



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | [believerschapeldallas.org](http://believerschapeldallas.org)

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Ephesians 1: 7-12

Fall 2023

"Redeemed By the Son"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning. We are in the Book of Ephesians. We started our series a couple of weeks ago and we're in a great section of this book, a doxology that Paul, really begins with verse three, and we're looking now at verses seven through twelve.

He has given praise to the Father, and now we come to verse seven, which is connected to the end of verse six where he speaks of “the Beloved”, (speaking of Christ). And now we read in verse seven,

<sup>7</sup> In Him, (*that is in the Beloved—in Christ*), we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him <sup>10</sup> with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him <sup>11</sup> also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 1: 7-12

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word, and bless our time of study in together. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, we thank you for this time together. It's a great thing for Your people to gather together on the LORD's day and do the very things that we're doing. —And so we thank You for that. This is the week of Thanksgiving, when we as a nation express our thanks. And I'm sure that much of it is lost on this nation—but it is a good thing that we do, to set aside a day of thanksgiving: Thanks to You for all of the blessings that this land has experienced from Your hand; it's unique, I think, in all of history of the blessings that we have.

And we do give You thanks, thanks for the freedom that we enjoy, to be able to meet as we do—and we pray that would continue for many years to come. It is not a given, (for the world is wracked with war, and with tribulation, and with lack of freedom); and yet we experience so much of that, and we pray that freedom would continue. And to that end we pray for our leaders, our government, that You would bless them with wisdom, and that You would continue to bless us as a nation—materially, but most importantly, spiritually. We pray that You would bless: That You would pour out Your Spirit on this land and there would be great revival. That's Your work, not ours, yet we pray for it.

And we celebrate that in this sermon this morning, this text, this great passage of Scripture which reminds us of what You have done for us through Your Son, the second Person of the Trinity—the redemption that we have; what a great thing it is. And so LORD, I pray that as we consider this text You would unfold the meaning for us and that the Spirit of God would teach us; that He would open our spiritual eyes, the eyes of our heart that He would open our heart to receive it, and that You would bless us and build us up in the faith.

It's a glorious thing that we consider; and yet we really can only scratch the surface this morning. But we have a Savior in Jesus Christ; and He's done the work of redemption...and so much more. It's given us insight, wisdom to understand the plan

and purpose that You have for us. So LORD, bless us as we consider these things as we study this morning and help us to think correctly; guide us in all of that to bring the proper applications to each of us.

And LORD, we thank you for the material blessings we have. Again, we live in a prosperous land, and You have blessed this land richly, and we thank You for the material blessings that we all enjoy. And yet, there are some who are experiencing difficulty; we pray for them, LORD. You know our needs. We can't go through a list, but you know the needs of each and every one of us here. I pray that You would bless us richly. And while we will go through difficulties in life, those difficulties are planned and purposed by You for a good purpose and a good reason. And I pray that those difficulties will accomplish that good purpose.

And for those of us who are not experiencing difficulties, we thank You for that. We thank You for the peace and the blessing we do enjoy. It's all a gift from You, and it will all work to a glorious end, as we're reminded this morning in this text. So bless us, LORD, as we sing our next hymn, and bless us as we go through the passage that we have read. May we be built up in the faith, and may You be glorified, we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

*(Message)* Early in the story, Job asked the question, "How can a man be in the right before God?" (Job 9:2). The question is repeated throughout the book. It's been called, "The basic religious question." And there is no more important question: 'How can a person be just with God?' 'How can a person be right with God?' 'How can a person, a sinner, be saved?'

Job knew the answer. He later said, 'I know that my redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand on the earth. After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh, I shall see God.' (Job 19: 25-26). That's an early form of the Gospel. Now Job didn't know a lot, in that he was living at the beginning of God's revelation. His knowledge was simple—but he knew that his Savior was coming.

That Savior, 'the Redeemer', is the subject of our text in Ephesians chapter 1, verses 7-12. It is the middle of Paul's doxology: His praise of the Trinity. He has celebrated the Father for our *election*, which happened "before the foundation of the world." (vs4). It is *unconditional* election, *unconditional* love. He chose His people for *holiness*, to a life of *obedience*, and to *adoption*, to be *sons* of God. It's grace, and such amazing grace that Paul concludes, "to the praise of His glory." (vs12).

God's plan of salvation is eternal. But in order for the plan to be realized there had to be a Savior, there had to be one whom Job said would, "stand on the earth" to perform it, to accomplish it. (Job 19:25). And that naturally leads to the second Person of the Trinity, the Son and Savior, Jesus Christ—who is referred to in verse 6 as "the Beloved."

Paul praised Him in the next verses for the *redemption* that He accomplished, the *forgiveness* we have through Him, for the *wisdom* that He has obtained for us, and the *insight* that He has obtained for us that we might understand the mystery of God's plan for the world—and for us and our place in it.

It's a full passage, and Paul begins his praise of Christ in verse 7 with that very important phrase, "In Him", meaning, 'By virtue of His representation of us, that we were 'in Him' in the things that He did. Because of that we have *redemption*.' Now that too, is a very important word, *redemption*. It means, 'deliverance by the payment of a price', 'a ransom.'

The word has an interesting history; it was used of a practice in ancient warfare. You read it in *Homer*, for example, in the *Iliad*, the war between the Greeks and Trojans, Achilles and Hector. When an enemy was captured, he could be freed by a payment of treasure. On one occasion, Odysseus and a Greek companion were out at night doing reconnaissance, when they caught a Trojan who pleaded for his life, telling them that, 'His father would pay a rich ransom for his freedom.'

It was also frequently used of 'freeing slaves'. Now that happened in various ways. In ancient times slaves could gain small payment for their services; and if they saved enough, then they could buy their freedom.

However it happened, redemption was always of a 'person in captivity', from war or slavery, who could only be released or set free by the payment of a price called 'the ransom price'. Paul found in this word and this practice an illustration of our condition and in our deliverance. We were slaves, slaves of sin.

Leon Morris wrote, "We might break away from this or that sin, but never break the grip of all sin, or our sinful condition, for which we were guilty before God and headed for judgment." We were helpless captives, being carried on to our doom when Christ redeemed us. He paid the ransom for us—and at a very costly price. "In Him" we have redemption through "His blood". (vs7). "His blood" means 'shed blood'. It refers to the blood of a sacrifice.

That's the kind of death that Christ died—a violent death. It was the only kind of death that He could die for us in order that we be ransomed. He couldn't die of natural causes, or by strangulation, or asphyxiation, or a peaceful death in His sleep; it had to be a violent death. It had to be the death of a blood sacrifice, which alone could atone for sin.

That was taught in the Law, from the beginning. It's what the LORD said in Leviticus 17, verse 11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls." In other words, 'The life was in the blood, and atonement comes on the altar when that blood is poured out and that life is ended.' Only through a bloody sacrifice could God's righteous judgment be satisfied and we be freed from sin—from its guilt and power and penalty. Christ made that payment, and set us free.

Now that is not a popular idea in modern times. People object. 'We forgive one another without a sacrifice, surely God can simply forgive and forget.' Well that's a modern view—but it's not just a modern view. As I've mentioned before, (I think, probably, fairly recently), in the 11th century the theologian Anselm responded to a

debate partner who struggled with this idea of the necessity of Christ becoming a man in order to die for our forgiveness—the forgiveness of our sins; he didn't think that was necessary. Anselm responded with, "You have not yet considered the greatness of the weight of sin."

Well that's always been the problem. In part, due to unbelief—but also due to the human inability of the natural man to understand how wicked and how wrong even the very smallest of sins is. There is no small sin. In our mind they may be. We may talk about a 'peccadillo' or something like that—but even that merits eternal death, eternal judgment.

As God's creatures, we owe Him worship and obedience. Sin is a deliberate offense against Him that makes us His debtors—with such deep debt that we can never repay it; we are spiritually bankrupt.

The solution was: God sent His perfect Son, His sinless Son to pay the debt for us through His substitutionary sacrifice. He took our place in the judgment and He paid all our debts. He removed all our sins and our guilt. In that way, God could both forgive sinners and judge their sins. He could be both, the "*Just*" and the "*Justifier*", as Paul put it in Romans 3, verse 26. He could save the lost without compromising His holiness in doing it.

As a result of that payment of that ransom price, Paul wrote that we have, "...the forgiveness of our trespasses...", (vs7). We have release from our sins and its guilt and power. Our debts are canceled out.

Now, that only magnifies the love of God for us: The only way He could forgive us righteously and truly is by sending His Son into this world to suffer our judgment in our place—to be our substitute. We were His enemies; and yet He did it. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. (Jn 3:16). 'He so loved such as us'; such as the world, as sinful and rebellious as it is, and was.

The blood of bulls and goats could never do that. They had centuries in Israel, century upon century of sacrificing bulls and goats and other animals; blood flowed freely every day—morning and evening at the tabernacle and the temple...None of that could satisfy God's justice. All that could do, all of those sacrifices could be, (as the writer to the Hebrews said), "is a reminder of sins." (Heb 10:3). It took a man. It took a human person to be the substitute for other humans—for other people.

But also it took a human person who is also God, the God-man. The union of His deity with humanity in one person gave His death, (as a man on the cross for us), gave that death infinite value. And as a result, the forgiveness of all for whom Christ died, and who believed in Him is complete. Not one sin has been left unatoned—left unforgiven. When Christ on the cross said, "It is finished", it is finished! He's done it all! We can add nothing to what He's done; we can only receive it through faith.

And in fact, the LORD held nothing back that was necessary to save us, and necessary to accomplish that salvation in the future. As Paul says, 'Our forgiveness is', "according to the riches of His grace." (vs7). That is more than sufficient to meet all our needs for eternal salvation, and insures that we will be finally and completely saved, and that we will never be lost. We'll never be lost today, tomorrow, forever.

And notice the wording here. His forgiveness is "according to the riches of His grace." Not, *out of* His riches, but, *according to* them—and there's a big difference. Donald Grey Barnhouse illustrated this difference using the example of John D. Rockefeller, who was well known for his wealth in that day. He's probably not so well known today, but he was very wealthy. He was the wealthiest man in the world in his day—the 'Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates', rolled into one. The richest man in the world, yet he was known as a ruthless businessman, a 'Robber Baron'. And so to polish his public image and show himself to be generous man, he had photographs taken and published of him handing out dimes to children.

Now that is an example of giving *out of* a person's riches, not *according to* them. If it had been according to his vast wealth, he would have been handing out bags of

coins, and bundles of cash—thousands and thousands of dollars. God's care for us is “according to the riches of His grace”; meaning, ‘it is limitless’. He spares nothing to save us and keep us saved—to guard us and guide us daily until we enter safely into glory, forever. It all shows the greatness of our need that such grace was required—but equally, the greatness of the divine favor that is for us.

That is brought out further in verse eight with the description of this grace and this mercy of God being “lavished on us”. It expresses the LORD's freedom in blessing us—His joy in blessing us. He doesn't simply bless us, He lavishes upon us, abundantly—without limit.

Now this was not altogether new to the apostle. It was prophesied in Jeremiah 31, verse 34, the prophecy of the New Covenant. “...I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” Micah, the minor prophet, in chapter 7, verse 19, and then David before him in Psalm 103, verse 12, promised it more poetically: That the LORD would “cast all their sins into the depths of the sea”, (Mic 7:19), and remove them “As far as the east is from the west.” (Psa 103:12). In other words, ‘It would be complete.’

But to experience it for himself as a former persecutor of Christ and His people, and then to witness it among the Gentiles—pagans, outcasts, by grace; well that filled Paul with such wonder that he piles up the praise here—that what happened to him, and it would happen to these outcasts, these Gentiles, these pagans, he marveled over that, and he spoke here of the LORD ‘lavishing His grace on the unworthy’.

And we receive it, “In all wisdom and insight”, (vs8), so that we not only have experienced grace, and are actually in ‘the right’ before God, we are *justified*, we are *forgiven*, but we can *understand* what has happened to us; we can *understand* this grace. We've been given “wisdom and insight”.

Now that is a great blessing, to now have a mind that can understand God's grace, when before, when we were in darkness, in ignorance, we could not. It made no



sense to us; and it makes no sense to the natural man. It's true; it makes great sense; it's glorious revelation, but the natural man or woman cannot understand it because he or she does not have this new mind, this "wisdom and insight."

And we have that—that's what Paul is saying here. God's not only blessed us with redemption, He's blessed us with a *new mind*, He's blessed us with a *new heart*. That's the promise of the New Covenant. He's given us understanding.

And yet, that great blessing comes with responsibility—the responsibility to act upon it. But as we do, as we study the Word of God, (by ourselves or with the people of God), as we do that and learn, then we, too, grow in our amazement of God's goodness to us, in that He was moved by His love to do so much for us; and that will move us as we understand it, to love Him, and live in obedience to Him as well.

It requires effort to do that. It requires a disciplined life to learn, to apply ourselves, to reading and studying the Word of God. And that takes time; that takes effort; it takes study. —But the blessings for us that will follow are immeasurable. And they're immeasurable and we have them because we have the faculties to do this—we have wisdom and insight.

J. Armitage Robinson wrote a classic commentary on the Book of Ephesians, and he defined *wisdom* as, "The knowledge which sees into the heart of things, which knows them as the really are." And he defined *insight* as, "The understanding which leads to right action." Understanding reality, understanding our situation, understanding it correctly; and then knowing how to deal with it, making the right decisions, and taking the right actions—now that's the ability that God has given us through the *new birth*, through *regeneration*, through the *new heart* that He has given to us.

The world is full of illusion, with promises that are really a mirage, and that lead to disappointment, and lead to ruin. But we can now see through it. We have a new mind, guided by the Holy Spirit that enables us to understand reality and know how to act upon it.

Money and education can't buy that. It's God's gift to His people. It's God's gift to you and me. We've been so gifted that we understand the nature of reality, the way the

world really is, so we can live wisely in the present—and not only for our personal benefit, but more, we can live a life of service to the LORD and to His glory, which means we can, we can live a life that really counts—that counts for eternity.

And that's only a beginning. He has given us knowledge into things unknown to even the greatest of human minds, a Plato or an Einstein. They didn't understand the things that we are able to understand. It's what Paul calls in verse 9, a "*mystery*". We've been given understanding of "the mystery". He, God, made known to us, "the mystery of His will. "

That word, "*mystery*", becomes very important later in chapter 3. It doesn't mean something 'mysterious' or 'eerie'. It's not like a mystery novel which, if we read it carefully, we can pick up enough of the clues to figure out or solve the riddle. —Just the opposite. It's something that we can't uncover by skill or by study. A *mystery*, as this word is used in the Book of Ephesians, is 'truth beyond our ability to discover'. It must be made known through *revelation*. Otherwise it remains hidden; otherwise it remains unknown to us.

This mystery has to do with God's will for the future—what Paul describes in verse 10 as "the summing up of all things in Christ." It is 'the end of all things', 'the goal of all things', which means we know where history is going, where time is leading. That it is not going in circles, that history is not just one thing after another without meaning or purpose. It is moving toward a great and glorious end in which all things will be gathered under one head—under Christ's rule. "...things in heaven", Paul said, "and things upon the earth." (vs10b).

All of God's people, those in heaven and those on earth, as well as the angelic realm, (meaning the elect angels), will be brought together in Christ, under His administration. —All things. And that includes the entire universe; material things as well as created beings. That's how the expression is used, for example, in Hebrews chapter 1, verse 3, Christ "...upholds all things by the word of His power."

So Paul is writing of the regeneration of the entire cosmos. He's speaking here of 'the new heavens and the new earth', what Paul describes in Romans chapter 8, verses

20-23. Because of Adam's sin, God subjected the creation to futility. But He also did so, Paul said, 'in hope, the hope of being set free from its corruption, and into the glory of the children of God.' And so the creation is personified as someone stretching out his neck looking toward the future—looking for that hope that's coming, the glory that's coming.

And it is coming. That's the future that Paul is speaking of here. And it is glorious. Someday all the redeemed, and the universe, will be united under Christ's headship and rule—glorified and blessed. That's God's will; that's His eternal plan for the ages. And that, at least in part, is the reason Paul wrote so jubilantly, so triumphantly at the end of Romans 8, in verse 37, that, "...we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

That's what Christ has done for us as our redeemer. We will die 'the first death' unless our Lord comes. (And we have that hope every day. He may come at any moment, and we hope for that.) But if He does not come, then we, like so many others, like all others before us, (with a few exceptions, Elijah being one, Enoch being one), had died the first death, will experience that physical death.

But—what we will not experience is 'the second death'—eternal, spiritual death. Christ has experienced that for us. He underwent that on the cross as our representative; and we escape that. We are, as the King James Version puts it, "more than conquerors." Christ has gained for us, for His people, for His elect, for believers, a good life now—the best life now, a life with meaning and purpose, a life that is under His provision and protection and guidance at every moment. But what he's speaking of here is a life that will result in a glorious future to come, an eternal future beyond our comprehension. And as Paul wrote here in verse 9, God has revealed this mystery to "us"—to you Ephesians 2000 years ago, to us here at Believers Chapel. He has revealed that to us—not just to the apostles, not just to a select few, not just to brilliant minds, but to all of us, because it is important that we know it. It's important that we have this perspective. We have hope.

The future is not mysterious, as it is for the world and for the most brilliant of men. They have no idea of what is to come. Death for the unbeliever is a great leap in the dark. It's terrifying—should be. But not for the believer in Christ. He's rescued us from sin's guilt, and punishment, and power. He has made us right with God so that we now have hope of glory.

Now that gives stability and courage in life now. And that's how the LORD wants us to live, not in weakness and fear. There are things to fear, and there are things that challenge us, certainly; but we're not to be slaves to that. We can take the long view on life, and I mean looking to the end and be encouraged and blessed by that, with the certainty of how it's all going to come out. The LORD has made certain a glorious future; we conquer in the end—but in the meantime He's with us. He's with us now, and He's guaranteed heaven for us in the kingdom to come, and a “world without end.” (Eph 3:21). We are absolutely secure, now and forever. All of this, all of grace gives us perspective on this life so that when trouble comes we can say with Hebrews chapter 13, verse 6, ‘The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?’

Well, man does a lot of things. He can take our possessions, he can put us in prison, as happened to a number of those Hebrew saints that the author was writing to. Men can take our life. That's happened to the saints, down through history. Down through the centuries there are martyrs that went to the stake, or went to the arena for their faith. —They can do lots of things.

But what the author of Hebrews is saying is, ‘They cannot rob us of eternity.’ These things, these trials, are temporary. Paul speaks of that elsewhere; he writes in 2 Corinthians 4, verse 17, of hardship and persecution, but he describes it as “momentary light affliction.” He wasn't making light of that, he knew how difficult the trials of life are. But compared to what's to come, they're “momentary.” They don't last for long; they're “light” compared to the great weight of glory that is coming for us—the “eternal weight of glory”, as he puts it, that is ours. (ibid).

Now that is a *victor*, that is a *conqueror*. But to have that perspective and faith, that stability and confidence under fire, again takes careful preparation. And that takes study of God's Word, where this *mystery* that he speaks of is revealed, where we can understand it more clearly and better.

Thinking on our redemption, and forgiveness, and our 'hope of glory' produces sanctification; it produces maturity. It's what we all need, and we have the provision of *wisdom and insight* to gain that—and we're to act upon it.

But next, Paul adds to the blessing of this mystery revealed, by naming us as God's 'prized possession' in His great plan of the ages. In verse 11 we are called His "inheritance". Now that's not the translation in the New American Standard Bible that I'm reading from, which is, "We have obtained an inheritance," which is true. But others, other translators have translated this, "We have been chosen as God's *portion*", or, "God's inheritance."

And that really fits the language, but also fits the Old Testament background for which Israel was God's *inheritance*. The word here means, 'to assign by lot', which is how Israel inherited the land. Lots were cast, and land was assigned to each of the tribes, as their inheritance. And within that geographical area of the tribe, each individual family had its portion of land as its inheritance. So that's how the inheritance was gained.

But then the LORD, after giving Israel the land, He made Israel His inheritance. In Deuteronomy 32, Moses wrote of that, how when the LORD gave the nations their inheritance, He took Israel as His inheritance. "For the LORD's portion *is* His people; Jacob *is* the allotted of His inheritance." (vs8). He found the nation in a "howling wilderness", Moses wrote, and cared for and guarded him, or her, "as the apple of His eye." (vs10).

This language is applied to the Ephesian saints by the apostle Paul, and to the elect of God, the whole church of the LORD. We are 'the apple of His eye', or, 'the pupil of His eye'—precious to Him, chosen to be His inheritance. Now that's an amazing fact—we have a glorious inheritance. In Romans 8, Paul describes us as, "heirs of God...fellow heirs with Christ." (vs17). We'll reign with Him. —That's our future.

But it's equally amazing, if not more so, that we, former rebels, and what Paul calls in 1 Corinthians 1, 'the weak, the ignoble, the lowly, the foolish things of the world', (vs27&28), —that we would be chosen by God as "His inheritance." (Eph 1:18).

Now that fact, amazing fact that it is: That He would purchase us to be that; that's all the more amazing, is it not? That He would purchase us with the blood of His own Son; redeem us, buy us out of slavery to sin and captivity—that is truly amazing.

And it is equally encouraging because He hasn't left us in that degraded, lowly, base condition—for He is presently transforming us. In Ephesians chapter 5, we are called "Christ's bride." And we are being sanctified; we are being 'washed and cleansed', so that He may present us in the future to His Father in glory—"having no spot or wrinkle". He is changing us. He's removing the spots, the wrinkles. He's strengthening us; He's transforming us to make us perfect. In fact, the Father now sees us as being that—He sees us "in Christ", not according to what we are, but what we shall be.

But again, that's grace, that's sovereign grace. And Paul again stresses that by stating that it is all predestined; "having been predestined according to His purpose..." (vs11). It's "His purpose", not ours. It's His eternal purpose. Before we were, He determined this to be. And since God's purpose cannot fail, He will not fail to bring us to perfection and glory.

And that's what's so encouraging here. We are absolutely secure. He will not, and cannot lose any one of us. We are His inheritance, the 'apple of His eye'. That's what you are, personally, to Him in Christ. And He is working presently to keep us and transform us because, as Paul continues, God who predestined us to glory, "...works all things according to the counsel of His will." (vs 11b).

What a sense of relief that should give to us! 'Working all things according to the counsel of His will!' Our destinies have not been left to chance or fate—or to the whims or impulses of man. We can be in a person's favor, a boss's favor, today—and then out of favor the next day. The people of this world and the circumstances of life change quickly; and our lives can take some unexpected and unpleasant turns. Still, God's hand is always

on us. And because He, 'works *all things* to the counsel of His will', His hand will never stop being on us, and He will never cease to guide us to a glorious future; to a glorious end. He 'works all things according to the counsel of His will.'

Now that's a statement that Charles Hodge, the great Princeton theologian, explained. And he explained it as, "As He works His control in accordance with the nature of His creatures, so that He does no violence to their wills, yet through their free acts, His will is done."

So we're still responsible; but He's working things in a way that's very natural within us, within everyone, within everything, to accomplish His very will. It's a mysterious thing, but it's true. His purpose of, "summing up all things in Christ", (vs10b), of bringing the universe, and saints, and angel's under Christ's headship and government, will happen.

He will bring His saints to glory. Why? It's His will. It's His purpose. We are His inheritance, redeemed by the blood of His Son. So, He "causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Romans chapter 8, verse 28.

You cannot read Paul, (and I would say this of all of the apostles and prophets, for that matter), but you cannot read him and not know that God is absolutely sovereign. We are absolutely dependent on Him—and we are absolutely secure. There's no 'fate' or 'chance', only God's will. And again, as Paul thinks about this he again concludes in verse 12, this second section of his doxology, "...to the praise of His glory." Not glory to us; not at all. All the glory goes to the Lord God.

Understanding that, and Christ's work in our redemption and forgiveness, that we have glory in the world to come, and that we are actually God's inheritance, gives us strong faith and a stable life.

Abraham had that. In Genesis 13 he and his nephew Lot were so prosperous that the land couldn't contain them. They had to separate, (in fact, their herdsmen were quarreling with one another). And so Abraham said, 'We've got to separate, and I'm going to let you take the first choice. You choose the land where you want to settle.' And

what did Lot do? He chose the best. He chose the beautiful land. He chose the green valley, leaving Abraham the Negev, a semi-desert.

It was a magnanimous thing on the part of Abraham. Different from chapter 12, when Abraham went down to Egypt and had a very selfish failure of faith. But between Egypt and the Negev, Abraham went to the altar. That's how chapter 13 begins. He went from Egypt north, "to Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar" where he began. And there he reflected on redemption, he reflected on salvation...that's sanctifying. That is a sanctifying thing to think about. So he had a different perspective on the LORD and was able to be magnanimous.

F. B. Meyer wrote, "The man who is sure of God can afford to hold very lightly the things of this world." I think that's a great statement: 'The person who is sure of the Lord God has faith and lives by it.'

Well may God help us to have that—that assurance and certainty in the LORD and live that kind of life of faith. May He help us use the gifts that He's given us to understand the mystery, His plan of the ages, our redemption and future—and God's sovereign goodness that our faith be firmly in Him and that we live well.

But to have that and do that, a person must first be 'just with God'. "How can a man be in the right before God?" Job asked. (Job 9:2). Only one way; it's by the Redeemer. Christ has paid the ransom price for the sinner's freedom by His own death on the cross. There's nothing more to do; He has paid it all. It is for us to simply place our trust in the person and work of Christ—place our trust in Him and His work on the cross, His sacrifice.

If you've not done that—you're lost, and you will enter eternity condemned. Flee to Christ while there is opportunity. Believe in Him; receive the forgiveness of sin, and life everlasting. Become a child of God, a son of God. May God help you to do that.



*(Closing Prayer)* Father, that is a great hope we have—He is coming again, and we will enter into glory. And we'll do that because of His redemption, because of His first coming, and what He did for us as our sacrifice at Calvary. We thank You for redemption. We thank You for the ransom price that was paid for us; that has placed us in that great mystery that will unfold that future, that glory, for all eternity. It's all of grace, and we thank You for that.

Now the LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace. In Christ's name, Amen.

*(End of Audio)*