

The Four R's of the Gospel: Redemption

by E.A. Johnston

The sermon emphasizes the doctrine of redemption as the heart of the gospel, which displays the heart of God and offers salvation to all who believe in Christ.

Duration: 17:34

Scripture: Isaiah 53:3

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of preaching the gospel in its purity and proper order. He emphasizes that part of the gospel has been omitted by many preachers today, specifically the preaching of the law before grace. The preacher introduces the concept of the four Rs of the gospel, which are Rune, Redemption, Repentance, and Regeneration. He explains that the first doctrine, Rune, highlights the need for a Savior due to man's sinful nature and separation from God. The sermon ends with a personal anecdote about the preacher's mistake in assuming someone's salvation without proper discernment.

Transcript

We are in a series of preaching the gospel in its purity and proper order. I mentioned last time how in your day and mine part of the gospel has been omitted by many preachers today. I talked about how old time preachers used to preach the law before grace and they preached up the four R's of the gospel which are Rune, Redemption, Repentance, and Regeneration.

Last time we spoke on the first doctrine of the four R's of the gospel, Rune. We said that man is born with a sinful nature and separated from God because of sin and therefore is in need of a savior from sin. A man must first recognize his need of a savior before he will have any interest in that savior.

A man feels no need of a doctor until he becomes ill. If a man discovered he had a fatal illness and the doctor had a cure, that man would give all he had to obtain that cure and live. So too, the gospel presentation must be preached in its proper order to show sinful man his desperate and perilous position outside of Christ.

So we must preach the full counsel of God to sinful man. Today friends, our message is on the second R of the gospel, Redemption. The Christ who died must substitute for sin.

Peter tells us this in 1 Peter 2 verse 24, 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. The gospel can be summed up in the following verse found in 1 Corinthians 15 3-4 For I have delivered unto you the first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. Listen friends, what separates Christianity from other religions is this, Buddha lived, died, and was buried.

Confucius lived, died, and was buried. Muhammad lived, died, and was buried. Jesus lived, died, and was buried.

But he rose again. We serve a resurrected Lord. He reigns in glory.

Christianity was never built on a coffin lid. Listen to the words of the Apostle Paul from 1 Corinthians 15 14 And if Christ be not risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain. We must preach the Christ of redemption, the Christ who hung on a bloody, gory tree for sinful man.

Christ Jesus is the gospel, friends. Our salvation is found in him. We are not saved by believing the fact that Christ died for sin.

We are saved by believing in the Christ who died for sin. Let me share with you a true story which happened to my homiletical mentor, Dr. Stephen Olford. I present you this story because it's a picture of what Christ has done for us in the act of redemption.

Here now is that story. Born in Africa to missionary parents, Stephen Olford grew up in the African bush in a humble little cottage. It was Christmas and young Stephen decided to sneak out of the cottage early that morning to go bag a wild turkey for Christmas dinner.

Before daylight, he left his parents' home quietly so not to awaken them. Into the darkness, he walked with his rifle beneath his arm. Making his way to the gate, he unlatched it, but it made a squeak.

He kept going into the dark bush to a distant field where he knew wild turkeys would be. Slowly he moved in the darkness, but unfortunately his next step landed him in a treacherous bog of mire. There he was sinking in the miry bog as he held his rifle above his head.

With one hand, while frantically trying to extricate himself with the other, he realized he was in grave danger and sinking to his death. But unknown to him, the native servant of his father's house was awakened by the squeak of the gate, and this African had followed him in the darkness without his knowledge. There stood the African as the morning sun began to break over the field.

He was attired in a colorful robe of silk which was wrapped around his naked body. Quickly, the native began to unfold his cloak about him. It unfolded into one long piece of material, and as he unfolded it, he reached the garment over to the desperate Stephen Olford.

Stephen grabbed it and hung on for dear life as he was pulled to safety. Dr. Olford would relate that this action of the African was like the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus stepped out of the glories of heaven to come to earth to save lost man who was sunk in the mire of sin, and in his great mercy, he unfolded his royal robe of righteousness and reached it out to us to grab hold of.

Jesus saves his people from their sins. Once we acknowledge that we are sinners, lost, and without God in the world, we see our great need of a Savior who saves us from sin. And when we turn to God in repentance and place our faith in his dear Son, Jesus Christ, then God imputes his righteousness to us, and we stand justified in his sight, and no longer are we guilty before him, for Jesus is our sin substitute.

Jesus said, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. The Apostle Paul declared that the power of God was unto salvation.

We see this in Romans 1.16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Oh, friends, how wonderful it is that God, who is rich in mercy, provided a remedy for sin in the person of his dear Son, Jesus Christ. Well, this word redemption, it's a striking word.

Jesus is my Redeemer. He redeemed me. Allow me to explain the word redemption in these terms.

Years ago, when I was a young man, I visited the ruins of the ancient city of Ephesus. It was exciting because I walked where the Apostle Paul walked. My feet went over the same cobblestones where the Apostle John's sandals traversed.

They have done a wonderful job excavating those ancient ruins. Perhaps you've been there. Well, during my visit, I took a guided tour, and this tour guide explained to me how the ancient city of Ephesus operated.

He took me to a place called an agora. An agora was an outdoor marketplace, kind of like a mall we would know about today. It was a marketplace where items were bought and sold.

Slaves were also sold in the agora. Now, there are several words in the Greek language that better explain the word redemption, and they are rooted in this word agora, a-g-o-r-a. Now, take that word and make the word agorazo into Greek.

The word agorazo means redemption, and this word means that Jesus went into the marketplace of sin and purchased me by His blood and with His death. That's redemption, friends. He is my Redeemer.

Now, add the little preposition ek in front of the word agorazo, and you have the word ekagorazo. Ek means to take out of something, to remove something out of. So, this word for redemption, ekagorazo, means that Jesus not only entered the marketplace of sin and purchased me by His blood and with His death, but He removed me from that marketplace of sin.

He set me free from sin's dominion. When Christ redeemed me, He moved me out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light and life. You see, friends, a saved person has experienced the double cure.

That person is saved from the penalty of sin and also saved from the power of sin. When we are saved, a new disposition of holiness is implanted within us. We are set free from serving Satan, and now we are glad bond slaves of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

As we preach the gospel, we must present Christ and Him crucified. We must be careful not to convince a lost sinner to merely mentally agree with some facts about the death of Christ. We must not tell a person

they are saved because they agreed with John 3.16. In fact, we can learn much from D.O. Moody on this aspect of assurance.

When Moody was preaching in Scotland, he made sure to tell his counselors never, ever, to tell anyone they are saved. Moody said, that's not your job. That's the work of the Holy Spirit.

Only He can tell a person they are truly saved. That's good advice, friends. I remember going out years ago door to door and sharing the gospel.

It was a hot summer evening, and I heard an ice cream truck's bell ring. I walked over to the ice cream man and spoke with him about his salvation. He leaned over and listened intently as I shared the gospel with him.

But I made a terrible mistake that evening when he said that he wanted to accept Christ. I led him in a prayer, and then I confidently told him he was now a Christian. Oh, friends, I should never have told him that.

Only heaven knows if that ice cream man got saved that night or not. I had no right to tell that dear man he was saved. I erred greatly.

Don't you do the same. Be wise when you witness for Christ, and don't make your own converts. But we must present to lost sinners what Christ has done for sinful man.

Listen to these verses taken from Isaiah chapter 53. He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray.

We have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all, and he bore the sin of many. Oh, friends, this good news of the gospel is that Christ took our place on that cross, so we would not be sent to hell and suffer the wrath of God for sin. Our good works can't save us.

Isaiah tells us, and all our righteousness are like filthy rags. We must rest in the merits of Christ alone to save us. We can't boast about our salvation, for by grace you've been saved through faith and not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Christ, our Redeemer, is a substitute for sin, and those who are in Christ are no longer under the condemnation of God because of sin. There is, therefore, now, no condemnation of those who are in Christ Jesus.

In the Old Testament, in the Levitical system, we have the imagery of a lamb without blemish, slain, and the blood of that lamb sprinkled upon the altar as a sacrifice, a peace offering unto God. We have the same imagery in the sin offering, whereby the priest takes a young bullock without blemish, and it is slain, and its blood is put on the horns of the altar. We see this striking imagery that blood must cover sin and make peace with God.

The Bible says without shedding of blood is no remission. The book of Hebrews gives us a description of Jesus both as our high priest and sin offering, as it depicts our redemption in Christ Jesus. This is seen in chapter 9 verses 11-14.

But Christ, being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say not of this building, 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. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve in the living God? Listen friends, this very fact of Christ's sacrifice for sinful man is the basis of the gospel as summed up in John 3.16. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, that should not perish. In other words, subjects of grace and redemption are no longer under the condemnation of a holy God.

God's wrath will not befall Him, because He is now under the blood of Christ, His Redeemer. More this is seen in John 3.36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on Him. There you have it friends, this doctrine of redemption is the very heartbeat of the gospel, for it displays the heart of God, who in His mercy offered up His only begotten Son, that whoever believes on Him won't perish, but have life everlasting.

We will close with the following words of the Apostle Paul from Ephesians 1.7. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. Well friends, in our next message, we will examine the next R of the four R's of the gospel, which will be repentance. Until then.

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