

Monstrosity of praise Part 2

Introduction

This is the 2nd part of a 3-part sermon of praise, coming from the longest sentence (202) words in the Bible.

Every day, you and I get distracted by the world, to worship the things of this world rather than God.

Even in this period of lock down, it's so easy to see this time as an extended time of being selfish, worshipping the idolatry of self, or becoming a couch potato with box eyes.

Worshipping media and entertainment of the world.

Porn usage has spiked in this time of pandemic, implying the worship of sex and self-gratification

You are a worshipper; Gods word this morning simply challenges you to make sure that who you worship is God.

The passage that we continue to look at is Eph 1:3-14, one sentence in Gk called a monstrous sentence of praise

Section 1 being vs 3-6 focuses on the blessings from God the Fathers blessings for the believer culminating in worship in vs 6

Section 2 vs 7-12 focuses on the blessings from Jesus Christ for the believer culminating in worship vs 12

Section 3 vs 13-14 focuses on the blessings from the Holy Spirit Christ for the believer culminating in worship vs 14

We will focus in Eph 1:7-17 this morning

Propositional statement

4 fruits of redemption that exhorts you to praise God

1. Redemption
2. Revelation
3. Reward
4. Reverence

1. Redemption

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, Ephesians 1:7
ESV*

The benefits of redemption itself are the fruit of redemption.

If you are saved, then redemption benefits are for you

In him

Should actually be translated **in who**

This does not refer to Christ in the Greek but to the beloved that is mentioned in vs 6
Paul is describing what are the privileges of the beloved.

The beloved are the ones:

- Saints, those who trust in Jesus Eph 1:1
- Blessed by God Eph 1:3
- chosen by God to be holy and blameless and at the same time Eph 1:4
- He chose you for a destiny, to be adopted, for joy and for praise Eph 1:5

The present benefit that any believer has in Jesus Christ is redemption.

we have redemption

The grammar implies that you the believer has redemption in an ongoing way.

There is never a time you lose it.

It's an ongoing reality for you if you have repented and trusted in Christ death and resurrection for your sins.

Redemption in the Greek means to be released from a condition of captivity.

You were a slave to sin and have been released.

It comes from the OT idea of Gods divine deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Deuteronomy 7:8 ESV

And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making for yourself a name for great and awesome things, in driving out nations before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt? 1 Chronicles 17:21 ESV

Redemption requires payment.

The reason is that because you and I have sinned against a Holy God.

Gods holy response to sin is wrath and, in His righteousness, He demands justice for this infinite offence.

Redemption is all about Jesus and what He accomplished.

And Jesus paid the price that release you from the debt you owed God.

If you reject Christ payment, God will demand payment from you, an eternity in hell.

How was payment made?

through his blood,

The instrument used to pay God was the blood of Christ.

This refers to Christ death on the cross.

The term blood in the OT related to animal being sacrificed.

Animals were sacrificed to make atonement for the sins of the people paving the way to worship God.

In the OT it served as a covering of sins, and a shadow pointing towards the future ultimate sacrifice of Christ.

The OT sacrifices served as religious billboards illuminating Christ's death on the cross.

The blood of a person was considered the seat of vitality, the life blood of a person.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. Leviticus 17:11 ESV

For the life of every creature is its blood: its blood is its life.

Therefore, I have said to the people of Israel, you shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood.

Whoever eats it shall be cut off. Leviticus 17:14 ESV

Blood represented the life of the creature or the person

Israel were not permitted to eat the blood of the animals as a reminder that it represented the life of that creature

Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

Hebrews 9:22 ESV

The shedding of blood was needed to obtain the forgiveness of sins.

Paul made it clear that God's wrath has been turned away (propitiation) and so obtained redemption through Christ blood shed on the cross.

But it also demonstrated that God is a righteous/just God demanding justice for sin.

and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance

he had passed over former sins. Romans 3:24–25 ESV

Christ substitutionary sacrifice paved the way for redemption.

the forgiveness of our trespasses,

Paul defines redemption grammatically as **the forgiveness of our trespasses.**

Forgiveness means the formal release from obligation or debt, especially the debt of sin.

It implies that you are released from bondage to sin, from the legal charges, and the punishment.

You are freed from the obligations, the guilt.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1 ESV

You are legally pardoned.

Trespasses means refers to a sense of estrangement from God, it's a violation of the moral standards, it's an offence against God, an unfaithful treacherous act against God.

So, redemption means you have been released from the obligation to pay or your treacherous act of violating Gods moral standards.

according to the riches of his grace,

It took the riches (wealth, plentiful supply) of God's Grace (His unmerited favour) to redeem and forgive the sinner.

You deserved to pay the cost for your sin, that would be the just thing for God to do.

But in His wealth of Grace, the cost of sin was paid by Jesus's death on the cross.

Illustration

Many of you have faced the situation in which you get pulled off because you have been speeding.

The traffic officer would come to your window, informing you of your offence, and what the penalty for the offence is.

Some of you may have been released without having paid your debt.

But imagine this that the traffic officer, tells you of your offence, tells you of the fine you should pay is R200 000(an amount that would in debt you the rest of your life). You know your guilty. He then, then pulls out his wallet and pays the other traffic officer your fine and lets you go.

This is a picture of redemption, in which someone else paid your debt, relieving you from the legal charges, and punishment for your offence.

Application

1. You should praise Jesus because He shed His blood to release you from your bondage to sin, and from your debt you owed God.
2. May I encourage you even this morning simply to thank Jesus for setting you free.
3. the world is enslaved to sin; they have no option other than to follow their own sinful desires. They think they are free, but they have no choice except to act in their selfish ways.
4. Believer, you have a choice, you can choose not to be enslaved to your own desires, because Jesus has redeemed you.
5. that guilt, you struggle with over your sin, in Christ, and because of His death on the cross for your sins, you are forgiven.
6. So, choose to live in praise and worship for what Jesus has done.

You should not be entertained by the sins for which Jesus Christ died. (John Macarthur)

2. Revelation

which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. Ephesians 1:8–10 ESV

Explanation

which he lavished upon us,

Upon us is better translated into us.

His grace is lavished into, or aimed towards you.

Lavished= Gk term meaning abundant to shower upon, more than enough, beyond the usual amount.

There was an extravagant display of grace.

God poured out his Grace unsparingly upon us.

It takes extravagant grace to cover the treacherous offence against an infinitely Holy and angry God

in all wisdom and insight

“All” refers to all the wisdom you need to understand what God revealed.

“God's lavish grace not only provides redemption but also supplies, along with this, all necessary wisdom and insight to understand and live in the light of what he has done in Christ and its implications” (Word Biblical commentary)

Wisdom originated from a term describing the skill of a carpenter.

A person combining theoretical knowledge with practice. (Hoehner: Ephesians: an exegetical commentary)

Wisdom is a capacity of the mind; in the OT it involves both knowledge and the ability to direct the mind toward a full understanding of human life and toward its moral fulfilment
Baker Encyclopaedia of the Bible Wisdom, Wisdom Literature

It implies **using knowledge and experience** with common sense and insight.

Not human wisdom, based upon the cleverness of a man, academic wisdom but Gods wisdom.

God and His word are the ultimate source of wisdom available to you

that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all

*the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. **Colossians 2:2-3 ESV***

*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! **Romans 11:33 ESV***

Wisdom is the capacity to understand and function according to Gods word.
Gods wisdom is moral in nature.

*But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. **James 3:17 ESV***

Wisdom involves skilfully applying Gods word (the ultimate source of truths) in your life.

Insight is closely related to wisdom

Insight refers to the way of thinking, the capacity to think, **understanding**, to discern, to show prudence.

Insight is to understand the knowledge of God.

It's the ability to understand the relevance of God's word in the present times.

In our passage Paul uses it to having an understanding in the redemptive events with regards to the forgiveness of sins.

OT picture often connected understanding with wisdom

*The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; **Proverbs 3:19 ESV***

by understanding he established the heavens;

You need insight (the capacity to understand) what happened in the gospel to wisely(skilfully) apply the gospel in your life.

There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the

*days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar, your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers, because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.” **Daniel 5:11–12 ESV***

Daniel had understanding and wisdom, which he used to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve problems.

Insight/understanding is attached to the hip of wisdom

The one requires the other

Wisdom and insight

God in His grace supplied the insight (capacity of rational thought, understanding) and the wisdom (capacity to skilfully direct your mind to obey His word) to live in light of what God has done in Christ.

Illustration

Some years ago, I purchased a Nikon camera for myself.

*Before I bought it, I did lot of reading so as to **understand** how I would use it.*

I learned about speed, aperture, focus, and many other things.

I saved up, and eventually paid for it.

But because I understood it, I was able quickly become very skilled in using the camera to enjoy the delight wild life photography.

You have been blessed with insight and the wisdom, of Gods plan, so that you can joyfully live in that reality, in obedience to God.

making known to us the mystery of his will,

Simultaneously with God pouring out his grace to you supplying redemption and the provision of

wisdom and insight, to live out these gospel realities, God did something else.

He revealed the mystery of His will to you the believer.

Mystery implies a **truth that had been hidden in the past, hidden in God**, not understood by human ingenuity or study, but now revealed through His grace.

It's pictured in the OT with King Nebuchadnezzar who had a dream. He required his magician and enchanters to reveal not only the dream, but also its interpretation.

*The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. **Daniel 2:5 ESV***

Daniel prayed and God made know the dream and its meaning to Daniel

*To you, O God of my fathers,
I give thanks and praise,
for you have given me wisdom and might,
and have now made known to me what we asked of you,
for you have made known to us the king's matter." **Daniel 2:23 ESV***

*but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: **Daniel 2:28 ESV***

Paul was saying that God in through His grace has **unveiled a mystery (a previously hidden truth)** to you the believer.

Several questions are answered in the text regarding this mystery.

1. To whom was it revealed? The answer to us, you the believer in Christ
2. how was it revealed?

The answer

according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

Another way to state it would be to say in accordance with his purpose (good pleasure), which He purposed in Christ.

God careful designed strategy, to make know the mystery in Christ gave God great joy.

The third question answered is

What is the mystery?

as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him,

as a plan for the fullness of time=

refers to sequences of periods of time under Gods direction.

It has the idea that after certain sequential periods of time will climax in its full measure.

Just as in the 2-world war, a series of events or periods of time culminated eventually in the end of the war

God controls history, to culminate in achieving his ultimate plan.

That plan is explained as to unite all things in Christ.

The term unite means:

- The summing up of all things in Christ
- it means to unify the cosmos to a common goal
- To restore the cosmos, the universe to its original harmony in Christ
- Christ is the head and everything is in subjection under His Lordship.
- He is King who has conquered all other kingdoms, He is simply wrapping up the last the final details. (The narratives conclusion has been written)

A vision of great oneness in Christ through the gospel

You may ask what things?

things in heaven and things on earth.

Paul refers to two realms.

- Things in heaven **spiritual realm:** which includes
 - The triune God (Jesus), His holy beings: angels, seraphim etc (Epp 1:20)

- Rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, spiritual forces of evil (Epp 3:10, 6:12)
- Things on earth referring to the earthly realm containing
 - Human beings
 - Believers and unbelievers

Gods plan is to restore harmony in and through Christ.

He accomplished this through the gospel.

Through the gospel:

1. Satan and His demons were defeated Eph 1:20-22
2. Redemption was accomplished for His elect Eph 2:4-6
3. Reconciling for Jew and Gentile were accomplished in Christ body Eph 2:16

Application

1. This morning, you have been challenged to understand Gods ultimate plan.
2. God has revealed his plan to restore all things in harmony through Christ.
3. One way or another, you will submit to Christ, either by responding to Him through repentance and faith or being subjected to an eternity in hell in submission to His justice and wrath.
4. Understand this that Satan has been defeated and that you do not need to live in fear of the evil one as a believer.
5. I want to encourage you to respond in praise and thanks giving for God making known to you his ultimate plan.
6. Knowing God s plan, may I encourage you to live in submission to Christ as Lord of your life.

3. Reward

*In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,
Ephesians 1:11 ESV*

Explanation

In him

“in him” should be translated “in whom”,

Referring to Jesus Christ mentioned in vs 9&10

we have obtained an inheritance,

This is one word in the Greek

It’s a term which means a lot, to cast lots, to determine by lot, to appoint or choose by lot.

It comes from the idea of assigning a portion, to divide up the inheritance and assign a portion to someone.

Just as a modern day will and testimony works in which you are allotted to inherit different things, cars, homes, clothing etc.

But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.

Deuteronomy 4:20 ESV

The grammar indicates that it’s not you obtaining, or choosing as the lot, but it is was done to you.

The Authorized standard version of 1901 I believe has made a better translation of the Greek here.

in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will;

Ephesians 1:11 ASV 1901

IN Jesus you were made a heritage implying that you are the heritage.

In Jesus, you had been chosen as Gods portion as Gods inheritance
Because of Christ, you are Gods heritage
God possess you because of what He has done for you in the gospel.
You are His because of what He has done for you in Christ
You have been chosen as Gods portion, assigned by God himself as His own.
You are Gods portion
You are Gods rewards because of what Jesus has done, by uniting all thing in the spiritual realm
and earthly realm in the gospel.

having been predestined

simultaneously to God choosing you as His reward, as his inheritance /heritage God has predestined you.

The reason you became Gods reward, Gods heritage is because our destiny as his inheritance was predetermined beforehand

God destined you beforehand in Christ to be His reward

according to the purpose of him

Purpose here means plan, resolve, will

It means that this was God's plan: you destined beforehand in Christ to be His rewards.

How did God bring this about? The next phrase explains how:

who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

“who works’ is a term in the Gk “energe’ where we get the term energy from? It refers to the operative work, the capability, to produce something, the ability to cause to function, to bring it about.

It's by God's ability, His operative power that He accomplishes it.

The infusion of supernatural power.

*and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe,
according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he*

raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, Ephesians 1:19–20 ESV

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, Ephesians 3:20 ESV

Gods continual activities towards the purpose that He had resolved in eternity past.

The counsel of His will refers to the series of steps to be carried out, or goals to be accomplished

His will refers to the attitude of mind that favour one alternative over another

To summarise:

You are Gods heritage(reward) because he predestined that for you, according to His plans, accomplished through His power according to a series of steps that God chose.

It's a nice way of saying you are His reward because God in His sovereignty brought this about.

Application

1. how does it make you feel knowing that in Jesus you have been chosen as a reward for God, you are his inheritance
2. If you ever felt abandoned in life, felt alone in this world, felt as if nothing make sense.
3. Remember this truth, that as a believer in Jesus, you have been allotted to God, you are his inheritance portion

Reverence

so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:12 ESV

Explanation

so that we who were the first to hope in Christ

We are defined as those who were the first to hope in Jesus

The grammar indicates that it happened at a specific point of time with continual effect.

Believers come to hope in Christ when they place their faith in Christ, and they never stop hoping.

Biblical hope is the confident certain expectation of future good based on the promises of God found in Scripture

As believers we have a firm expectation of what?

might be to the praise of his glory.

That everything will culminate in worshipping God.

In showing reverence, honour and glory to God.

God's ultimate purpose for you that hoped in Jesus is to respond to his glory in praise.

God's ultimate purpose in his plans is His own glorification, that God would be seen as ultimate and be worshipped and revered accordingly.

Application

1. If you have no hope, then it's because you have not turned away from your sin and trusted in Christ.
2. May I encourage every person who hears this sermon to ask this question, what am I hoping in?
3. Are you hoping that everything will get comfortable again, everything will get normal again. Even if the sense of normality restores, you will be facing your own death.
4. Death has 100% success rate
5. One thing that Covid has brought to our minds is that people are dying, and thousands are dying without having hoped in Christ.
6. Oh, my friend, there is hope, Jesus is our hope, trust in Him.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Saviour and of Christ

Jesus our hope, 1 Timothy 1:1 ESV

7. for those who hope in Christ, who are believers, this sentence reminds you and I of our destiny, and that is to be worshippers.

We are to live in praise and worship of God.

Conclusion

4 fruits of redemption that exhorts you to praise God

1. Redemption reminds you that Jesus paid the price on the cross releasing you from both the legal debt to God and the bondage to sin.

2. Revelation reminds you that God has shared with you His ultimate plan to restore harmony in this universe in Christ

3. Reward reminds you that you are special and belong to God

4. Reverence reminds you that you have in the end been designed to worship him,

so, respond to these truths in worshipping Him.