

REDEMPTION
PRESENTED BY
JESS HALL, JR.
GREEN LAWN CHURCH OF CHRIST
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IN MATTHEW 20:28 WE READ THE FOLLOWING: "EVEN AS THE SON OF MAN CAME NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER, AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MAN." THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN PLACED IN A CONTEXT WHERE OFTENTIMES IT LOSES ITS GREAT SIGNIFICANCE. I HOPE IN THE COURSE OF OUR LESSON TONIGHT THAT I CAN IMPRESS UPON YOU THE BEAUTY AND THE WONDER OF THIS STATEMENT, NOT IN SPITE OF THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN PLACED, BUT BECAUSE OF THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN PLACED, THAT WE MIGHT HAVE A FULLER UNDERSTANDING OF AND A GREATER APPRECIATION FOR THE MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE MESSAGE OF REDEMPTION IS THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF SCRIPTURE. THE MESSAGE OF REDEMPTION BEGINS IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS AND IT IS THE THEME OF GOD'S WORK UNTIL JESUS COMES. THEN IT IS THE THEME OF THE WORK THAT GOD GAVE HIS PEOPLE TO DO THAT THE REDEEMED MIGHT CAUSE OTHERS TO BE REDEEMED. THUS, IT SHOULD BE NO GREAT SURPRISE THAT, WHEN WE COME TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION WHERE INSPIRATION IS GIVING US A VIEW OF THAT WHICH LIES BEYOND FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD, WE FIND THE NEW SONG WHICH GOD'S PEOPLE ARE SINGING IN HEAVEN TO BE THE SONG OF REDEMPTION. IN REV. 5:9 WE READ THIS LANGUAGE, "AND THEY SANG A NEW SONG, SAYING, THOU ART WORTHY TO TAKE THE BOOK, AND TO OPEN THE SEALS THEREOF: FOR THOU WAST SLAIN, AND HAST REDEEMED US TO GOD BY THY BLOOD OUT OF EVERY KINDRED, AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE, AND NATION." THIS I BELIEVE WILL BE PART OF THE ACTIVITY OF THE SAINTS THROUGHOUT ETERNITY--PRAISING GOD FOR THE REDEMPTIVE WORK THAT HE WROUGHT ON OUR BEHALF THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

TO SAY THE WORD "REDEMPTION" IS REALLY TO SAY THE WORD "ATONEMENT." THERE ARE A NUMBER OF WORDS WHICH SIMPLY PRESENT DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT. TO USE ONE OF THESE WORDS IS TO LOOK AT THE ATONEMENT FROM A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT VANTAGE POINT. FOR INSTANCE, WHEN WE LOOK AT THE WORD "SACRIFICE," WE ARE LOOKING AT THE ATONEMENT FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF GUILT, AND THE SACRIFICE WHICH IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO REMOVE OR TO ATONE FOR THE GUILT OF MAN. WHEN WE LOOK AT THE WORD "PROPITIATION" WE ARE LOOKING AT THE ATONEMENT, BUT WE ARE LOOKING AT THE ATONEMENT FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF THE WRATH OF GOD ON SIN, AND THE GIFT OF JESUS WHICH PROPITIATES OR SATISFIES OR PUTS AWAY THE WRATH OF GOD. ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL WORD IN THE N.T. IS THE WORD "RECONCILIATION." WHEN WE LOOK AT THE WORD RECONCILIATION WE ARE LOOKING AT THE ATONEMENT, BUT WE ARE LOOKING AT THE ATONEMENT FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF ALIENATION, THAT MAN HAS BEEN ALIENATED FROM GOD BUT THROUGH THE ATONING WORK OF JESUS MAN MIGHT BE RECONCILED UNTO THE FATHER.

THE WORD "REDEMPTION" IS THIS KIND OF WORD. IT IS AN ATONEMENT WORD, BUT IT LOOKS AT THE ATONEMENT FROM ITS OWN VANTAGE POINT PERSPECTIVE. WHEN THE WORD "REDEMPTION" IS USED IN RELATIONSHIP ^{TO} THE ATONEMENT, WE ARE LOOKING AT THE ATONEMENT FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF BONDAGE, FOR THE WORD "REDEMPTION" IS A WORD WHICH MEANS "TO BUY BACK." THIS IS EMPHASIZED IN THE VARIOUS USES OF THE WORD "REDEMPTION" IN SCRIPTURE. FOR INSTANCE IT IS SOMETIMES USED IN REGARD TO THE PAYMENT OF A DEBT. WE FIND THIS IN THOSE PASSAGES (THEY ARE MANY IN NUMBER AND WE WILL NOT READ THEM) WHERE REDEMPTION IS IDENTICAL WITH "THE REMISSION OF SINS." SOMETIMES THE WORD REDEMPTION IS USED IN THE SENSE OF LIBERATION OF A CAPTIVE OR A SLAVE, AS WHEN IT IS SAID THAT JESUS "GAVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR ALL," OR "A RANSOM FOR MANY." THEN SOMETIMES THE WORD "REDEMPTION" IS USED, NOT IN REFERENCE AT ALL TO THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN REDEEMED, NEITHER IS IT USED IN REFERENCE TO THE BLESSINGS THAT BELONG TO THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN REDEEMED, BUT IT IS USED TO REFER TO HIM WHO HAS PERFORMED THE REDEMPTION AND TO THE PARTICULAR RELATIONSHIP THAT EXISTS BETWEEN THE REDEEMER AND THE REDEEMED, AS WE FIND IN

THOSE PASSAGES WHICH SPEAK OF CHRISTIANS AS BEING "REDEEMED UNTO GOD," OR WHICH SPEAK OF THOSE WHO ARE CHRISTIANS AS BEING "NOT YOUR OWN FOR YOU HAVE BEEN BOUGHT WITH A PRICE,"

BUT WHEN WE THINK OF EACH OF THESE DIFFERENT USES OF THE WORD "REDEMPTION" THERE IS ONE THING THAT IS COMMON TO ALL---IN EVERY USE OF THE WORD THERE IS THE IDEA OF A PAYMENT. THERE IS THE IDEA OF SOMETHING BEING GIVEN IN ORDER THAT SOMETHING MIGHT BE BOUGHT BACK. THIS I BELIEVE IS VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTANDING THE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION AS WE HAVE IT IN THE WORD OF GOD. FOR YOU SEE, WHEN WE USE THE TERM "REDEMPTION" WE ARE NOT SAYING THAT THE DEBT HAS BEEN CANCELED. BUT WE ARE SAYING THAT THE DEBT HAS BEEN LIQUIDATED OR THE DEBT HAS BEEN PAID. WHEN WE USE THE TERM "REDEMPTION" WE ARE NOT SAYING THAT THIS SLAVE WHO WAS IN BONDAGE HAS BEEN GRATUITOUSLY OR FREELY RELEASED, BUT WE ARE SAYING THAT THE PRICE HAS BEEN PAID IN ORDER THAT THIS CAPTIVE MIGHT BE BOUGHT BACK OR RANSOMED. WHEN WE THINK OF THE TERM "REDEMPTION" IN RELATIONSHIP TO A POSSESSION, WE ARE NOT SAYING THAT THIS POSSESSION WHICH HAS BEEN ALIENATED IS GRATUITOUSLY RECOVERED, BUT RATHER WE ARE SAYING THAT THIS HAS BEEN BOUGHT BACK. NOW WHY IS THIS NECESSARY? WHY COULD NOT THE DEBT HAVE BEEN CANCELED? WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE PAID? WHY COULDN'T THE SLAVE JUST BE RELEASED? WHY DID HE HAVE TO BE BOUGHT BACK? WHY COULDN'T THIS ALIENATED POSSESSION BE GRATUITOUSLY GIVEN? WHY DID THE PRICE HAVE TO BE PAID? THE ANSWER IS IN ROMANS 3:26, WHERE WE FIND THAT IT WAS THROUGH THIS PROCESS OF REDEMPTION THAT THIS DIFFICULTY WHICH GOD FACED WAS ANSWERED. FOR IT WAS IN THE FACT OF THE ATONING GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST THAT GOD WAS ENABLED TO BE "BOTH JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER OF THEM THAT BELIEVE ON JESUS CHRIST." THE JUSTICE OF GOD HAD TO BE RECTIFIED. THE JUSTICE OF GOD COULD NOT BE SET ASIDE. AND IF THE SLAVE HAD JUST BEEN SET FREE, IF NO PRICE HAD BEEN EXACTED FOR DISOBEDIENCE, IF NO SACRIFICE HAD BEEN DEMANDED FOR SIN, THEN GOD MIGHT HAVE BEEN A JUSTIFIER BUT HE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN JUST. THEREFORE THE ATONEMENT OR THE REDEMPTION WAS NECESSARY IN ORDER THAT GOD MIGHT BE BOTH JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER OF THOSE THAT BELIEVE IN JESUS.

REDEMPTION, THEN, VIEWS THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST AS BEING NOT SIMPLY A DELIVERANCE FROM BONDAGE, BUT IT LOOKS AT THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST IN TERMS OF A RANSOM. IT LOOKS AT THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST AS BEING THE PRICE THAT WAS PAID FOR THE SINS OF MAN. THE LANGUAGE OF REDEMPTION IN THE N.T., THEN, IS ALWAYS THAT OF SECURING RELEASE THROUGH THE PAYMENT OF A PRICE AND IT IS THIS TERMINOLOGY, THIS CONCEPT, WHICH IS USED TO DESCRIBE THE LAYING DOWN OF THE LIFE OF JESUS AND THE SHEDDING OF HIS BLOOD.

NOW WITH THIS IN MIND LET US LOOK AGAIN AT THE TEXT WE READ AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR LESSON MATTHEW 20:28. "EVEN AS THE SON OF MAN CAME NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER, AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY." NOW THE WORD "RANSOM" HERE, WE MIGHT SHOULD POINT OUT, IS THE SAME WORD IN THE GREEK WHICH IS TRANSLATED "REDEEMED" OR "REDEMPTION" IN OTHER PASSAGES, SO WE'RE SPEAKING OF THE SAME THING. IT JUST HAPPENS HERE TO BE TRANSLATED AS "RANSOMED." IN FACT, "RANSOM" IS A BETTER TRANSLATION OF THE GREEK, FOR THE TERM "REDEEMED" COMES TO US FROM THE LATIN TRANSLATION OF SCRIPTURE. WHEN WE LOOK AT THE CONTEXT OF MATT 20:28, WE DISCOVER THAT THE APOSTLES HAD BEEN IN ONE OF THEIR OFT DISCUSSIONS OF WHO WOULD BE THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. JESUS TAUGHT THEM THE LESSON THAT THE MAN WHO WOULD BE GREAT AMONG YOU LET HIM BE THE MINISTER OR SERVANT OF ALL. THEN HE USES HIMSELF AS AN ILLUSTRATION. "EVEN AS THE SON OF MAN CAME NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER, AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY."

GENERALLY WHEN WE THINK OF THE MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST WE THINK OF MANY FORMS OF SERVICE WHICH HE RENDERED. WHEN WE WANT TO THINK OF SOME PARTICULAR HUMILIATING SERVICE WHICH JESUS RENDERED, WE USUALLY GO TO THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, WHERE IMMEDIATELY PRIOR JESUS GIRDED HIMSELF AND WASHED THE FEET OF HIS DISCIPLES. WE LOOK AT THIS AND SAY, "LOOK AT THE MINISTRY, LOOK AT THE SERVICE OF JESUS. JESUS CAME NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO BUT TO MINISTER." BUT THE LESSON IN THIS VERSE DOES NOT RELATE SIMPLY TO JESUS BEING A MINISTER TO OTHERS, FOR JESUS DOES NOT STOP WITH SAYING, "EVEN AS THE SON OF MAN CAME NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER." HE THEN DEFINES THE GREATEST MINISTRY THAT

HE CAME TO PERFORM, THE GREATEST SERVICE THAT HE CAME TO RENDER FOR MANKIND, "AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MAN."

THIS VERSE OFTEN IS OVERLOOKED WHEN WE SPEAK OF REDEMPTION, AND YET THREE BASIC CONCEPTS OF THE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION ARE SET FORTH IN THIS ONE BRIEF VERSE. IN THE FIRST PLACE JESUS SAYS THAT THIS IS THE WORK HE CAME TO DO, "EVEN AS THE SON OF MAN CAME TO MINISTER AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY." THIS ACT OF REDEMPTION WAS NOT INCIDENTAL TO THE COMING OF JESUS. IT WAS THE MAIN PURPOSE. IT WAS THE MOTIVATING FACTOR. YEA, I THINK WE COULD SAY IT WAS THE ONLY REASON THAT JESUS CAME TO EARTH. HE CAME TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY. IN THE SECOND PLACE, JESUS TELLS US IN THIS PASSAGE CONCERNING HIS WORK OF REDEMPTION THAT THE GIVING OF HIS LIFE WAS THE RANSOM PRICE, "AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY." THEREFORE, THE REDEEMING ACT OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE INCARNATION. SURELY THE INCARNATION WAS ESSENTIAL TO THE DEATH, BUT THE INCARNATION ITSELF WAS NOT THE REDEEMING ACT. THE REDEEMING ACT OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE MARVELOUS LESSONS THAT HE TAUGHT. THE REDEEMING ACT OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE INSPIRATION THAT HE GAVE TO MEN. THE REDEEMING ACT OF JESUS CHRIST BY HIS OWN DEFINITION IS THE GIVING OR THE LAYING DOWN OF HIS LIFE. THIRDLY, JESUS TELLS US IN THIS PASSAGE CONCERNING HIS ACT OF REDEMPTION THAT IT WAS SUBSTITUTIONARY IN ITS CHARACTER AND IN ITS DESIGN. JESUS DID NOT DIE FOR HIMSELF. JESUS DID NOT REDEEM HIMSELF. HE CAME TO GIVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR MANY. IT WAS ON BEHALF OF OTHERS AND IN THEIR STEAD THAT JESUS DIED.

NOW, SINCE THE WORK OF CHRIST, AS WE HAVE SEEN HERE IN MATT. 20:28, SETS THE POINTS FOR THE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION, AND SINCE JESUS PRESENTED THE GIVING OF HIS LIFE, THE GIVING OF HIS BLOOD AS THE RANSOM PRICE, THEN SURELY BY HIS STATEMENT HERE WE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR THE EMPHASIS THAT WE FIND IN SCRIPTURE WHICH IS PLACED UPON THE BLOOD OF JESUS IN RELATIONSHIP TO HIS REDEPTIVE WORK. FOR INSTANCE, EPH. 1:7: "IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD. THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE." 1 PETER 1:18, 19, "FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW THAT YE WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS, AS SILVER OR GOLD, FROM YOUR VAIN CONVERSATION RECEIVED BY TRADITION FROM YOUR FATHERS; BUT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, AS OF A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH AND WITHOUT SPOT." HEBREWS 9:12. "NEITHER BY THE BLOOD OF GOATS AND CALVES, BUT BY HIS OWN BLOOD HE ENTERED IN ONCE INTO THE HOLY PLACE, HAVING OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOR US." NOW IT IS TRUE THAT THERE ARE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE IN THE WORD OF GOD WHICH SPEAK OF REDEMPTION WITHOUT SPEAKING OF THE BLOOD, BUT WHENEVER THE AGENCY IS DESCRIBED, IT INVARIABLY RELATES TO THE SHEDDING OF THE BLOOD OF THE SON OF GOD.

BUT THEN WE HAVE SAID THAT THE USE OF THE TERM "REDEMPTION" IS LOOKING AT THE ATONEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OR FROM THE VIEW OF BONDAGE, THAT THERE IS A PAYMENT OF A PRICE IN ORDER THAT A PERSON OR A POSSESSION MIGHT BE BOUGHT BACK. WHAT THEN, IS THAT FROM WHICH WE AS CHRISTIANS HAVE BEEN REDEEMED? REDEMPTION WOULD NOT HAVE MUCH MEANING IF IT HAD BEEN FROM SOMETHING THAT EITHER WAS NOT VERY BAD IN ITS NATURE OR IF SOMEONE HAS PAID A PRICE FOR US THAT WE COULD HAVE PAID FOR OURSELVES. BUT IF WE HAVE BEEN REDEEMED FROM SOMETHING THAT IS TERRIBLE IN ITS CONSEQUENCES AND IF WE HAVE BEEN REDEEMED FROM SOMETHING THAT DEMANDED SO GREAT A PRICE WE COULD NOT PAY, THEN SURELY THE PAYMENT OF THAT PRICE BY ANOTHER TAKES ON A GREATER LUSTER AND BEAUTY. THIS IS THE CASE WITH OUR REDEMPTION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

LET ME MENTION TWO THINGS. WE HAVE BEEN REDEEMED FROM SIN. IN OUR WORLD TODAY THAT HAS PERHAPS LOST A GREAT DEAL OF SIGNIFICANCE AND MEANING BECAUSE WE HAVE SO DEFINED AWAY SIN THAT TO US IT HAS BECOME SOMETHING THAT IS REALLY INSIGNIFICANT IN ITS CONSEQUENCES. NOW AS FAR AS MOST OF US ARE CONCERNED WE DO NOT HAVE ANY TROUBLE WITH LINING UP CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE, IN OUR EYES, GREAT SINNERS AND SAYING, "YES, THE SINNERS NEED TO BE REDEEMED." BUT OVER HERE ON THE OTHER SIDE, WE HAVE MADE US A LIST OF LITTLE SINS OR WE'VE MADE US A LIST OF INNOCUOUS SINS OR WE HAVE MADE US A LIST OF SINS OF WHICH GOD TAKES NO NOTICE (BECAUSE THEY ARE MINE), AND WE FEEL THAT WE DON'T NEED TO BE REDEEMED FROM THESE, THAT NO PRICE NEEDS TO BE PAID. BUT I SUGGEST THAT WE READ THE WORD OF GOD AGAIN. JESUS DID NOT COME TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR GREAT SINS. JESUS DID NOT COME TO GIVE HIS LIFE

A RANSOM FOR SINS OF LASCIVIOUSNESS AND OF A PROFLIGATE NATURE, BUT HE CAME TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR SIN. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT YOUR SIN IS. THAT'S ENOUGH TO KEEP YOU OUT OF HEAVEN. THAT'S THE REASON SO MANY OF US AREN'T GOING TO BE SAVED AT LAST--BECAUSE WE GO ON OUR MERRY WAY INDIFFERENT TO THE REDEMPTION THAT GOD HAS WROUGHT IN US AND WE ARE UNFAITHFUL IN SO MANY, MANY WAYS AND WE DON'T EVEN THINK IT IS A SIN. BUT IT IS, AND JESUS CAME TO THE PRICE OF SIN, PERIOD! NOT GREAT SIN.

THE BONDAGE IN WHICH SIN ENTAILS US MAY BE DESCRIBED AS BEING THREEFOLD. THE GUILT OF SIN, THE DEFILEMENT OF SIN, AND THE POWER OF SIN. FROM EVERY ONE OF THESE KINDS OF BONDAGES INTO WHICH SIN PLACES US JESUS CAME TO DIE AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM. WE THINK OF THE GUILT OF SIN. WE READ ROMANS 3:24, "BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS," THAT WORD "JUSTIFIED" IS A LEGAL WORD WHICH MEANS ACQUITTED FROM GUILT. WHEN WE THINK OF THE DEFILEMENT OF SIN WE TURN TO TITUS 2:14, "WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR US, THAT HE MIGHT REDEEM US FROM ALL INIQUITY, AND PURIFY UNTO HIMSELF A PECULIAR PEOPLE, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS." JESUS GAVE HIMSELF FOR US IN ORDER THAT, BEING CLEANSED FROM THE DEFILEMENT OF INIQUITY, WE MIGHT BE PURIFIED--NO DEFILEMENT. HE CAME TO REDEEM US FROM THE POWER OF SIN, JOHN 12:31, "NOW IS THE JUDGMENT OF THIS WORLD; NOW SHALL THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD BE CAST OUT," HEBREWS 2:14, "FORASMUCH THEN AS THE CHILDREN ARE PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD, HE ALSO HIMSELF LIKewise TOOK PART OF THE SAME; THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM THAT HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS, THE DEVIL." SO WHETHER WE SPEAK OF THE GUILT OF SIN, OR THE DEFILEMENT OF SIN, OR THE POWER OF SIN, JESUS CAME TO REDEEM US THEREFROM. IT IS SIGNIFICANT IN THIS RELATIONSHIP THAT WHEN WE BEGIN IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS, IN GEN. 3:15, THE VERY FIRST PROMISE THAT GOD GIVES THAT BRINGS HOPE BACK INTO A FALLEN WORLD IS THAT THAT OLD SERPENT WILL BE DESTROYED, AND WHEN WE COME TO THE CONCLUDING PORTION, WHEN WE COME TO THE CONSUMMATION OF INSPIRATION, IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION, CHAPTER 20 AND VERSE 10, WE HAVE DESCRIBED THE CASTING OF THAT OLD SERPENT WHICH IS THE DEVIL OR SATAN INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE, THAT IS THE SECOND DEATH, INTO AN ETERNAL HELL. SO THE BIBLE BEGINS WITH THE PROPHECY THAT HOPE SHALL BE AND THE BOOK OF REV., IN DESCRIBING THE END OF TIME, SAYS THAT GOD WILL DELIVER US AND THAT THE OLD DEVIL, SATAN, WILL BE DESTROYED, AND HE WHO HAS BEEN DIGGING PITFALLS FOR THE FEET OF THE SAINTS SHALL BE NO MORE. THIS IS THE REDEMPTION THAT JESUS CAME TO WORK FOR US IN RELATIONSHIP TO SIN.

BUT THEN SECONDLY, JESUS CAME TO REDEEM US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW. THE CURSE THAT THE LAW PRONOUNCES ON ITS TRANSGRESSORS IS JUST AS INVIOABLE AS ARE ITS DEMANDS. WHEN THE DEMANDS OF THE LAW ARE BROKEN THEN THE LAW IS GOING TO EXACT THE PENALTY THEREOF AND EVERY MAN UNTIL THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST HAD BEEN UNDER THE CURSE OF THE LAW. GAL. 3:10 "FOR AS MANY AS ARE OF THE WORKS OF THE LAW ARE UNDER THE CURSE; FOR IT IS WRITTEN, CURSED IS EVERY ONE THAT CONTINUETH NOT IN ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW TO DO THEM." IF EVERYONE IS CURSED WHO CONTINUETH NOT TO DO ALL OF THE THINGS THAT ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAW, THAT IS JUST SAYING IN SIMPLE LANGUAGE THAT EVERY ONE OF US IS CURSED. IT IS TO THIS SANCTION OR TO THIS CURSE WHICH THE LAW PLACES UPON EVERY MAN THAT THE REDEMPTIVE ACT OF JESUS CHRIST IS DIRECTED. IT WAS IN RELATIONSHIP TO THIS CURSE THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS MADE A CURSE FOR US. GAL. 3:13, "CHRIST HAS REDEEMED US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW BEING MADE A CURSE FOR US AS IT IS WRITTEN, CURSED IS EVERYONE THAT HANGETH ON A TREE." YOU SEE, THE REDEMPTIVE ACT OF JESUS CHRIST WAS NOT JUST THE DEATH OF CHRIST. THE REDEMPTIVE ACT OF JESUS CHRIST WAS THE SHEDDING OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST, IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF GOLGOTHA. WITHOUT THE CURSE OF GOLGOTHA THE DEATH OF CHRIST AND THE SHEDDING OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST WOULD HAVE GONE FOR NOUGHT. IT WAS IN THIS FACT, THIS GREAT TRUTH, THIS REDEEMING TRUTH--THAT THE BLOOD WAS SHED IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST WHILE THE VERY CURSE OF HEAVEN WAS UPON HEAVEN'S SON--THAT THE DEATH OF CHRIST BECOMES AN ACT WHICH CAN REDEEM US FROM OUR SINS. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO MEASURE THE INTENSITY OF THE REPROACH. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR

US EVEN TO BEGIN TO APPRECIATE OR UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH OF THE HUMILIATION THAT WAS PLACED UPON JESUS. BUT IT WAS THE HUMILIATION WHICH GAVE REDEEMING POWER TO HIS DEATH. TO BE ABLE TO STAND IN THE PRESENCE OF THIS REDEMPTIVE WORK AND TO BE UNMOVED BY THIS GREAT SPECTACLE IS TO BE INSENSITIVE TO ALL OF THE HOLINESS AND ALL OF THE LOVE THAT HEAVEN CAN DISPLAY. IT'S BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN RANSOMED FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW THAT IN OTHER PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WE'RE PICTURED AS BEING DEAD TO THE LAW, ROM. 7:6 AND GAL. 2:19, THAT WE ARE PICTURED AS HAVING PUT TO DEATH THE LAW, THAT WE ARE PICTURED AS BEING DISCHARGED FROM THE LAW. IT IS AS WE VIEW THESE STATEMENTS THAT WE CAN UNDERSTAND HOW WE ARE RELEASED FROM THE POWER OF THE BONDAGE OF CONDEMNATION AND WE HAVE BECOME FREED TO BE JUSTIFIED APART FROM THE LAW.

BUT NOW LET'S ASK ANOTHER QUESTION. WE SAY THAT JESUS CAME TO REDEEM US FROM SIN, FROM IT'S GUILT, IT'S DEFILEMENT, AND FROM IT'S POWER. WE SAY THAT JESUS CAME TO REDEEM US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW. ARE THESE REALLY TWO DIFFERENT THINGS? I THINK NOT. BOTH OF THEM ARE INTERRELATED. WHEN WE TURN TO I COR. 15:56 WE READ THAT THE STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW. THESE THINGS WERE SO RELATED THAT JESUS COULD NOT REDEEM US FROM ONE WITHOUT REDEEMING US FROM THE OTHER. JESUS COULD NOT SET ASIDE THE ONE WITHOUT FREEING US FROM THE OTHER.

BUT BEFORE WE CAN FULLY APPRECIATE THE REDEEMING WORK OF JESUS CHRIST WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT JESUS, OUR SAVIOR, MEETS EVERY QUALIFICATION THAT ONE MUST MEET IN ORDER TO BE AN EFFECTIVE REDEEMER. IN THE O.T. THERE WAS PREFIGURED VERY BEAUTIFULLY IN THE MOSAIC ECONOMY THE QUALIFICATIONS THAT ONE MUST HAVE IN ORDER TO BE A REDEEMER. IF YOU TURN BACK AND READ THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS YOU BEGIN TO SEE THAT THERE WERE ACTS OF REDEMPTION IN THE O.T. PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL IS THAT ACT OF REDEMPTION OF WHICH WE READ IN THE BOOK OF RUTH. IN THIS CONTEXT I BELIEVE THAT THE FOUR QUALIFICATIONS OF THE REDEEMER ARE VERY VIVIDLY SET FORTH. THE FIRST OF THESE QUALIFICATIONS IS THAT A REDEEMER MUST BE A NEAR-KINSMAN. YOU REMEMBER WHEN RUTH WENT TO BOAZ AND BOAZ THOUGHT THAT HE WOULD MAKE A REDEMPTION, BOAZ SAID THAT HE COULDN'T DO IT YET BECAUSE THERE WAS ONE THAT WAS A NEARER KINSMAN THAN HE AND HE MUST FIRST GIVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO REDEEM. NOW 1 COR. 10:4 TELLS US SOMETHING ABOUT THE INCARNATION AND ITS PURPOSE. YOU SEE, JESUS HAD TO BE A KINSMAN TO US. JESUS HAD TO BE A NEAR KINSMAN TO US, AND IT WAS ONLY BY BECOMING GOD-INCARNATE OR GOD IN THE FLESH, IT WAS ONLY AS HE TOOK UPON HIMSELF THE ROBES OF HUMANITY THAT HE COULD BECOME A NEAR KINSMAN TO US AND BE QUALIFIED TO MAKE THE ACT OF REDEMPTION. HEAR HEB. 2:14,15. "FORASMUCH THEN AS THE CHILDREN ARE PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD, HE ALSO HIMSELF LIKELIKE TOOK PART OF THE SAME; THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM THAT HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS THE DEVIL; AND DELIVER THEM WHO THROUGH FEAR OF DEATH WERE ALL THEIR LIFETIME SUBJECT TO BONDAGE." YOU SEE THE WRITER OF THE HEBREW LETTER SAYS THAT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR JESUS TO BECOME A PARTAKER OF FLESH AND BLOOD IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT WORK THE ACT OF REDEMPTION.

IT WAS NECESSARY IN THE SECOND PLACE, FOR ONE WHO WOULD BE A REDEEMER TO HAVE A PRICE TO PAY. IT WAS NECESSARY THAT HE BE ABLE TO MEET DEMANDS OF HIM WHO WAS DEMANDING THE PRICE. THE NEAREST KINSMAN OF RUTH WAS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO DO THIS. HE HAD NO PRICE TO BRING TO WORK THE ACT OF REDEMPTION. JESUS HAD A PRICE TO BRING. "TAKE HEED UNTO YOURSELVES AS UNTO THE FLOCK OVER WHICH THE HOLY GHOST HATH MADE YOU OVERSEERS TO FEED THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, WHICH HE PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD." JESUS HAD THE PRICE TO PAY. "FORASMUCH AS YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS SUCH AS SILVER AND GOLD FROM YOUR VAIN CONVERSATION RECEIVED BY TRADITION FROM YOUR FATHERS BUT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, AS A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH AND WITHOUT SPOT." JESUS HAD THE PRICE TO PAY. WERE IT A MATTER OF SILVER AND GOLD, WERE IT A MATTER OF THINGS OF THIS WORLD, I SUPPOSE THAT MEN COULD GET IT TOGETHER, BUT ALL OF THE SILVER AND GOLD OF THIS WORLD COULD NOT REDEEM ONE SOUL. THE PRICE WAS NOT GREAT ENOUGH. JESUS HAD THE PRICE TO PAY.

A REDEEMER MUST BE WILLING. THE NEAREST KINSMAN TO RUTH WAS UNWILLING AND SO BOAZ STOOD IN THE PLACE OF REDEMPTION. JESUS WAS WILLING, WILLING TO LEAVE HEAVEN, WILLING TO GO TO THE CROSS. LUKE 22:42. "FATHER, IF THOU BE WILLING, REMOVE THIS CUP FROM ME; NEVERTHELESS, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE." HEB. 10:7. "THEN SAID I, LO, I COME TO DO THY WILL, O GOD." JESUS WAS WILLING TO GO TO THE CROSS AND TO PAY THE PRICE. IT WOULD HAVE DONE NO GOOD FOR HIM TO HAVE TEN TIMES TEN THOUSAND TIMES THE PRICE IF HE HAD NOT BE WILLING TO PAY THAT PRICE FOR YOU AND FOR ME.

FINALLY, HE WHO WOULD REDEEM ANOTHER MUST NOT NEED THAT REDEMPTION HIMSELF. BOAZ WAS A FREE MAN, BOAZ COULD MAKE THE ACT OF REDEMPTION. ONE SLAVE CANNOT REDEEM ANOTHER SLAVE BECAUSE EVERY SLAVE IS IN AS MUCH NEED OF REDEMPTION AS IS ANY OTHER. IT IS IN THIS CONSIDERATION THAT THE PERFECT, SINLESS LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST GAINS SIGNIFICANCE. FOR YOU SEE, HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THAT LIFE JESUS WOULD HAVE BEEN A SLAVE IN BONDAGE TO SIN AND HE WOULD HAVE BEEN IN NEED OF REDEMPTION. BUT THANKS BE UNTO GOD THAT THE HEBREW WRITER WAS ABLE TO WRITE, "FOR WE HAVE NOT AN HIGH PRIEST WHICH CANNOT BE TOUCHED WITH THE FEELING OF OUR INFIRMITIES BUT ONE THAT HAS BEEN IN ALL POINTS TEMPTED LIKE AS WE ARE YET WITHOUT SIN." THE APOSTLE PETER IN I PETER 2:22-24 SAID OF JESUS, "WHO DID NO SIN, NEITHER WAS GUILF FOUND IN HIS MOUTH: WHO, WHEN HE WAS REVILED, REVILED NOT AGAIN; WHEN HE SUFFERED, HE THREATENED NOT; BUT COMMITTED HIMSELF TO HIM THAT JUDGETH RIGHTEOUSLY: (NOW THAT PETER HAD ESTABLISHED THE PERFECT LIFE OF JESUS YOU CAN SEE THE CONNECTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT.) WHO IN HIS OWN SELF BARE OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BODY ON THE TREE, THAT WE, BEING DEAD TO SINS, SHOULD LIVE UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS: BY WHOSE STRIPES YE WERE HEALED." IT WAS BECAUSE IT COULD BE SAID OF JESUS, "WHO DID NO SIN," THAT IT COULD BE SAID OF HIM, "WHO BEAR OUR SINS IN HIS BODY ON THE TREE."

I SUPPOSE THAT EVERY INDIVIDUAL IN THIS ASSEMBLY HAS AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER SEEN ONE WHO WAS DERELICT AS FAR AS SOCIETY WAS CONCERNED. BUT PERHAPS VERY FEW HAVE DRIVEN INTO AREAS OF SOME OF THE MAJOR CITIES OF OUR COUNTRY THERE, AS IT WERE, TO BE SHUT OFF FROM THE WORLD AS WE HAVE KNOWN IT, AND TO SEE NOTHING BUT THOSE WHO ARE DERELICT TO SOCIETY. TO SEE HIM WHO WHOM WE HAVE CALLED THE BOWRY BUM, FOR WHOM THERE IS NOTHING WHICH HAS ANY SENTIMENTAL VALUE, WHO WOULD TAKE HIS FATHER'S WATCH CONTAINING HIS MOTHER'S PICTURE AND SELL IT FOR A DOLLAR IN ORDER TO GET THAT WHICH HIS BODY CRAVES. BUT YOU SEE, WHEN HE PAWNS THAT WATCH HE GETS A TICKET AND IF THE TIME SHOULD EVER COME THAT, HAVING THE TICKET AND HAVING THE DOLLAR, HE SHOULD ALSO HAVE THE DESIRE, HE CAN GO TO THE PAWN SHOP AND REDEEM IT. HE CAN BUY IT BACK--HE HAS THE PRICE. BUT MAN, YOU SEE, BECAME DERELICT WITH GOD. MAN HOOKED HIS SOUL. MAN SOLD HIS PURITY IN THE PAWN SHOP OF HELL. HE GOT NO TICKET AND DID HE HAVE THE TICKET, HE WOULDN'T HAVE THE PRICE. NOTHING IN HIS HAND CAN HE TAKE AND BUY BACK HIS PURITY AND HIS SOUL. WE ARE BANKRUPT, AND IT IS HERE, IT IS HERE THAT WE CAN SING AND OH, HOW WE OUGHT TO REJOICE THAT WE CAN SIN, "JESUS PAID IT ALL." AND HAVING SUNG "JESUS PAID IT ALL," CAN WE BUT SING, "ALL TO HIM I OWE, SIN HAD LEFT A CRIMSON STAIN, HE WASHED IT WHITE AS SNOW." THE APOSTLE PAUL WROTE TO THE CORINTHIAN BRETHREN AND HE SAID, "YE WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE, BECOME NOT BONDSERVANTS OF SIN." AND STATING IT NEGATIVELY HE JUST EMPHASIZED THE POSITIVE TRUTH--BECOME THE BONDSERVANT OF THE REDEEMER. SERVE HIM! LOVEN HIM! PRAISE HIM!

IN THE DAYS OF OUR NATION'S HISTORY WHEN SLAVERY WAS IN VOGUE A MAN WENT DOWN ONE DAY TO THE AUCTION AND, STANDING OFF AT ONE SIDE, HE SAW A YOUNG NEGRESS CRYING BITTER TEARS. HE ASKED HER WHAT WAS THE MATTER. SHE SAID SHE HAD BELONGED TO A GOOD MASTER, SHE HAD LIVED IN A GOOD HOME, BUT NOW SHE WAS BEING SOLD. HER MASTER HAD COME UPON HARD TIMES AND, KNOWING NOT WHERE SHE WOULD GO, SHE WAS AFRAID. THIS MAN LOOKED AT THE AUCTIONEER AND CRIED "WHAT'S THE PRICE?" THE AUCTIONEER, CATCHING A GLEAM OF INTEREST IN THE GENTLEMAN'S EYE NAMED A PRICE THAT WAS MUCH TOO HIGH, BUT WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION HE REACHED IN HIS POCKET AND PULLED OUT THE PRICE AND PAID IT. RECEIVING THE PAPERS FOR THIS YOUNG LADY, HE CARRIED THEM TO HER, GAVE THEM TO HER, AND SAID, "YOU ARE FREE." SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT TERM MEANT. IT WASN'T IN HER VOCABULARY. IT WASN'T IN HER EXPERIENCE, THE MA

SAID, "WELL, IT MEANS YOU ARE FREE. YOU CAN GO WHERE YOU WANT TO GO. YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO. YOU ARE JUST FREE TO BE ANYTHING THAT YOU WANT TO BE." IT WAS SAID THAT AS VISITORS WOULD COME INTO HIS HOME FOR YEARS HENCE THEY WOULD SEE IN HIS HOME A NEGRO WOMAN WHO GAVE LOVING SERVICE UNTO HIM. THEY COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT BECAUSE IT WAS SO UNUSUAL. THEY COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT BECAUSE THEIR SLAVES WOULD NOT GIVE THIS KIND OF SERVICE AND THEY WOULD INQUIRE OF THE MASTER, "WHY DOES SHE SERVE YOU SO?" HE WOULD SAY, "ASK HER," AND WHEN THEY ASKED HER, THEY WOULD HEAR THIS STORY AND INVARIABLY IT WOULD CONCLUDE, "HE REDEEMED ME! HE REDEEMED ME!"

THIS, BELOVED, IS WHAT JESUS HAS DONE FOR US. GOD LOOKED DOWN UPON US. HE SAW US CRYING BITTER TEARS, FACING SIN AND DEATH AND LAW AND NOT BEING ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT. ASKING QUESTIONS FOR WHICH THERE WERE NO ANSWERS, DESIRING THINGS WHICH WERE NOT AVAILABLE AND GOD CRIED OUT AND SAID, "WHAT'S THE PRICE?" THE ANSWER CAME, "YOUR SON." GOD DIDN'T HESITATE. "FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE." CAN WE BUT RENDER LOVING SERVICE? CAN WE BUT NOT SHOUT TO THE WORLD, "HE REDEEMED ME, HE REDEEMED ME." IS IT ANY WONDER THAT THE NEW SONG OF HEAVEN ITSELF IS THE SONG OF REDEMPTION? AND IF YOU ARE NOT SINGING THAT SONG TONIGHT THANKS BE UNTO GOD THAT THE PRICE HAS BEEN PAID. THANKS BE UNTO GOD THAT THIS OPPORTUNITY EXISTS AND YOU CAN COME TO JESUS CHRIST. WILL YOU NOT COME WHILE WE STAND AND WHILE WE SING?