “to loose, set free or deliver.”

## II. THE REDEEMER

This redemption is procured by Christ; “in Him we have redemption.” Paul is here speaking of Christ’s work of redemption. The extent of this work is defined by the context. Who are redeemed? The very same ones that are chosen and predestinated in Him. These and no others are the recipients of Christ’s redeeming work. Note that Christ is declared to be God’s beloved (1:6). Chrysostom, one of the early church fathers, declared, “It is strange, infinite strange, that he that was God’s beloved, whom he delighteth in as in himself, that God should ever send him to be a Redeemer, and to shed his blood for sinners. What! was he God’s beloved, and have you redemption in him too? Should God sacrifice his beloved? God chose us to be holy in heaven with him, to be sons with him there, to delight in us there. Let that plot stand, let them never come to be sinful, let me have up in heaven presently with my Son. One would have thought God might have said this. No, God would commend his love yet further. He would let them fall into sins; to redeem them, he would sacrifice this beloved. He had do much love in his heart that he could commend it to us no way but by sacrificing his beloved. He might have chosen

whether he had done so or no; he might have made us as happy in heaven as now we shall be; it needed not have cost him the blood of his Son. But now he wonderfully sets out his love to us, in that we have redemption in his beloved.”

### **III. THE PRICE OF REDEMPTION**

It was through “his blood” that sinners are redeemed. Paul tells us elsewhere that we are “bought with a price” (I Corinthians 6:20; 7:23). This price is identified as being His blood. “But what is meant by his blood? His blood is only mentioned; not that his active obedience doth not go into it. Take all Christ, good brethren. But because his blood was the last part of the payment that cancelled all the bond, therefore his blood is still mentioned in Scripture. And his blood is more mentioned than the other. Why? To answer the expression of the type in the old law. There was the blood poured out, you know, and there was blood laid upon the horns of the altar, and all things were sprinkled with blood. What did the blood signify in the Old Testament? Blood in the Old Testament signified the soul of the beast; saith he, the life of it, or the soul of it, lieth in the blood. So in the New Testament still, the blood of Christ is mentioned, to signify the sufferings of his soul; and it is mentioned, too, to answer the type. In the Lord’s Supper you have bread, to signify the breaking of his body; but you shall find that he ascribeth more peculiarly his sufferings to his blood, signified by the wine, to represent the sufferings of his soul; and therefore his soul is said to be ‘poured forth.’ Fall down, my brethren, before the Lord Jesus Christ. ‘Thou art worthy to receive all honour and glory, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,’ say the angels and saints, Rev. 5:9.”<sup>5</sup>

### **IV. THE RESULT OF REDEMPTION**

Redemption secures for sinners the forgiveness of their sins (Colossians 2:13). Rightly did Richard Sibbes once declare, “We can never bless God too much, nor sufficiently, for Christ. ‘Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,’ Eph. 1:3. Now we may think of sin without shame and despair. O blessed state, when a man can think of his former odious, and filthy, loathsome sins, and yet not despair! Because, when he believes in Christ, the blood of Christ purgeth all away, takes away all sins. He hath taken them away.”<sup>6</sup>

### **V. THE SOURCE OF REDEMPTION**

What caused God to be redemptive? “The riches of his grace.” And what is grace? I doubt if there is a biblical term that is more distorted or misunderstood. It is very typical, even for professing evangelicals to say something like this, “If you do this, then God will be gracious.” In this scheme “grace” is something God does in response to what we do first. The grace of God cannot be earned or merited or in any way solicited from God. The word properly understood always signifies God’s sovereign freedom to exercise His love and compassion. Therefore, the love of God is called grace as is His mercy.

**CONCLUSION:** The great work of redemption which the Apostle glories in is little understood and even less appreciated in many churches today. Until we take seriously the Bible’s teaching on sin and God’s holiness, we will never be captivated the way Paul was with Christ the Redeemer. Bavinck, writing about a hundred years ago, said, “True, there are many who try to banish these serious thoughts from their minds and plunge into life as though there were no God and no commandment. They deceive themselves with the hope that there is no God (Ps. 14:1), that He does not bother about the sins of men, so that whoever does evil is good in His sight (Mal. 2:17), that He does not remember evil nor see it (Ps. 10:11 and 94:7), or else that, as perfect Love, He may not seek out and punish the wrong (Ps. 10:14). And whoever holds to the demand of the moral law and lets the ethical ideal stand in its loftiness, can only agree that God must punish the wrong. God is love, indeed, but this glorious confession comes into its own only when love in the Divine being is understood as being a holy love in

perfect harmony with justice. There is room for the grace of God only if the justice of God is first fully established.”<sup>7</sup>

#### ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> B.B. Warfield, *The Person and Work of Christ* (rpt. P & R, 1950), p. 325.

<sup>2</sup> *John Calvin's Sermons on Ephesians* (rpt. Banner of Truth, 1973), p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> *The Works of Thomas Goodwin I* (rpt. Tanski, 1996), p. 122.

<sup>4</sup> This word is found twenty-five times in the New Testament with its usual commercial meaning, mostly in the gospels (Matthew 13:44; Luke 22:36), but on five other occasions it describes the “buying of Christians out of the bondage of sin (1 Corinthians 6:19; 7:23; Revelation 14:3); cf. *Dictionary of New Testament Theology I*, ed. C. Brown (Zondervan, 1975), p. 268.

<sup>5</sup> Goodwin, p. 124.

<sup>6</sup> *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes II* (James Nichol, 1862), p. 262.

<sup>7</sup> H. Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith* (rpt. Baker, 1977), p. 260.