

# Colossians

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Preacher: Delves, Stanley (1897-1978)

[ 0 : 00 ] Continuing with the Lord's help, our meditation upon the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, I read this morning the 14th verse.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

The 14th verse of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians. In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

The Apostle at this point in the Epistle turns somewhat from the theme of thanksgiving and prayer to instruction.

The Apostle would have the Colossian believers understand more about the Gospel than they did.

[ 1 : 20 ] For though they had heard enough to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they had felt enough to have love to all the saints.

But the Gospel is an exceedingly great matter. There is a great depth of truth in it, and a fullness of blessedness in it, into which it is good for believers to be instructed.

And not only instructed, but to experience for themselves. Brethren, we should not be content with what I may call a meagre knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because that will leave us really very impoverished in our own spiritual state. For if you and I are to grow in grace, to become men in understanding, and to be established in the present truth of Jesus Christ, we must be brought to God, and to be guided and instructed by the Holy Spirit more into the lengths and depths and breadth and heights of the blessedness that there is in Jesus Christ, and which comes to us in the Gospel, and which is conveyed in us by the Holy Spirit.

And so at this point, when the Apostle had mentioned that they had been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, which work of grace we have considered together, at once the Apostle comes to the theme that was nearest his own heart, in whom we have redemption through his blood, because for the Apostle to think of God's dear Son, was at once for his heart to be led into the riches of grace, and truth, and mercy, and love, that there is in God's dear Son.

[ 4 : 04 ] Not of course that the spirit and feeling of the thanksgiving and prayer does not flow into this.

It should do. We have every cause, brethren, to be thankful that there is redemption through the blood of Jesus, and the forgiveness of sins, for it were better for us than we had never been born, than that we should have been born into a sinful case and state, with regard to which there was no possible redemption.

Oh, we should be thankful that there is redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins in connection, vital connection with that redemption.

And not only thanksgiving, but prayer. Prayer that we might know that redemption more, in its truth, and experience it more, in its power, in its power, and enjoy it more, in its blessing, and that the forgiveness of sins might come to us through the gospel of redeeming love and blood, that our sins might be forgiven, and that we might feel they are forgiven, and enjoy God's rich favor in that blessing.

For blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is covered. So, this is still a matter for thanksgiving and prayer, and I desire to speak upon it in that spirit.

[ 6 : 05 ] May the Holy Spirit lead us into it. Oh, may the Holy Spirit come with the word to us this morning. For this is a very rich text.

It really is. Rich in the truth, and rich in the blessing, and rich in the experience of it. And as I pondered over it, I felt in my heart such a desire that the richness of this text might flow into my preaching today, and enrich that which will be poor enough if it doesn't, and that it might flow not only into my preaching, but that it might flow somewhat into your hearts through the preaching.

for my friends, my text this morning, it can, it expresses the marrow and fatness of the gospel, and if it is mixed with faith in your hearing it, and the Holy Spirit clothes it with heavenly power, it cannot fail to feed your souls.

well now may the Lord grant us then his blessing. Here are the two themes of the gospel.

Redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin. And these two truths you see are put together.

[ 7 : 55 ] Although considered as truths they may be considered distinctly.

Redemption is redemption and forgiveness is forgiveness. forgiveness. But the apostle puts them together because they are so closely connected that you cannot have the one blessing without the other coming with it.

If there is redemption through his blood, there will be in that redemption the forgiveness of sins. And if there is forgiveness of sins, it clearly implies that there has been redemption through blood.

Because forgiveness of sins can never come to any except those who are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. And my meditation upon this text leads me to speak first of all of these two gospel blessings things in their connection.

First, for the apostle puts them before us as being one. He doesn't say in whom we have redemption through his blood and the forgiveness of sins as though the one is somewhat added to the other.

[ 9 : 33 ] But we have redemption through his blood, even, the forgiveness of sins. And the word even is in italics. So that the two blessings, although they are distinctive blessings, are so united together that we must speak of them, I think, first, in that way, and then, as I may be able, secondly, to expound them distinctly, in whom we have redemption through his blood, then, the forgiveness of sins.

Or, nothing, my friends, can so exactly and so completely and so blessedly meet our case as redemption and forgiveness.

And, before I come to speak of these truths distinctly in themselves, I would point out first that they both come from the same blessed person in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.

They both come from the same person. And, it is the greatest importance for us to appreciate this for all the fullness and richness and sweetness and power of gospel truths comes from the person of Jesus Christ himself.

Now, if I were to spend this morning delivering to you a sermon doctrinally on redemption and left Jesus Christ out of it, treated this blessing theologically and not personally, I should most likely draw you up this morning, that if I could preach redemption as it is in Jesus Christ and as it comes from him and through his blood, then that would enrich your heart because all the riches of grace and love are in the person of Jesus Christ.

[ 12:18 ] for as I have said, doctrine however, true and scriptural considered doctrinally without its connection with Jesus Christ is very dry.

All the life and sweetness and power and love and grace and holiness that flows in doctrines of the gospel flows from Jesus Christ in whom and this view of the word expands to one's mind in whom in what sense in Jesus Christ well first brethren in Jesus Christ with regard to his purpose to save and redeem us for we have redemption in the purpose of Jesus Christ before ever he came into this world and long before we were ever born into it there was in his very purpose redemption purposed and planned because whatever the Lord

Jesus Christ has done in this world has been a fulfilling of a purpose that was in his heart long long before he appeared amongst men we have redemption in the purpose of his heart but there's more than that we have redemption in his great heart of love I don't know how I can put it otherwise for my Saviour has a wonderful heart of love and all that troubles me is that I make such a poor attempt to set it before you and expound that love he has a great heart of love as God he has a divine heart of love and as man he has a human heart of love and God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners

Christ died for us there's love in redemption oh there is in his love and in his pity he redeemed them he redeemed them because redemption was in his love in whose heart of love we have redemption yes before ever his sacred blood flowed from his veins at Calvary before ever he uttered those words so very very significant it is finished before the veil was rent either the veil of his precious body or the veil of the temple was rent we had redemption in his love and so the apostle puts it according to his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins brethren it's a very poor dim view we have of redemption and a very dim sense of it if we do not see and feel that we have redemption in his love there mark how it's put for truth like this could not safely be expressed otherwise than by inspired language the language of my text is inspired language in every word of it it doesn't say we have redemption through his love we have redemption through his blood but it says we have redemption in him we have it in him in his love and so with his grace as in a similar passage to this the apostle puts it that we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace he doesn't say we have redemption through the riches of his grace but according to the riches of his grace that is to say that redemption that we have is what it is such a wonderful redemption because it's according to the riches of his grace his redemption that manifests so wonderfully what riches of grace there are in Jesus

Christ are you wishing while I try to set this before you that you knew more about this in your own heart more about this redeeming love and the exceeding riches of his grace in whom we have redemption well if you have that if that is your real desire to know and understand and feel these things the Lord will grant you that knowledge and that understanding and that experience I'm sure he will it may perhaps come to you surprisingly the Lord will cause the light of this blessed gospel to shine in your heart and then and some of you perhaps you're younger in life listening to me this morning and beginning to fear your way along matters that may seem difficult to you to understand now doctrines that you fear you can't grasp and even expressions that you seem scarcely able to understand that will seem as clear to you when the light shines in your heart as things are clear to our day this morning this bright lovely clear morning in whom we have redemption and forgiveness in the same person and then secondly with regard to this in whom we have redemption it implies this that with regard to redemption and the forgiveness of sins we have the fullness of that blessing in Jesus

[ 20 : 10 ] Christ even though we may seem to come very short in the experience and enjoyment of it in our hearts but we have it in Jesus Christ and do remember this that the whole of this proceeds upon this truth concerning the Colossians that they had faith in Jesus Christ and love to all the saints the apostle went upon that entirely he was quite sure that if they had faith in Jesus Christ they had redemption in Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sins the fullness of every gospel blessing is in Jesus Christ not in our experience of it this might help and encourage some of you who feel very much how you come short in the experience of these heavenly blessings do I hear you say this morning some of you that you feel very poor in your spirit that you feel very much to lack these rich and holy things that you feel very low perhaps just now with regard to your inmost feelings are you saying that there's one text that least suits you but I am poor and needy well even so that may be and I think that is more often than not the feeling we have about our spiritual state that we feel very poor in it and that we're very needy but do remember this that it is in

Jesus Christ you have redemption and forgiveness and there's no poverty there look brethren I may put it to you in this simple way anyone may be an heir to a fortune and yet for various reasons they may not yet have come into the personal possession and enjoyment of it why they may even have difficulty perhaps to make ends meet and yet be heir to a fortune but it's in someone's will for them there it is they have it they have it by right though they haven't it yet by personal enjoyment now that's just about where it is with us isn't it we haven't very much to go on with often ourselves but still we have it in Jesus

Christ and if we have it in Jesus Christ we shall come into the enjoyment of it to the full sooner or later and I think generally speaking this is applicable that though here thou hast that little scarce enough for the proof of thy proper title oh but it's in Jesus Christ you have it you have it in him in whom we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sin well now I mustn't dwell longer on that secondly just as these two united gospel blessings come from the same person and the same infinite source of his grace and his love and his purpose so they come both together in and through the same means to us it is through his blood whether it's redemption whether it's forgiveness it's both alike it can only come to us through his blood this then again is a gospel truth that you need to understand most of you do understand it that every blessing comes to us through

Jesus blood and there are reasons for that why it should be so one reason of course is because redemption and forgiveness comes to us as sinners not as saints but as sinners pray don't look for proof and evidence of saintship in your soul and then hope that redemption and forgiveness will come to you that way sin because of grace and goodness and the like in your heart don't think that redemption and forgiveness if it is ever to come to sinners must come through the blood that atones for sin and because it is so true that without the shedding of blood there is no remission so true it is that if remission ever comes to us it must come through the shedding of blood brethren this is I know a disputed point with some not with us and I trust never will be a matter of doubt or debate that the blood of

Christ is essential to redemption and forgiveness I've spoken to you this morning about love I've mentioned the redemption comes from love if it comes from love it must come through blood redemption has in it in Jesus Christ an exceeding richness of grace but even so it must come to us through his blood Jesus Christ has set us a wonderful example in every way and it becomes those who follow him to think much of his example and seek much grace to follow it and copy it but it is not through his example that redemption comes to us we're not redeemed by

[ 27 : 47 ] Jesus Christ setting us an example and out following it and acting up to it and in that way being redeemed no brethren no redemption comes to us only through his blood for one thing it must be so because of the just character of God for God to redeem is for God to redeem in a just manner to forgive is for God to forgive entirely consistently with the justice of his nature and the justice of his law for we're redeemed from under the law that condemns us but God doesn't redeem us from under the law that condemns us by overthrowing his law to do it but by giving his only begotten son to atone for sin through the shedding of his blood and so to honour

God's holy and just law and God's just nature there is much in that scripture if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us not only faithful but just we should have a very reverential regard for God's just nature for he cannot do unjustly mercifully he forgives sin but he forgives sin justly and justice requires that sin shall be justly condemned and God has condemned sin in his dear son who bore it to was

Jesus our friend when he hung on the tree that opened the channel of redemption and mercy for you and me there is much encouragement for us in this consideration that we have redemption through his blood and the forgiveness of sins that both these truths come through this wonderful channel of the saviour's blood because that answers all objections that unbelief and a sense of sin in us may raise against us you say you feel sometimes in such a case your heart is such a heart you tell me there is so much evil in it you feel that you could hardly expect good to come to you from

God blessing to come to you forgiveness to come to you now I tell you there is a lurking feeling and unbelief is a seed of it that sin blocks up the avenue between God and our souls well in some sense it does in some sense it does well we'll say it does then we'll say that sin blocks up the avenue between God and us comes between us like a barrier well brethren it would block everything out it would be an impenetrable barrier between God's love and God's grace and there are needy souls if it were not for the blood of

Christ I can only say what's on my mind and on my heart to say this way the blood of Christ has such an atoning virtue in it that sin is no barrier to the precious blood of Christ and it is no barrier to every gospel blessing coming to us that way if there are any other way I might truly say it's no use sin has blocked it up it's made it impossible for there can be anything come from God to you but when it comes to the blood of Christ I must say sin can never block that avenue never never it is because redemption is through his blood that I know it can come to me and to you and were matters worse with us than they are were our sin even a higher mountain were it even a more guilty condition were it even more evil still could not prevent redemption coming to us through his blood and you will understand me those of you who do understand me and I hope some of you are wishing to and that is that when these two gospel blessings come to us through the blood of Christ they bring into our hearts a sense of the preciousness of that blood through which they come

[ 34 : 15 ] I know they do when redemption comes the blood of Christ seems to speak in it you're bought with a price you're not your own brethren there is there is something exceedingly precious in the blood of Christ and not only precious with regard to the infinite merit of that atoning blood but there's something very precious in our feelings with regard to it when redemption and forgiveness comes to us there's something very precious we feel about the blood of Jesus very precious well now if redemption and forgiveness could come to you any other way than through his blood you wouldn't have a sense of that precious blood brought into your soul the blood of Christ how sweet it sounds to cleanse and heal the sinner's wounds the streams thereof are rich and free and why my soul why not for thee well why not why not why not for every person if God so will in this chapel this morning why not why not and why my soul why not for thee for the blood of Christ was shed for sinners it's a lack of the sense of sin not the greatness of the sense of sin that keeps a sense of the preciousness of the blood of Jesus

Christ away from our hearts it's the lack of the sense of sin not the burden of it when it's felt presently redemption through blood will come and remove that burden entirely and forgive that guilt because it's through blood and I have to leave the subject at this point who hath delivered us from the power of darkness in whom we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins now redemption and forgiveness coming together through the blood of Christ they meet every feature of our case they constitute a complete blessing in this way that redemption and forgiveness coming through the blood of Christ as a cleansing as well as a forgiving blessing to us if you see what I mean and I think

I can illustrate what I mean in a very simple way and I think sometimes divine things can be illustrated really in a very simple manner the Lord Jesus Christ anyway often illustrated profound truths with simplest illustrations now suppose a parent for bad child for good reason to go somewhere or to do something not an arbitrary point of view but because it would be very injurious to the child and dangerous to the child to do that well we'll imagine the child willfully and disobediently went and did it and got into trouble perhaps wounded or perhaps fell into the mire and filth and came back in that filthy condition and we'll suppose that the child comes back sorry and penitently for having disobeyed the parent's word and got into that trouble that he was warned against and we'll suppose the parent kindly and tenderly said well it's all forgiven and left it at that could suppose the child was still filthy kind of mud and mire that had fallen into would forgiveness be sufficient no the child would need to be cleansed as well as forgiven to have clean clothes as well as a pardoning kiss now my friends when redemption and forgiveness comes through blood it's not only a pardoning kiss but it's a cleansing operation it's a cleansing operation it puts everything right that our disobedience sin has put wrong for we all have sinned against our

God exemption none can boast that he who feels the heaviest load will prize forgiveness most it's a blessing to be convinced of sin but it's one of the most painful blessings you'll ever know to be convinced of sin to feel its guilt sting the conscience and a sense of filth make the mind ashamed before God so that you will say I'm ashamed to lift up my face unto the old God because of this that consciousness of sins guilt and filth is a great blessing to anyone but it's a most distressing blessing that it fits them for my text present the redemption comes and delivers them and forgiveness comes and pardons them and that precious blood through which redemption and forgiveness comes cleanses them now brethren if you're redeemed from the guilt and power of sin and death if you're forgiven every sin and if you're purged from every pain

I'm asking what's lacking with regard to that that it works complete isn't it I know there's much more you will want to know and want to feel but with regard to the matter of your original condition now what's lacking you see you put these two blessings together redemption and forgiveness and regard them as both coming through atoning cleansing blood that meets your case exactly and when the Holy Spirit applies in some measure the truth that I preached this morning then you will be very happy then you will feel free in your spirit then your heart will praise and bless redeeming love oh brethren what we owe to

[ 43 : 12 ] Jesus Christ what we owe to Jesus Christ well we don't realize a tenth a hundredth part of what we owe to Jesus Christ but when as we sang this morning before I tried to begin when his spirit brings us home when his spirit brings us home then we will praise and bless redeeming love oh we will and our poor stammering tongues won't stammer any longer and our hearts won't be held down with dullness and deadness any longer but all our expanded powers will rejoice in redeeming love and atoning love amen amen