

"FOR GOD SENT NOT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD TO CONDEMN THE WORLD; BUT THAT THE WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED" (JOHN 3:17)

GOD GAVE HIS ALL BY SENDING JESUS

MIKE GREIF

(All scriptures are from the New American Version, NASB)

Jesus gave His all to God by agreeing to come down to earth to fulfill the calling and ministry God had for Him. He gave His all by walking with God and abiding in Him each day here on this earth, being led by God's Spirit throughout His entire lifetime, one day at a time. God gave His all by sending His only unique Son to earth as a sacrifice for each and every one of us down here so that we might enjoy the privilege and opportunity to fellowship with Him as we live this life He has given us.

God also wants us to give our all to Him. If we're going to bear fruit for God we're going to have to deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily, or our ministries, the gifts he has given us, and follow Jesus, as it says in Luke 9:23. Just as Jesus was led by the Spirit, we need to be led by the Spirit. Just as Jesus was following God, daily, we need to follow Jesus, daily. Just as He was faithful daily, we must be faithful daily.

We won't take anything with us into heaven if we live for ourselves. If we accept Jesus as our savior we will receive salvation, though. This is explained in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. Verse 12 says, "Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious

stones, or with wood, hay, or straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire." God not only wants us to receive salvation but to bear fruit for Him. John 15:4-5 says, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I am him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." In order to bear fruit for Him, we must abide in Him. To abide means to be in close fellowship with Him and to be in tune with His Holy Spirit. John 10:27 says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." As we fellowship with Him, we will learn to hear His voice as He bids us do this or that. I think we are all learning, hopefully, to do this at this time. We want to be about His business, whatever it is during the day that He wants us to do.

John 12:24-26 says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it; and

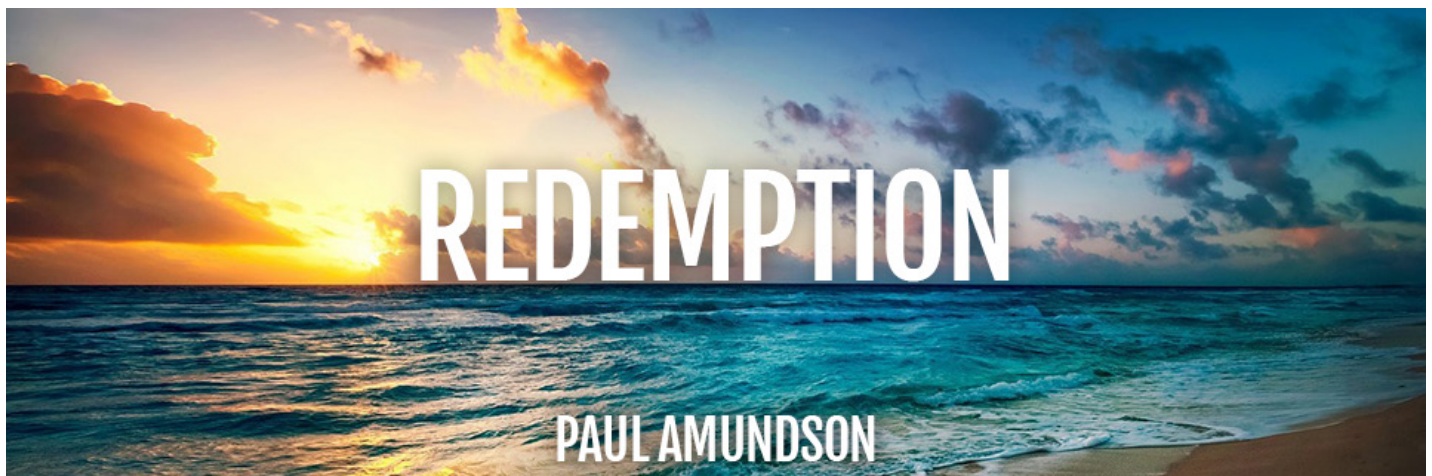
he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am there shall My servant be also; if anyone serves Me the Father will honor him." The Bible says here that in order for us to bear fruit for Him we must die to self. The word 'hates' here needs to be explained a little. It comes from the Greek word 'miseo' which apparently means choosing or elevating one value over another or loving someone or something less than someone or something else. So I don't think it means here that we hate our lives but rather we are choosing our lives, and our likes, and all the things that we want to do, over and above what the Holy Spirit is trying to lead us to do during the day. It's like when you go outside and the birds are singing but you don't hear them because your mind is so focused on the jobs and the things that you're doing. But if when you go outside you're focusing on hearing those birds singing while you're doing your jobs you're amazed at what you weren't able to hear before. It's the same with listening to the Holy Spirit and hearing His voice. If we're so focused on all the things that we want to do we aren't able to hear that still small voice of the Spirit asking us to do such and such a thing, or say something to someone He wants us to speak to. *"If anyone serves Me let him follow Me."* If we wish to serve Him we must learn to follow His leading and to hear His voice.

There's a scripture made into a song that says, "If you want to be great in God's kingdom learn to be the servant of all." Learn to be the servant of all! Jesus was the servant of all! He came, lived, and died for us that we might all have the glorious opportunity of walking with our Creator, our Heavenly Father. God made this entire universe for us in this specific time in history. Don't miss out on this opportunity because you are selfish. Everyone is selfish. That is just our nature. But let's learn to die to self and God will make us truly happy! Psalms 37:4 says, *"Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart."* God is the only one who knows how to make us truly happy. He wants us to be happy and fulfilled but it can only come through knowing and walking with Him! Fulfill the ministry that He has given you! Evie Tornquist wrote a song with a line in it that says, "Live for Jesus, that's all that matters!" We are here because God wanted fellowship!

God wants us to be about His business serving others. He wants us to do this during our normal lifetime. Whatever it is that we do during the day we can speak the words that He wants us to speak, to see people in the way that He wants us to see them, and to be about our jobs as His representatives and ambassadors. This can be a daunting task. The good news is He promises to give His Holy Spirit to help us to do it! Luke 11:13 says, *"...how much more will your Heavenly Father give of the Holy Spirit to them who ask Him."* And Ephesians 5:18 says, *"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit"*. He commands us here to be filled with the Spirit! This makes it all possible! He has given His Spirit to us so that it is God's own Spirit that is working in us and through us. All things are possible with God and He is inside us working in us. *"...for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13). *"...and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. This power is in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He has put all things in subjection under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all"* (Ephesians 1:19-23). The very power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead is working in us, living and abiding in us, daily, and He wants to work through us by His Holy Spirit. Let's walk with Him and take Him along with us each and every day on our adventure of life.

God gave His all to and for us. Jesus His Son gave His all by coming to earth and dying on the cross for us. Let us also choose to give our all to God as we daily walk this earthly sod for Him.

To quote another Evie Tornquist song called 'This Life' she wrote, 'This life that I've been given, is but a moment's time. This life I have received it, as a gift from Your hand. Let all my days reflect, Your precious, holy name. Everything that I do, let it glorify You, my Savior, and my God!' May this be the desire of our hearts! ✝



(All scriptures are from the New King James Version)

on a carnal level.

The definition of redemption is as follows, "the act of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil" and "the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment or clearing a debt" The first pertaining to spiritual, the second more

I have found it quite interesting to read the preface of the different books in the New Testament. This is a description of the book of Romans. "Romans, Paul's greatest work, is placed first among his thirteen epistles in the New Testament. While the four Gospels

present the words and works of Jesus Christ, Romans explores the significance of his sacrificial death. Using a question and answer format, Paul records the most systematic presentation of the doctrine in the Bible. Romans is more than a book of theology, it is also a book of **practical** exhortation. The good news of Jesus Christ is more than facts to be believed; it is also a life to be lived, a life of righteousness befitting the person justified freely by (God's) grace through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus."

*"But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"* (Romans 3:21-26).

*"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which **shall** be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

*Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the **redemption** of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.*

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He **foreknew**, He also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He **predestined**, these He also **called**; whom He called, these He also **justified**; and whom He justified, these He also **glorified**" (Romans 8:18-30).*

What a tremendous statement these last two paragraphs tell us of what from before we were born how he placed his hand on us, lead us, blessed us, empowered us, and will fulfill his complete plan for mankind in us as we walk faithfully with Him.

Oh glory to God. What a realization of his investment in his own.

"For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame

*the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and **redemption**— that, as it is written, 'He who glories, let him glory in the Lord' (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).*

God is not interested in us walking in the recognition of our fleshly weakness but in walking in the **redemptive** power that was completed on the cross when Christ said, "It is finished." The veil was rent and we were given access into the Holy of Holies.

I want to go to Hebrews 9:11-15, "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal **redemption**. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the **redemption** of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are **called** may **receive** the promise of the **eternal inheritance**."

Saints of God, we must realize that we have that redemptive power abiding in our bodies and that we can reclaim it simply by repenting, just like reclaiming our new birth from water baptism and reclaiming speaking in tongues. We have to enter into it. I think of that song "Oh yes, oh yes, I'm a child of the King. His royal blood now flows through my veins."

Even though we have responsibilities on this earth we are **pilgrims**. We must look past and rise above what this world has to offer and set our eyes upon the heavenly calling of being kings and priests in the Kingdom of our Lord. Oh God, open our eyes to a greater glimpse of this wonderful way.

I want to read the preface for Ephesians. Ephesians is addressed to a group of believers who are rich beyond measure in Jesus Christ, yet living as beggars, and only because they are ignorant of their wealth. Paul begins by describing the contents of the Christian's heavenly "bank account." Adoption, acceptance, **redemption**, forgiveness, wisdom, inheritance, the seal of the Holy Spirit, life, grace, citizenship. In short, **every spiritual blessing**. The Christian learns a spiritual walk rooted in his **spiritual wealth** for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works and that we should walk in them.

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having **predestined** us to **adoption** as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us **accepted** in the Beloved.*

*In Him we have **redemption** through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being **predestined** according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.*

*In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were **sealed** with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the **guarantee** of our inheritance until the **redemption** of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory” (Ephesians 1:3-14).*

*“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were **sealed** for the day of **redemption**. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving** one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:30-32).*

*“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has **qualified** us to be **partakers** of the **inheritance** of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have **redemption** through His blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:9-14).*

In closing, we know the enemy of our soul is engaged in trying to discourage us in any manner he can. Let the realization of these scriptures burn in your heart with the plan that God has for **you** in the Body of Christ, His Church. It may be painful smoothing off the rough edges to get to the priceless jewel He is creating in each and every one of us. But, if we will be faithful, the victory has been won, so let's enjoy the race knowing he walks beside us each step of the way. What a joy, what a promise, what a victory.✝

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