

Biblical Topics

Son – Work of Redemption/Atonement

Christ so humbled Himself to redeem me, a lost and condemned creature. Lost, by my own fault, we had departed from God and were lost in sin. Condemned, because of our sins we were under the curse of God. Redeem means to set free by paying a ransom. It is doing what we should have done, and suffering what we should have suffered.

Christ has taken away all my guilt and suffered all my punishment. We must distinguish between the act of sin and the guilt of sin. The act of sin may be committed in moment, but the guilt continues ever after. Children sometimes blame others for the evil they have done; so God put all the blame and guilt for our sins on His innocent Son, Jesus Christ. Guilt always entails punishment. We should have suffered the punishment, but God punished Jesus in His suffering and death.

- Romans 5:19: For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.
- 2 Corinthians 5:21: God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- John 1:29: The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"
- Galatians 3:13: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Christ has freed us from the slavery of sin. By nature man is a servant and slave of sin. He can do nothing but sin. When Christ died on the cross, His purpose was not only to deliver us from the guilt and punishment of sin, but also free us from the slavery of sin. That means we should not let sin rule over us to obey its lusts. Instead we can lead a life well pleasing to God.

- 1 Peter 2:24: He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.
- John 8:34, 36: Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

Christ has redeemed you from death. Christ has overcome death, now we need not fear temporal death, since eternal death has no power over us. There are three kinds of death: spiritual, temporal, and eternal. Spiritual death is this that the heart, departing from the Lord, is without fear, love and trust in God. Temporal death is the separation of body and soul. Believers also suffer this death. To a believer, however temporal death is but a dark passageway which leads us into the beautiful mansions of heaven. Eternal death is the eternal separation of body and soul from the blissful presence of God. Because by faith in Christ we have become the children of God, therefore, eternal death has no power over us.

- Hebrews 2:14-15: ¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of

death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

- 1 Corinthians 15:55-57: ⁵⁵“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Timothy 1:10: but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Christ has redeemed us from the power of the devil. Christ has overcome the devil and conquered him; therefore he can no longer successfully accuse us, and we can now overcome his temptations. It was by sin that the devil gained power over us and made us his slave. From this power Christ has redeemed us when in our place He resisted the devil's temptation and when He paid the full penalty of our guilt on the cross. If we then, believe in Christ, our Advocate and sure Defense, the devil can no longer accuse us before God and we can also successfully resist his temptation.

- Genesis 3:15: And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”
- 1 John 3:8: He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.
- James 4:7: Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Christ has redeemed me, not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. An act of an individual sin often seems small to us, and we think it can easily be blotted out. But every sin is an offense against the Almighty and Holy God. Therefore also the ransom must be commensurate with His greatness. For this ransom all the treasures of this world are not sufficient to redeem even one guilty soul. The sacrifice of Christ satisfied all the demands of God against us.

- 1 Peter 1:18-19: ¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.
- 1 John 1:7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.
- Isaiah 53:5: But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

As my Substitute Christ has atoned, or made satisfaction, for my sins by paying the penalty of my guilt. (Vicarious Atonement) “Vicarious” means that not we ourselves, but a vicar, a substitute, even Christ, made this atonement. Our sins were charged to Christ, and His righteousness was credited to us. He did this by His holy life, He kept

the Law for us (active obedience), and by His holy, precious blood and innocent suffering and death He paid the penalty of our guilt (passive obedience).

- 2 Corinthians 5:21: God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- Isaiah 53:4-5: ⁴Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Christ redeemed, purchased and won not only you and me. Christ has redeemed the whole lost and condemned mankind. There are those who teach that Christ redeemed the elect only, and not all men. But the Scriptures plainly show that the redemption is universal, it covers the vilest of sinners. If there were not one person in the world, whom Christ had not redeemed, no one could be sure of his redemption because each one might believe himself to be that one. No man is lost because he was not redeemed, but because he does not accept the redemption Christ earned for him.

- 1 Timothy 1:15: Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.
- John 1:29: The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
- 1 John 2:2: He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.
- 2 Corinthians 5:15: And he died for all.
- 2 Peter 2:1: But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

The above information is taken from: “Luther’s Small Catechism” annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler.