

# Unsearchable Riches of Christ - Part 3

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*Redemption is the process of restoring balance to God by giving him what belongs to him, which is life, and it is made possible through the blood of Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 43:09

**Scripture:** Exodus 12:5, Romans 3:25, Romans 11:33, Ephesians 1:7-8, Ephesians 1:14, Revelation 5:9

**Topics:** "Riches Of Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of balance and completeness in relation to God's possession and redemption. Using the parables of the lost son, lost sheep, and lost silver, the speaker emphasizes that when something is lost or missing, the balance is upset and things are unequal. The speaker explains that life itself belongs to God, and when it is taken away, it disrupts the balance and righteousness that God desires. The ultimate goal of redemption is to restore this balance and bring everything back into perfect order and righteousness.

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## Transcript

In verse 7 of Ephesians 1, in whom we have our redemption through his blood according to the riches of his grace, our redemption according to the riches of his grace. This matter of redemption is a very big one to take many hours of consideration, and like election it is a matter which has been misunderstood and in some ways it has been distorted. There has been a good deal of confusion over the matter, this priceless wonder of our redemption, the meaning of that word.

There may be an element of truth in it, but it is just there that the confusion arises when redemption is pictured as matter of taking a slave out of bondage by paying the redemption money. Well, I say there may be an element in that idea or interpretation, but the difficulty and the confusion arises when you ask the question to whom is the money paid? Has God got to pay the devil something? Get back that which he has taken? Is God a debtor to Satan? Has God got to go into Satan's slave market and put up a price to redeem that which Satan has captured? You see, it is an untenable idea, an unthinkable thing. God is at the mercy of Satan, and Satan is in the position of saying, if you like to pay me an adequate price, I'll let you have what is in my possession.

We will never recognize that. So we have got to revise our idea of this matter of redemption. I say there may be an element of truth in it, may go just so far as we shall probably see, but that is really not the whole truth.

And if we are not clear, we shall be in some confusion. So I want to try and make this thing clear, for it is important that we have a right understanding of things. We rejoice in redemption, we sing about redemption, we can never make too much of redemption, but there is some real value in understanding what we are talking about.

Having a right apprehension of the words and the terms that we use so commonly. And I just trust that what I say about this will not make it seem to be a complicated thing, but rather help us to appreciate the real meaning of redemption. Now let us begin where it does begin.

Redemption begins with being unto God. It is redemption unto God. No, the great word, the beginning of the book of the Revelation, hath redeemed us unto God.

That means that something has been taken from God, which is God's right. And if something has been taken from God, the balance of things has been upset. Things are not equal.

Things are not complete. There is something lacking, which belongs to God. And that being the case, things are unequal, things are unbalanced.

If there is a family, and in that family there are two sons, belonging to the one father. And one son is removed. The balance of the family is upset, it is lopsided, it is one sided.

And the father's position is divided and incomplete. An unequal position obtains. If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, that is his complete lot, that's everything, his fullness.

And one of those sheep is lost, the balance is upset. Everything is not complete. His possession is interfered with, disturbed, and things are out of proportion.

If a woman has a necklace with ten pieces of silver hanging from it, and one of those pieces of silver is lost, then the balance is upset. She has not got all that belongs to her. Things are unequal.

The balance is disturbed. The bringing back of those lost things, whether it be a son, or a sheep, or a piece of silver, restores the balance to the owner. There is redemption unto God.

God has all that belongs to him, is his right, and there is completeness restored. Redemption unto God. But what is it really that has been lost? Of course, we have the parables and the illustrations in the scripture.

It's not an illustration, a son, a sheep, a piece of silver. Many other things are employed to illustrate the truth, but they are only illustrations. What is it really that has been lost, that has, by being lost, upset the balance? It is life.

It is life. Now, here is the mystery of redemption. What we are met with in the Bible throughout, and of course I can't trace this thing in half an hour, but what we are met with in the Bible throughout is this very matter of the disturbance of the balance of life, and God's demand that that balance shall be restored.

He is the author, the fountain, the origin, and the whole sum of life. Life is God's. He alone is the rightful law of life.

Life is God's. It belongs to God. It is as though, if I may put it this way, God has so much life, just so much life, which is a complete measure of life, a fullness of life, an ultimate of life.

Life is just so much in God and with God, not less, not more, just so much. Take something of that life away as you upset the balance of life. The whole thing is out of proportion.

And redemption means restoring that balance by restoring the fullness. Now then, here you have your Bible. We are in these days very much occupied, or the government is, and perhaps the country is occupied with this matter of capital punishment.

Capital punishment. A life has been taken, therefore another life must equalize the situation. Put it straight, put it right.

The balance of life must be restored. That's the heart of capital punishment as in the law of Moses, or before the law of Moses. In the law of the first covenant, whosoever taketh man's life, his life shall be taken.

The law of capital punishment. Oh why? Just revenge? Just revenge? Just judgment only? Malice? You do that to me, I do that to you. Is it just that? No, there's a deep principle here.

So much life has been taken by the slaying of that man. God says that's got to be put straight. That's got to be equalized.

The balance has got to be restored. The law of capital punishment. The law of the cities of refuge for the manslayer.

Very interesting matter is that of the manslayer, the cities of refuge provided because he has taken life and the avenger of blood is on his track to equalize this. To take his life. Put it straight, put it even.

Measure another thing up again. Of course that's negative so far as the Old Testament is concerned, but we haven't finished yet. You can see the principle is quite clear I think.

It's just a matter of restoring the balance of things. Restoring the balance of things. Now through the Old Testament it's like that.

It's all wonderful illustrations of great divine truth. The point is life has been taken which belongs to God. It belongs to God because he is the author of life.

It's been taken and God demands because he is an equal God. Equality or equity or righteousness which is a perfect balance of things belongs to God. Things must be even in God's universe.

Not out of proportion, not out of order, not out of measure, but just perfectly even. We come to the end of redemption. Everything will be even.

Everything will be straightened out. There will be nothing out of balance or out of proportion, but all will be just right. Just right.

And righteousness will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. And no one will have any ground for a quarrel with God. It's just right.

Now that's the point you see over this matter of redemption. It's a question of life. There is in God's order, in God's universe, in God's system of things a great equalizing principle.

You can never be in fellowship with God and be unrighteous in a detail. Your fellowship with God, your oneness with God is upset, is unbalanced. It's like a dislocation of a limb in the body if there is a point of unrighteousness in life, in business transactions or in relationships.

That's unrighteous. All right. Balance is upset.

And God is going to demand that that is straightened out, evened out. Righteousness is a tremendous thing with God because it just means that God has things balanced, perfectly balanced. Now the focal point then, as we have said, of this is life.

Now the Old Testament tells us that the blood is the life. The blood is the life. You and I can never, never straighten this matter out.

Man can never put this thing right with God. Man can never give God that which has been taken from him. Therefore his own son took flesh and blood.

And Christ's infinite blood, infinite blood. You never yet fathom the depth of the wonder of the blood of Jesus Christ. It's returned for his life.

His infinite blood is given to God to restore the balance, to make up what has been lost, what has been taken from God by ruthless hands, by the murderer who has come in. He restores to God by his own, let us repeat it, infinite blood because it's got to be sufficient to meet the demands of an infinite God on the one side and of all men on the other side. Yes, sufficient life poured out by Jesus Christ.

God's son, for God's satisfaction, God shall have all that he has of right and poured out to meet that demand of God in all men from whom this life has been taken. The payment is not to Satan, it's to God. It is redemption by his blood unto God.

There follows this that because man is by this terrible thing that has happened in a position of weakness, defectiveness, helplessness, he is in bondage. He is in bondage. He is helplessly in bondage.

Now you of course can take your illustration from your own testament. Israel in Egypt, always referred to as the land of bondage. They were in bondage.

That's the word which governs their position there. How were they delivered from that bondage? Well we say by the blood of the Lamb. By the blood of the Lamb.

The operation was two-sided. It depended entirely upon the attitude of the heart. The attitude of faith.

In unbelief and rebellion of heart as in Pharaoh and the Egyptians persisted, the blood testified against them. It was their undoing. But Israel was just as much in bondage to sin to the world as Egypt was.

Just as much. No difference. The difference which did come about was by their attitude toward the blood.

If any Israelite had by unbelief or rebellion of heart refused to take that shed blood and sprinkle it upon the doorpost, the mental threshold making a circle of blood, they would have done the same way as the Egyptians. Remained in bondage and death under judgment. But recognizing, of course they didn't understand.

They didn't know what we are talking about. But they had the simple prescription and the simple command that they should take that blood of the Lamb without spot, without blemish. Take it and sprinkle it.

And with that simple demand arose the demand for the obedience of faith. And thereby that blood answered for them to God's requirements. God knew the secret, the mystery of that blood.

God who is the timeless, the eternal God was not moving so many hundreds or thousands of years before he was moving then and there on the ground of his own Son at Calvary. The Passover Lamb. And he knew the meaning of it while Israel did not have the understanding.

God knew. And he just made his simple requirement. But bound up with this deep, this timeless mystery of life.

Life. God had a right to life. God must have that which is his own.

Life. And so the Lamb with its shed blood symbolically answers to God's demand. And in that life blood poured out, it is unto God.

Remember, through all the Old Testament ritual in Israel, the blood belongs to God. The blood belongs to God. It's sacred unto God.

Don't you drink the blood. Don't you appropriate the blood. That's poured out unto God.

That's God. God's right. You know that preserve of the blood, don't you? It's God.

It represents the life which belongs to God. And in the giving that God has his right, his portion, what belongs to him. So when we come to this word in Ephesians 1, we have redemption through his blood.

The forgiveness of our trespasses. We have redemption through his blood. And have, says John, redeemed us unto God by his blood.

Would you like to change the word? You can. We have redemption through his poured out life. Redeemed unto God through his poured out life.

That's the meaning of it. The Lord Jesus, because of the infinite value, the infinite measure of that which he gave in his cross unto God, satisfied God perfectly. In this matter of his requirement, his demand.

And although the explanation may sound a little complicated and difficult, well of course it is. It's the unsearchable riches. Oh how, oh the depth of the riches beyond us.

After all, in experience it's very simple. You know dear friends, when you and I, at the beginning of our Christian life, take by faith the virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ, we don't understand that. We do not comprehend its meaning.

But in simple faith, we see that it is by way of the blood of Jesus Christ that we are saved. And in that simple, that genuine, heart faith, in the efficacy and virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ, we take it. And give ourselves to God on the ground of it.

What is our first consciousness? Everything's alright. Everything's alright. The dislocation has been adjusted.

The unbalanced state of things has been put straight. We call it peace with God. Peace with God.

It's only another way of saying the same thing. God has what he requires for his satisfaction. And if God is satisfied, we'll be well satisfied.

If there is that in us that satisfies him, the spirit will bear witness. And although, I say again, we do not understand, we are in the depths, the mighty depths, depths which it will take eternity to comprehend. There's the simple beginning of this fact.

Everything was distorted, deranged, unbalanced. There was something lacking that was essential, vital to our peace. All that sort of thing.

And now, we have peace with God. The balance is restored. God is satisfied in our hearts, we feel.

Although we cannot explain, we feel. Well, somehow or another, a great adjustment has taken place. Things are equal now.

Things are straight now. Put it as you will. It's a consciousness, isn't it? And what is true in that sense of the initial aspect of our salvation will be an abiding law throughout our Christian life that if on any matter whatsoever, God's rights are being withheld, he is not getting that which is his due, in that measure, we shall lack the wholeness of his rest and his peace.

Sort of. Now, if not an unbalanced state of things, there's an oscillation in the balances. Do you know something about that oscillation in the balances of your heart? Just not steady.

Just not steady. Something here that's uncertain, that's wavering, not sure about this yet. But immediately, you and I get that thing cleared up with God.

It may be only one thing. Get that straightened out and God gets what he requires. Peace is restored.

It's a wonderful truth in the Christian life, isn't it? It's simple in that way, but there is the explanation. Oh, why have I been holding out so? Why didn't I get that thing cleared up before now? I've been spoiling everything for myself because the Lord has not had what he had a right to. Now, redemption is initial, redemption is progressive, and redemption is final.

There are the three tenses. You can change the word from redemption to salvation if you like. It's the same thing.

We were saved. We are being saved. And we shall be saved.

Those are the three tenses of salvation. Well, the first is what he has done for us perfectly and completely, of which we have accepted. The second of the process of redemption or salvation is that God is getting more and more of that requirement of his in our life.

And as he does, we are knowing more and more of the balanced life, the steady life of rest and confidence. But, thank God, while that will go on to the end of our days, salvation will continue right to the last breath. There is that ultimate, perfect salvation when with that prong around the Lamb on the throne, we shall see and hath redeemed us unto God.

By his blood. That is the final, last phase of redemption. It's all in the infinite value of the blood of Jesus.

See how great this is? Well might the apostle here include this in the riches of his grace. The unsearchable riches of his grace. The depth of the riches of his grace.

Providing God with that which we could never give him. Answering to God for his righteous demands which we could never give him. All these words are bound up together.

He is made unto us from God's righteousness. Sanctification. Redemption.

Righteousness. The righteousness which is of God through faith in Jesus Christ. God has provided it all in his Son.

Now, I will add just a word here as to the next thing in this group, five-fold group of riches of his grace. It will not take me more than a few minutes to do this because it is so closely linked in with what we have been saying. Election.

Adoption. Redemption. Thus each which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

He made to abound unto us in all wisdom. One of the riches of his grace here is this wisdom which he has made to abound unto us. Are this so many-sided and full matter of wisdom made to abound unto us? Christ made unto us from God's wisdom.

I am only going to say one thing in this context, what we have said and what the rest of this chapter contains. What is wisdom in its meaning here? Well, when the apostle, we will put it this way, when the apostle has tabulated these five profound things, unexplorable things, he goes on his knees. Now that was something extraordinary for a Jew very rarely knelt down to pray.

He always stood up to pray. If it was in the synagogue, he stood up to pray. Paul refers to this in one place when he stands praying.

Now that was something extraordinary for a Jew very rarely knelt down to pray. He always stood up to pray. If it was in the synagogue, he stood up to pray.

Paul refers to this in one place when he stands praying. The common attitude and posture of prayer for the Jew was standing and lifting up holy hands. It's only occasionally that you find such a one on his knees.

You'll find Daniel on his knees. And now here Paul says, I bow my knees unto the Father. What is this? Why? This unusual attitude, position, something unusual so to speak, or is involved.

It's an occasion for something extraordinary. You'll agree that that was so with Daniel. Remember when he prayed, there was something tremendous involved.

Now the apostle says, I bow my knees. There's something here that is a tremendous matter. And what does he ask, he pray for? He has said all these things.

He knows how incomprehensible they are. But he would grant unto you a spirit of wisdom and in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your heart being enlightened. Now you've gotten the heart of wisdom.

What is the heart of wisdom? It is the gift and ability of seeing right into the heart of things. The ability given to see into the heart of things. The spirit of wisdom and revelation.

Now Paul is writing in this letter about the mystery, hidden from ages and generations. From before times eternal. Hidden in Christ.

Now brought out from the hidden place and committed, conveyed. Paul is trying to explain this. To speak about this mystery.

And these five things are in the mystery. Predestination, poor ordination, redemption. And while they hear doubt that they are mistress and men are fiends.

Putting themselves into intellectual distortions through hundreds of years to explain just these words. Predestination, poor ordination. They are still going on with it.

Paul knows how deep are these riches of his grace. What a tremendous thing is brought to us in Christ. And before it all he falls down on his knees.

I bow my knees to the Father. He would grant unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation. Wisdom and revelation.

That is the ability to see into the heart of things. And all I can add to that is that the Holy Spirit has come, is with us, in order to disclose to us the heart of these things. Perhaps the greatest need of Christians today is to see the meaning of the things that they believe.

See the meaning of what true Christianity is. The meaning of all these things that make up our Christian faith. They are depths beyond our reaching.

They are abysmal things, these things. We need an ability God given to be able to see into the heart of this. But thank God that is possible.

Thank God the Holy Spirit is given for that very purpose. And what I am saying to you dear friends is just this, that you and I may have this same spirit and this work of the Spirit to open our hearts, the eyes of our hearts. Give us this wisdom to see into the heart of the things of Christ.

And what a wonderful thing it is just to see a little way in. I never saw that before. That is light.

That is indeed illumination. That is revelation. That is the truth.

It has an effect. It is not just the mental pleasure, fascination. It does something in us.

It puts us into a position where we cannot throw that away easily. It has become a part of us. We will never say we can do without that.

Well that is all very wonderful. That is all very nice. And so on.

But let us come back to the simplicities. The things easily understood. We cannot do that once we have seen into the heart of things.

Cannot throw it away. Cannot part with it easily. To do so would be to do irreparable damage to our own spiritual life.

I am this truth. This light of one. It is not some thing that I have got.

It is myself, my very self, my very life. I have seen. God has made it known to me.

No use, I cannot explain it all, but there it is. It is myself. He has made it a part of myself.

That is wisdom. That is wisdom. Seeing right into the heart by the opened eye.

Knowing in an inward way, an interior way, the meaning of the things we have heard and read. Perhaps believe that dear friends, as I think you will see from what I have said this afternoon, there is a depth, a fullness in such a word as redemption, which we have only just touched the fringe of. And everything else in our salvation is in the same category.

It is of the dimensions of God himself. And it is going to take eternity for us to comprehend. But it is given to us here to know and to know more and still more of the depth of the wisdom of his grace.

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