

Redemption

I have swept away your offenses like a cloud.

Return to me for

I have redeemed you.

Isaiah 44:22

Personal Redemption

1 Thessalonians 5 Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)

5 But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you. ² For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³ When people say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape. ⁴ But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵ For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶ So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. ⁸ But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

1.1.1 Final Exhortations, Greetings, and Benediction

¹² But we beseech you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. ¹⁵ See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray constantly, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit, ²⁰ do not despise prophesying, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good, ²² abstain from every form of evil.

²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

²⁵ Brethren, pray for us.

²⁶ Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

²⁷ I adjure you by the Lord that this letter be read to all the brethren.

²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY

POPE FRANCIS

JUBILEE AUDIENCE

*Saint Peter's Square
Saturday, 10 September 2016*

Mercy and Redemption

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

The passage that we have heard speaks of God's mercy which is implemented in the Redemption, that is, in the salvation which we were given with the Blood of his Son Jesus (cf. 1 Pet 1:18-21). The word "redemption" is not often used, yet it is fundamental because it indicates the most radical liberation that God could fulfil for us, for all of humanity and for all of creation.

It seems that man today no longer likes to think he has been freed and saved through God's intervention; he deludes himself that his freedom is a force for obtaining everything. But in reality this is not the case. How many illusions are sold on the pretext of freedom, and how many new forms of slavery are created in our times in the name of a false freedom! Many, many slaves. 'I do this because I want to, I take drugs because I like to, I am free. I do otherwise'. They are slaves! They become slaves in the name of freedom. We have all seen people like this who end up on the ground. We need God to free us from every form of indifference, selfishness and self-sufficiency".

The words of the Apostle Peter clearly express the meaning of the new life to which we are called. By making Himself one of us, the Lord Jesus not only takes on the human condition, but also raises us up to the possibility of being Children of God. By His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ, the blameless Lamb, conquered death and sin to free us from their dominion. He is the Lamb that was sacrificed for us, so that we can receive a new life made up of forgiveness, love and joy. These three words are beautiful: forgiveness, love and joy. All that He assumed was also redeemed, freed and saved. Certainly, it is true that life puts us to the test, and at times we suffer for this. However, in these moments we are invited to turn our gaze to the crucified Jesus who suffers for us and with us, as sure proof that God does not abandon us. Let us never forget that in anguish and persecution, as in everyday sufferings, we are always freed by the merciful hand of God who raises us up to Him and leads us to a new life.

God's love is boundless: we can discover ever new signs that show his attention towards us and, above all, his wish to reach us and to await us. All our life, although marked by the fragility of sin, is placed under the gaze of God who loves us. How many pages of Sacred Scripture speak to us of God's presence, closeness and tenderness for every man, especially for the smallest, the poor and the troubled! God has great tenderness, great love for the small ones, for the weak, for those rejected by society. The greater our need, the more his gaze upon us is filled with mercy. He feels compassion and pity towards us because He knows our weaknesses. He knows our sins and He forgives us. He always forgives us! He is so good, our Father is so good.

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, let us open up to the Lord, and receive his grace! Because, as the Psalm says, "For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with Him is plentiful redemption" (130[129]:7).

What is redemption?

re·demp·tion
rə'dem(p)SH(ə)n/

noun

noun: redemption; plural noun: redemptions

1. 1.

the action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil.

"God's plans for the redemption of his world"

synonyms: [saving](#), freeing from sin, [absolution](#)
"God's redemption of his people"

- a thing that saves someone from error or evil.

"his marginalization from the Hollywood jungle proved to be his redemption"

2. 2.

the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt.

synonyms: [retrieval](#), [recovery](#), reclamation, repossession,

Why do we need redemption?

For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God. Romans 5:23

Mankind after the Fall: Dead in his sins.

From the time of Adam on throughout history, mankind progressed in wickedness and sin: obscuring the image of God by the sins of idolatry and polytheism, perverting the meaning of marriage by polygamy and concubinage, and committing many other offenses against God and man. In short, human history is nothing but a mind-numbing string of murders, slaughters, conquests, pillages, toil, sicknesses, rapine, thefts and blasphemies until man, worn down by years of labor and worry, in death returns to the dust from which he was taken (Gen. 3:19). Man is desperately corrupted by sin. Because of original sin, his concupiscence causes him to commit actual sin, from which he is unable to free himself. Even the best exemplars of faith in the Old Testament (Noah, Abraham, Moses, David) still find themselves entangled in sin.

How do we find redemption?

Beginning with His promise to Eve in Genesis 3:15, God consistently held out to His people of the Old Testament the promise of a coming redeemer, a Messiah, who would deliver them from sin and reconcile them with the Father. This redeemer would in Himself fulfill all of the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament and transform mankind, giving them "new hearts" to love God and fulfill His commandments in righteousness.

"But in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons," St. Paul teaches in Galatians 4:4-5. Christ came to earth to redeem us from sin and to make us sons of God, or as St. Peter calls it, "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). But who is this Jesus Christ who has done this? In our earlier lesson, we discussed the proofs that Christ was divine. Now let us examine what is implied by saying things like Christ is "divine," the "Son of God," and "the Word made flesh."

Principles of the Atonement

Now that we understand who Christ *is*, we can understand what He *does*. The sacrificial death of Christ on the cross is referred to as the Atonement. It is by this Atonement that man has been redeemed. Before looking at the Atonement itself, we must clarify some principles first:

Atonement refers to the satisfaction of a demand. In the narrower sense it is taken to

mean the reparation of an insult. This occurs through a voluntary performance that outweighs the injustice done.

Reparation must be made by the one who committed the outrage, or at least one who can legitimately act on behalf of the one who has committed the insult.

The gravity of the insult is relative to the majesty of the one insulted. It is nothing at all to kick a stone; it can be wrong to kick a dog; kick a person hard enough, you may be fined, sued or imprisoned; attack a policeman, you will definitely go to jail; attack the President, you may go to prison for life. What happens to us if we, through our sins, offend and outrage God?

Because God is infinitely majestic, good, holy and powerful, a sin against Him is infinite in magnitude.

- It follows, therefore, that because men are finite beings, we cannot adequately repay this debt we owe God because the debt of sin is infinite.
- Because the debt is infinite, only God can pay it.
- Because it is man's debt, man must pay it.
- Therefore, the only one who can adequately atone for sin is a God-Man.

Because Christ was divine, the voluntary sacrifice of His blood was of infinite merit, enough to atone for every sin that has ever been committed and every sin that ever will be committed until the end of time. Because He was a man, and a perfect Man at that, He was able to offer the sacrifice of Himself on behalf of the entire human race (vicarious atonement), just as Adam by virtue of his fatherhood of the human race sinned on behalf of the entire race. Thus man is reconciled to God and enabled to become sons and daughters of God, partakers of the divine nature.

But what if he isn't divine?

Many heresies have denied Christ's true divinity, the most famous of which was the heresy of the Arians, which raged in the Church for over two hundred years (c. 300-500). Arianism denied that Christ was truly God in the same way as God the Father, and instead posited Him as a lesser being, a sort of demi-God who was created. "There was a time when the Son was not" was the creed of the Arians. This view was condemned by the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381).

Arianism, however, has again reared its ugly head in the modern world. Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons (two of the fastest growing sects in the world) and liberal Protestantism all assert a kind of modified Arianism where the divinity of Christ and His equality in nature with the Father are denied.

Did he really die for me?

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which he lavished upon us."

-Eph. 1:7

Though Christ poured out His life on the cross, it is the teaching of the Church that even the smallest drop of Christ's blood would have been enough to redeem all of mankind because, as a Divine Person, it has infinite value (Pope Clement VI, *Unigenitus Dei Filius*, 1343). Therefore, Christ's sacrifice on the cross is not only sufficient to atone for all sin, but is abundantly *more* than sufficient (this is called the "superabundance" of Christ's merit). It is enough to save every human being who was ever born or will ever be born. Christ's death is thus objectively enough to redeem everybody.

What do I have to do?

However, wishing to maintain the true freedom of the human race in keeping with God's perfect love, the application of the merits of the death of Christ is *subjective* and depends on the response of man to Christ's saving actions. Christ commands that to receive this forgiveness and sanctification, man must fulfill certain conditions: faith (Eph. 2:8), baptism (Mark 16:16), perseverance in charity (2 Pet. 1:3-11), etc.

Will this really help?

Effects of the Atonement

The Atonement is what effects our justification, which the Council of Trent defines "as being a translation from the state in which man is born a child of the first Adam, to the state of grace and of the adoption of the sons of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ our Savior" (Trent, Session VI, Chap. IV).

"Furthermore, justification is not only a remission of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man through the voluntary reception of grace and gifts whereby an unjust man becomes just and from being an enemy becomes a friend, that he may be an heir according to hope of life everlasting" (Trent, Session VI, Chap. VII).

The atonement delivers us from sin, makes us sons and daughters of the Father, restores us to a state of friendship with God, elevates us by grace to a state better than that enjoyed by Adam, through grace enables us to keep the commandments and attain true righteousness and holiness and transforms us to be capable of spending eternity in God's presence in heaven.

Heretical Views on Justification

Here are some heretical views on justification. Though they do not often go by these names today, the ideas are still prevalent. Watch out for them!

Heresy	Orthodoxy
<p><u>Judaizing</u>: We are saved by keeping the ceremonial prescriptions of the Old Testament.</p>	<p>While the moral principles of the old law are still binding, the ritual aspects of it were only meant for the Jews of the Old Testament.</p>

<p><u>Pelagianism</u>: We can save ourselves through being good; good people go to heaven regardless of the merits of Christ.</p>	<p>Salvation apart from the grace of God is not possible; if it were not the grace of God, we could not be saved. Our deeds are made meritorious by virtue of the atonement.</p>
<p><u>Sola Fide</u>: It is faith in Christ alone that saves us; it Faith in the Revelation of God plus is not necessary to do good deeds or even to give up persevering in charity and abiding sin. Faith alone suffices.</p>	<p>Faith in the Revelation of God plus persevering in charity and abiding in hope save us. This faith is put into action by obeying the commands of Christ and the teaching of the Church.</p>
<p><u>Calvinism</u>: Christ did not die for all, but only for the Elect.</p>	<p>Christ died for all, regardless of where their eternal destiny is.</p>
<p><u>Superstition</u>: You can be saved just by going through the external rituals of the Church (baptism, etc.) with the necessity of faith or good works.</p>	<p>The sacraments of the Church are of no profit if not accompanied by the necessary interior dispositions.</p>
<p><u>Protestant</u> : Justification does not actually make us holy; it is just a judicial declaration by God not saying we are holy. In reality, we will always be corrupt (dung covered in snow). Justification is a legal fiction.</p>	<p>Justification truly effects our sanctification and makes us holy just in name but in fact.</p>

A prayer for forgiveness Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
 According to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
 Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight,
 So that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgement.
 Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.
 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.
 Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.
 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing heart.**

Amen