

Our Great Treasure

by Chuck Smith

God treasures us highly and values our lives, and He is willing to pay the price to redeem us from Satan's power and give us eternal life with Him.

Duration: 35:45

Scripture: Malachi 3:16-17, Matthew 13:44, Romans 6:16, Ephesians 1:3-18, Philippians 2:5-8, Revelation 5:9-10

Topics: "Redemption Through Christ", "Gods Love"

Description

This sermon delves into the concept of redemption and the value God places on each individual, emphasizing how Jesus paid the ultimate price to redeem the world from Satan's power, highlighting the treasure that we are to God. It explores the consequences of sin, the two governments in the universe - God's government of light and life versus Satan's government of death and darkness, and the importance of choosing to enter God's kingdom. The message encourages listeners to understand the depth of God's love and the significance of accepting the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

For our scripture reading today, let's turn in our Bibles to Ephesians chapter 1, and we'll begin with verse 3, and we will read on down to verse 18. Ephesians 1, 3 to 18. Let's stand as we read the word of God.

I'll read the odd-numbered verses, and we ask you to join together as you read the even-numbered. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.

Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. Having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ.

Both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance. Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. In whom also after that you believed you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.

Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession under the praise of his glory. Wherefore I also after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and the love unto all the saints. Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened that you may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Let's pray.

Father, even as Paul prayed for the Ephesians, so we pray for our congregation. Lord, that we might understand being enlightened that we might know what is the hope of our calling. And Lord, the riches of the glory of our inheritance that we have in Christ Jesus.

And so Lord, this morning we pray that you'll just really help us to understand a little more about how rich is this inheritance that we have through Jesus Christ, our Lord. That we might come to a deeper, fuller appreciation of what you have given to us. We ask it, Father, in his name and for his sake.

Amen. You may be seated. Well, we're continuing our journey through the Bible now in the New Testament.

And this week we'll be studying Matthew 12 through 15 tonight. So we encourage you to read them over this afternoon. And then come on out tonight and join with us as we continue our journey through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

But this morning, we'd like to draw your attention to the 13th chapter of Matthew, verse 44. One of the parables of Jesus there in Matthew 13. And again, he said, And he said to us students, Now, when you get out in the ministry, never teach on the parables until you've been pastoring for 25 years.

He said, then you will have a understanding of them. And I thought, oh, this poor fellow. I understand the parables, you know, and I think they're exciting.

And so when I went out to minister, I began teaching from the parables and all. And I wish I had some of those sermons back. I'm glad that they didn't have cassettes in those days.

And so there's no permanent record of what I was teaching. But I discovered that I did not really understand the parables like I thought I did. And this particular little parable here in Matthew 13, 44, The witch, when a man is found, he hides, and for the joy thereof, he goes and sells everything that he has that he might buy that field.

Now, I had a really great sermon from this. And the kingdom of heaven, I likened to a man going through a field and discovering the treasure. And for the joy, goes out and sells everything that he has that he might buy that field, that he might obtain that treasure.

I taught that, you know, the discovery of the treasure that we have, you know, is so great that we go out and we sell everything that we have. And we, you know, are determined to buy the field in order that we might have that treasure. And that we were the ones who bought the field in order to gain the treasure.

Made a great sermon, but it was a total misapplication of this particular little parable. And, you know, as you, well, as I have gained through the years of ministry, I see this parable in a totally different light. In understanding parables, they are often filled with, you know, kind of figures of speech and so forth, and sort of parallelisms.

And in biblical interpretation, there is this, they call it hermeneutics, and that is the study of biblical interpretations. And there are rules in hermeneutics in teaching you how to study the scriptures. And one of the rules of hermeneutics is called expositional constancy.

I don't know why they always use these big words, hermeneutics, expositional constancy and all, but it sounds smarter when you can use those kind of words, I guess. But at any rate, according to expositional constancy in interpreting scriptures, if in one area there is a particular parallelism, in other words, if a tree is representing some particular facet, then everywhere where you have that tree used in a parable or in a figure of speech, it always is representing the same thing. There's a constancy as far as the understanding of that particular phrase or particular term.

So, in parables, the world does represent, or actually, the field represents the world. And we have that in another parable here that is very close to it. And that is, the field being the world, Jesus said that the man went forth to sow seed in his field, and the seed fell on different types of soil.

But when Jesus was interpreting for us that particular parable, he said, now the field is the world. So, expositional constancy, the field is the world. Now, I didn't sell everything to buy the world, I couldn't buy the world if I sold everything I had.

But who was it that actually gave everything to redeem the world? Well, Jesus, yes, you're right. He gave himself to redeem the world. For what purpose? That he might obtain the treasure that is in the world.

So, that would lead to the question, what is the treasure? That he was willing to redeem the whole world, that he might have that treasure. Fasten your seatbelt. You are the treasure.

He treasures you so highly, he redeemed the whole world just so he could have you as his own. And I think that this is such a wonderful thing to realize, how much he values you, how much he treasures you. And, you know, the scripture wants us to know just how much the Lord does treasure us.

So, Peter wrote in his first epistle, For as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, from the empty life that you used to have, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, who was slain as a lamb without spot or without blemish. And so, Jesus paid the price, slain as a lamb without spot or blemish, to redeem the world in order that he might have you. Paul, writing to the Philippians, said, Let this mine be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

The Bible teaches that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. So, the earth was his by the right of divine creation. It was, he created it, it belonged to him.

But when God created man, Adam, and put him on the earth, God gave the earth to man. So, it was a gift of God, God said to Adam, Have dominion over the earth, over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, over every living and moving thing. For it is yours, I have given it to you.

So, God created the world, but he gave it to Adam, and placed Adam here, and he said, Now, enjoy, be fruitful, multiply. And of all of the trees of the garden, you may freely eat, with the exception of that one tree in the middle of the garden, don't eat of that, because if you do, you will surely die. So, here he is, enjoying the creation of God, the world is his, and he is there just to enjoy.

And so, into this beautiful paradise comes Satan. And he said to Eve, Can you eat of all of the trees here in the garden? And Eve said, Well, yes, all of the trees, except that one in the middle of the garden, were not to eat of that, because God said, if we ate of it, we would surely die. The fruit is deadly poisonous.

Satan said, You don't believe that, do you? Look how delicious that fruit looks. And he tempted Eve, and she did eat. And she gave to Adam, and he did eat.

In doing this, it was really a double action. In eating of that tree, of which God said, You shall not eat of it, they were disobeying God. But in their disobedience of God's command, the other side of the coin was, they were obeying Satan's suggestion.

Now, the Bible said, Don't you realize that whoever you yield yourself servants to obey, his servants you become? They were serving God, as they were obedient to God, there in the garden. When they disobeyed God and obeyed Satan's suggestion to eat of that tree, then they actually transferred their allegiance from God to Satan. And in so doing, they transferred the ownership, which God had given to them, over to Satan.

And he became, according to the scriptures, the prince of this world. Jesus, referring to him, said, The prince of this world comes, and he has nothing in me. So as you look at the world today, you see not the world that God created and gave to Adam, but you see a world that has fallen, a world that is no longer under the control of man, nor under the control of God, he gave it to man, no longer man's because he forfeited it to Satan.

So you see a world that is controlled by Satan, and thus the pain, the misery, the strife, the sorrow, the grief, all of this is the result of man's disobedience to God. This isn't the way God intended things to be. This isn't the way God intended man to live.

God intended better things for you and for me. But yet, here we are, now the victims of what Adam did in turning the world over to Satan. Isaiah wrote in chapter 14, How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning.

How you are cut down to the ground who did weaken the nations. For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.

I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.

Yet, the Lord said, you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit, and they that see you shall look upon you, and they'll consider you and say, is this the man that made the earth to tremble and did shake kingdoms? God commanded the prophet Ezekiel to take up a lamentation against Satan, and he

said, Thus saith the Lord God, you were the model of perfection. You were full of wisdom, perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden, the garden of God, and you were covered with precious gems set in mountings of gold.

You were anointed as a guardian cherub. I ordained you so, but you have been in the holy mountain of God, and you've walked up and down in the stones of fire. You were perfect in all your ways from the day that you were created until iniquity was found in you.

You have sinned, and therefore I will cast you as propane out of the mountain of God, and I will destroy you. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty, and you've corrupted your wisdom, and I will cast you to the ground and lay you before kings that they might see you. And so with Satan's rebellion against God and man turning the world over to Satan, with his rebellion against God, there came two governments in the universe.

The first government is the government of God, the supreme God, supreme government. The second government is the government of Satan. It is in rebellion against God, and it is a government of death and darkness in contrast to God's government of light and life.

So Adam was created in the government of God, but with his sin and obedience to Satan, he submitted unto Satan's government or to Satan's rule, and thus Adam became a part of the kingdom of Satan. But when he did, he discovered an amazing thing. The door only swung one way.

He could go from the government of God into the government of Satan, but there was no way by which he could return back into the government of God. And thus man has been in sin, the world has been controlled by Satan since Adam's sin, and so it's sort of a sad kind of a position that we find ourselves in today. Paul wrote to the Romans, Know ye not that to whom you yield yourself servants to obey? His servants you are to whom you obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness.

So with Adam, his sin unto death, but he couldn't come back into the kingdom of light and life, but he was bound in the kingdom of darkness. The world now under the power of Satan. We see all of the problems in the world today, and you know it's an unfortunate thing, but man so often wants to blame God for the problems.

And how can a God of love allow, you know, a child to be born with, you know, genetic kind of physical problems? Doesn't sound like a God of love. And so they're looking at the consequences of sin, and they're trying to blame God for the consequences of sin, of course, which he is not responsible for at all. They are just the natural inevitable consequences of sinful living.

So the purpose of Jesus and his coming was to redeem the world from Satan's power and to actually turn the world back over to God and to God's control. That was the purpose of his coming. He has come to redeem the world, and thus, you remember when Satan first came against Jesus right after Jesus was baptized, before he began his public ministry, Satan took him to a high mountain, showed him all of the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and Satan said to Jesus, all of these I will give to you and the glory of them if you will just bow down and worship me.

Quite a temptation, because that's why Jesus came, to redeem the world. But he came to redeem it by paying the penalty for sin, which is death, and thus dying in our place, paying the penalty, because the wages of sin is death, he was going to redeem it through going to the cross and dying in our place. Painful

death.

A terrible form of death. And Satan is saying, look, you don't have to take God's path. You don't have to take the painful way.

Bow down and worship me. I'll just give it to you. But Jesus responded to Satan, it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.

So Jesus is declaring he's going to take God's path rather than Satan's path. The interesting thing about Satan is that what he offers to people today is instant fulfillment. You don't have to take God's path.

God's path can actually lead to a cross. The death to the self life. And that's not pleasant for anybody.

But he is encouraging people to just surrender to the easy path. And you can have instant fulfillment and instant satisfaction. And, you know, in this experience or that experience, the instant right now, and how many people are foolish enough to listen to Satan and are buying into his program and thinking that they can find that instant satisfaction in all.

But yet, look at how many there are along the road of life who have tried that other path and have just found that ultimately it brings to misery and to hopelessness. So, Jesus paid the price to redeem the world from Satan's power. As Peter again tells us, for as much as you know, you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from the vain empty light that you had, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ who was slain as a lamb without spot or without blemish.

Why was he willing to purchase the world? In order that he might have the treasure that was there. In order that he might have you, his treasure. Paul prayed for those in Ephesus that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, might give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him that the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, you might know what is the hope of his calling and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints or that you might know just how much God treasures you, the value that God places upon your life.

As Jesus said, what would it profit a man if he would gain the whole world but lose his own soul? So Jesus is declaring that your soul is more valuable than the whole world because what would it profit if you would gain the whole world but in so doing, lose your own soul? The prophet Malachi said, they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another and God eavesdropped. God listened in on them. And a book of remembrance was written before him of those that feared the Lord and thought on his name.

They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels. Years ago in the stone ages when I was in, I think, kindergarten that I first heard the story of the gingerbread man and how this little boy had baked this gingerbread man and as he took him out of the oven and as it was cooling down he put on the buttons for the eyes and just fixed it up and made it just so beautiful and the little gingerbread man hopped out of the pan and began to run down the street and so he was chasing him but the gingerbread man called back and said run run as fast as you can you'll never catch me I'm a gingerbread man and it was true he couldn't catch him the little gingerbread man just ran away and he went away he went back home so sorrowful crying that he had lost his little gingerbread man that he had made.

As he was walking past the bakery looking into the window of the bakery shop he saw his gingerbread man he was there in the bakery shop and so he went into the shop and he said to the proprietor I want my

gingerbread man he's there smiling at me in the window the baker said he'll cost you 15 cents the little boy said no you don't understand he's mine I want him he's my gingerbread man he said little boy if you want him it'll cost you 15 cents so he went home got out his piggy bank shook out the pennies went back to the bakery and placed the pennies on the counter and said I want the gingerbread man there in the window and so the proprietor went over got the little gingerbread man and handed it to him and he clutched it close to his chest as he walked down the street he said to this little

gingerbread man now you are really mine because first of all I made you and then I bought you you know it's wonderful to be held close by Jesus and hear him say to you now you're really mine first of all I created you and now I have purchased you redeemed us with his blood out of every nation, tribe, tongue and people and made us unto God kings and priests and we shall reign with him upon the earth our precious savior our precious redeemer who gave himself in order that we might have eternal life with him Father thank you for what the scripture teaches of your love for us and Lord we pray that you'll give us a greater appreciation of that love that we might come into this new relationship with you that you have made possible through sending your son to die for our sins that we might come

from the kingdom of darkness back into the kingdom of light and life living in fellowship with you Lord in the hope of eternal life together with you and so Lord just bless now we pray and open the hearts of the people Lord to receive this glorious love that you have in Jesus name we pray Amen shall we stand the pastors are down here at the front to minister to you today if you only knew how much God does love you the price he was willing to pay in order to redeem you from your sin in order to open the door that you can come from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light but he paid the price the door is open but you have to go in it's not until you enter at your own free will that you can receive the gift of God and the fellowship together with him in his kingdom so I would

encourage you today let this be that day let this be that time in which you decide within your mind I want to serve God I want to live in fellowship with God I want the cleansing from my sin I want to know the joy of walking in a relationship with God and just this is the day let it be the day in your life where you pass from death into life that glorious life that Christ has for you so they're here to pray with you as we're dismissed today if you'll just come on down to the front they'll be happy to minister to you and to pray for you and to help you with any questions that you might have and to just help bring you on in to this wonderful kingdom of God that he has prepared for those that love him and will serve him The Lord bless thee and keep thee The Lord make his face to shine upon

thee and be gracious unto thee and be gracious unto thee The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace God bless you

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