

# Ephesians Series

## 2. In Christ [Sermon Notes for Ephesians 1:3-22]

Many years ago Rhiannon worked for London Transport. As an employee she had free travel on London's Buses and Tubes. As her husband I had a Privilege Card so I had quarter rail fare. Why did I get privilege because I was married to Rhiannon.

In this passage Paul says we are chosen we have been blessed in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ (v3).

Why do we get the blessings? Well, it's like me and the privilege card - we get it all through being in Christ. It's not just that we have the blessings because God is outrageously gracious that He is prepared to forgive even the worst person on earth if they repent. We have all these blessings and all the forgiveness because we are IN CHRIST. Look again at v5

*In love 5 (C) he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- 6 (C) to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.*

IN CHRIST. If you are looking for the theme of my sermon this morning, I base it on just these two words that convey so much - we are IN CHRIST. If I wanted to I could go through the NT to see how much this is used. It is used over 80 times in the NT and most refer to what we are in Christ.

One of the questions I was asked at my induction the other Saturday was this:

*Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and do you confess Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord?*

I think Ian even mentioned the word Trinity specifically. This is a very Trinitarian passage because it speaks of the blessings of the Father, wrought by the Son and mediated by the Holy Spirit, and all three Persons appear in this chapter, each with His own personal role but fulfilling the same role of Godhead that had been worked out from eternity. From that point of view, this is a profound chapter of Scripture.

Last week we found that the Father had chosen us and has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

This week we are going to see how we are redeemed through the Son and next time we shall see how the Spirit works in our lives now.

So what have we obtained through being in the Son?

- **In Jesus we have redemption**

We have been redeemed. It's term that means to buy back such as redeeming an item at a pawnbrokers.

*The story is told of a little boy who built a model boat and when he went on holiday he played with it in the sea but a gust of wind blew it out to sea and he lost it. A few days later he saw it in a second hand shop but he could not have it unless he paid for it. His father gave him the money. He said "Not only did I make this boat, I paid for it too."*

We have erred from God but in Christ, not only did He make us, but he purchased us too.

The last words Jesus said on the cross were It is finished. In Greek it is just one word, Tetelestai. It's a word used in the marketplace to close a deal and it means the price is paid in full.

Finished - the deal is done, Jesus bought our forgiveness through shedding His blood. The blood shows the nature of the transaction. The shedding of blood meant that one life had been exchanged for others so that God is able to forgive the sins of those who would realise their sin and turn to Him for forgiveness. All the righteous requirements of God's law were met on Calvary. Hallelujah! - We're redeemed. "I'm redeemed yes I am by the blood of the lamb" and why - by God's grace which He lavished upon us. It is the bottom line - we are redeemed in Christ. We have a new owner - the price has been paid in full!

- **We are included in Christ through faith**

*12 (C) in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. 13 (C) And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory. 15 (C) For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.*

But secondly, that redemption only becomes part of us through faith. The price has been paid - but we have to accept the gift - accept the situation.

How do we do that - through faith.

Faith isn't just believing - it's about trusting.

Martin Luther - 3 kinds of faith:

*Not head knowledge alone - the demons believe and shudder James 2:19 - but you do require head knowledge*

*Not here and now faith alone - call out to God because the ship is sinking - just in case - you even require that BUT*

*Trusting Jesus alone for your salvation. It is His death on the cross alone that means God offers us salvation - redemption, forgiveness of sins. Trusting Jesus alone means just that, not Jesus plus attending Church, or Jesus plus giving the Church money or Jesus plus ~~no~~ doing certain things, or living in a certain way. It's trusting Jesus alone!*

Where are you? The train. God wants you to be sure you are redeemed - that you have eternal life!

- **In Christ, hope is here.**

*18 (C) I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 (C) and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, 20 which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.*

We are called to know His incomparably great power which is what we shall examine in the next sermon.

People in Swaffham are comfortable. That's Swaffham - it's just a nice place with nice people. Comfortable people. People for whom life is just nice. For most, it may be a place they dreamed about. Pretty market town, lovely house, clean air. What more could they possibly need or want? But it all must end some day. Then what. It is appointed once to die.... Then what? Most people have no hope. They even think it is arrogant to say we KNOW we have eternal life. But Jesus is our hope. In

scripture hope always means certainty.. We can KNOW the hope to which He has called us.. If you are in Christ this morning, God wants you to KNOW the hope.

If you are not sure you are in Christ this morning - God wants to you be sure - He wants you to KNOW!

Do you KNOW you have eternal life this morning. You CAN know. God WANTS you to know.

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