

## **SERMON: “Q&A/Jesus: “Who is the Redeemer?”**

Rev. Geoff Ross: Sunday, March 10, 2019, Lent 1 – St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church

*[Good to be back/Israel-Jordan – Petra/Jerusalem/Dead Sea. TY’s:Wayne/Rosemary. AW/Pre-Lent-event:Stations of the Cross – Kim/Jean/Michelle-Wayne/Peter, others.*

*Question: Who is the Redeemer? Answer: The only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, in whom God became man and bore the penalty for sin himself.]*

At the Ash Wednesday service, I reminded those there that when we were last together – two weeks ago – we heard that God abhors sin and will punish those who sin – no matter who they are – there is/will/can be no escape from the price for our sins: don’t be fooled/deceived; we can’t escape detection/judgement/sentence forever – there will be consequences/a payday – in this life and the next. Two weeks ago I stood here wearing a ‘sin-stained’ jacket, demonstrating that while sin might be ‘invisible’ to us, God sees it because sin is real. And while we might deceive ourselves into thinking we have no sin; the truth is we’ve all sinned/none of us can get there from here because our sins will be punished. That’s the bad news; but it wasn’t God’s plan to abandon us: the good news is that it was His plan from before time/promise made at the Fall – that while we are/were sinners, God – in Jesus – would come to us to offer us hope.(Rom 5:8) And this hope is that God Himself would provide a remedy – a Redeemer.

*[Bible: P.1023/1 Tim 2:5]*

Sixty-nine times throughout the Old Testament, God promises; *“I am the Lord, and I will free/deliver/redeem you....”*(Ex 6:6) Each time it’s a personal promise: God, out of His love/grace will save us. And then God did this in Emmanuel – God with us, Jesus who was/with/is God – or as Timothy, himself describes it: *“There is only one God, and Christ Jesus is the only one who can bring us to God. Jesus was truly human, and he gave himself to rescue all of us....”*(1 Tim 2:5) And Jesus did this by becoming one of us – (blood)/being with us/taking our place/by *“becoming a curse for us”* (Gal 3:13)/by being our substitute as the atoning sacrifice for us/our sins.(1 John 2:2) By taking on the pain/punishment/price of our sins, Jesus redeemed – paid for/bought/released/saved/restored us by compensating/honouring the law: to fulfill God’s promise He died for us.

*[Church of the Holy Sepulchre/crucifixion/Golgotha – Pilgrims kneeling/touching the stone of Golgotha – singing: “Alas, and did my Saviour bleed, and did my Sovereign die? Would He devote that sacred head, for sinners such as I?” Red String/Blood of Christ – By His blood we are saved.]*

Writing about this promise fulfilled, Paul tells us God did this by choosing us from before the *“foundation of the world to be Holy and blameless before him in love,”* that God “adopted” us to be His children in/through Jesus in whom we have *“redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”*(Eph 1:4-7) Like the people of God enslaved in Egypt were saved – rescued/ransomed/redeemed – by the blood of a lamb, we have been saved – rescued/ransomed/redeemed by Jesus’ blood.

The reading we just heard is a perfect place for us to start the season of Lent: like the two disciples we are post Crucifixion people holding out hope against what seems to be the despair of the ‘realities’ of this world. Confused/frightened/heart-broken the disciples meet the risen Jesus without knowing it. In their grief/panic they share their hopes/doubts – their faith: they retell what Jesus did/said/offered – saying they believed in Him – but that He was arrested/tried/killed; dashing their hope “*that he would be the one to set Israel free*” – that He would redeem Israel! They walk/talk on toward Emmaus – Jesus even reminds them of what the prophets/law said must happen – but it isn’t until, sitting at a table, when Jesus “*took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them*” – re-enacting the last supper/meal they had together – that “*their eyes were opened*”/freed from their fears/doubts.

Friends, as we begin Lent/approach the Table – and Communion – to celebrate the meal that commemorates God’s saving/redeeming grace in/through the blood/body of Christ, may our eyes also be opened – our fears relieved – by the presence of Jesus Christ who alone is our Redeemer. Amen.