TITLE: the Redeemed!

TEXT: Ps. 107:1-3; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Jn 3:16; Heb. 9:15;

 1St Thess. 4:13-18; Mt. 24:27-44

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about a promise from Scripture for the redeemed of the Lord..

 How many redeemed people do we have here this morning?

**Psal 107:1 (NIV) Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.**

**2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say this--**

**those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,**

**3 those he gathered from the lands,**

**from east and west, from north and south.**

The redeemed here are called to give thanks to the Lord because He is good and His love endures forever!

 So just who are the redeemed? You and I are! All of us who have accepted and embraced Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of our life are the redeemed!

 We who have accepted Jesus as our redemption!

 The Greek word that we translate redeemed is:

**1805 exagorazo {ex-ag-or-ad'-zo}**

**1) to redeem**

1a) by payment of a price to recover from the power of another, to ransom, buy off—buy back

**1b) metaph. of Christ freeing the elect from the dominion of sin and the Mosaic Law at the price of his vicarious death**

**2) to buy up, to buy up for one's self, for one's use**

 Example: Think of bottle or can redemption!

 (Coke can—Coke-Cola is the owner, the creator, if you will.

 You purchase and you become owner, one in control of the can-but your not the creator of it---only the creator can redeem, buy back by paying the redemption price)

 There is a story of the father and son who worked for months to build a toy sailboat. Every night when he came home from work the man and his boy would disappear into the garage for hours. It was a labor of love--love for each other and for the thing they were creating. The wooden hull was painted bright red and it was trimmed with gleaming white sails. When it was finished, they traveled to a nearby lake for the boat's trial run. Before launching it the father tied a string to its stern to keep it from sailing too far. The boat performed beautifully, but before long a motorboat crossing the lake cut the string and the sailboat drifted out of sight on the large lake. Attempts to find it were fruitless, and both father and son wept over its loss.

 A few weeks later as the boy was walking home from school he passed his favorite toy store and was amazed to see a toy sailboat in the window--his sailboat! He ran inside to claim the boat, telling the proprietor about his experience on the lake. The storeowner explained that he had found the boat while on a fishing trip. "You may be its maker," he said, "but as a finder I am its legal owner. You may have it back--for fifty dollars." The boy was stunned at how much it would cost him to regain his boat, but since it was so precious to him he quickly set about earning the money to buy it back.

 Months later he joyfully walked into the toy store and handed the owner fifty dollars in exchange for his sailboat. It was the happiest day of his life. As he left the store he held the boat up to the sunlight. Its colors gleamed as though newly painted. "I made you, but I lost you," he said. "Now I've bought you back. That makes you twice mine, and twice mine is mine forever."

 The man that owed the toy store could have sold the boat to anyone in the world but only the one who made the boat, the creator of it, could redeem it!

 A gem dealer was strolling the aisles at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show when he noticed a blue-violet stone the size and shape of a potato. He looked it over, then, as calmly as possible, asked the vendor, "You want $15 for this?" The seller, realizing the rock wasn't as pretty as others in the bin, lowered the price to $10.

 The stone has since been certified as a 1,905-carat natural star sapphire, about 800 carats larger than the largest stone of its kind. It was appraised at $2.28 million.

 It took a lover of stones to recognize the sapphire's worth. It took the Lover of Souls to recognize the true value of ordinary-looking people like us.

On a coke can the redemption price, the price that coke cola has set the value at, is a nickel--- for us, who have been sold into the bondage and slavery of sin and separated from our creator by that sin, the redemption price, the price that God Himself set, the value that He placed upon you and I to redeem us is the shed blood and life of Jesus!

 Scripture tells us in:

**1Tim 2:5 (NIV) For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,**

6 who gave himself as a ransom for all men--.

 It is for you and I, all who were lost and separated from God by our sin that Christ came and gave His life as a ransom! He came to pay the price of our redemption! To buy us back! The price He paid for our redemption was to give His life, sacrifice His life for us on a cross on a hill called Galgotha!

 Coke-Cola set the redemption price of one of their cans as a nickel…God set the redemption price for you and me at the very life’s blood of His one and only Son!

 That is the value that God places on you this morning!

 **John 3:16 (NIV) "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

Hebr 9:15 (NIV) For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

 Jesus came and gave His life as a ransom to set us free from the bondage and oppression of our sin!

 He came to pay the redemption price! To buy us back for God!

 All that we have to do is turn ourselves in for this great redemption!

 To turn ourselves in to God through by faith accepting Jesus as the lord and savior of our life!

 Once we become redeemed we are to be filled with that which the one who paid the redemption price has to put in us!

 If we were a coke bottle and are redeemed by coke-cola then we would be filled with coke…If we are a Christian who has been redeemed by Christ then we are to be filled with Christ!

 Once we become redeemed there is a tremendous promise that we have to look forward to…

 A promise that is only for those who have accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of their life, those who have been redeemed by God!

 The Apostle Paul speaks of this promise for the redeemed of the Lord….

**1The 4:13 (NIV) Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.**

**14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.**

**15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.**

**16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**

**17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.**

**18 Therefore encourage each other with these words.**

**Therefore encourage each other with these words!**

What are the words that we are to encourage each other with?

 The words that we are to encourage each other with are:**16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**

**17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.**

I love these words! These are words of real encouragement! They offer real hope! They are exciting words!

 This is speaking of that day when Jesus returns and we will receive the fullness of our salvation! When we will be raised to the newness of resurrected life!

 The promise is that when He returns that the dead in Christ will rise first!

 The dead in Christ speak of all those who have died having a personal, saving relationship with Jesus Christ!

 Christians who have passed on before us!

 The promise of Scripture is that on that day… **the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise into the newness of eternal life!**

All who have died with a saving faith in Christ will rise again!

 They will become alive again! They will come back to life! And not just life but eternal resurrected life! Life that will never end! Never again die!

Never again hurt! Never again sorrow!

 That’s good news! That is a fantastic promise of hope!

 That is news; these are words that we can encourage each other with!

 But now, catch the rest of the promise for the redeemed of the Lord here….

**17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.**

 Not only will the dead in Christ rise when Christ returns but there will be those who are still alive at the time Christ returns who will rise to the newness of resurrected life with them!

 In other words there will be some who will never have to experience death at all! Some who will pass from life to life eternal without ever having to experience a literal death!

 What I think is so fantastic about this is that there may very well be some, if not many in this place today that will fall into the second category!

 Some of us may very well never have to face physical death!

 If Christ were to return before we happen to die in the flesh we will never die but we will simply be caught up with Jesus in the air, changed and transformed, resurrected in the newness of eternal life in what Scripture says will happen in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye!

 You know how fast an eye twinkles? I don’t know but it is quick!

 Jesus describes the event this way…

**Matt 24:27 (NIV) For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.**

**30 "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.**

**31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.**

These are encouraging words folks! This is good news!

Just think about it!

 On that day we may just be going about our daily business and in a flash, in the time it takes an eye to twinkle we will be changed and transformed and literally be with Jesus!

 If we happen to physically die as a Christian before that particular day of Christ return it will still be utterly wonderful! Too wonderful to fully comprehend but personally I would like to be in the second category!

 To be alive at that time and be caught up with those who have died in Christ to meet Jesus in the air!

 Not that I am afraid to die but I am curious as to what the rapture is going to be like from this side of death!

 To be walking and talking here on earth and then all of sudden hear a loud trumpet blast and then in a flash, in less time than it takes to take a breath, be changed and transformed into the newness of resurrected life and be caught up in the air to meet Jesus coming in the clouds!

 And what is exciting is that this event can literally happen at any time!

 There are three prominent views on when Christ will return for His Church, what has become known as the Rapture of the Church…

Pre, mid or post tribulation.

 Pre= Christ will return just before the 7 year tribulation period starts.

mid= That Christ will return half way through the 7 year tribulation period.

Post= that Jesus will return just at the end of the 7 year tribulation period and it will be a synonymous event with the earthly return of Christ where He will rule from Jerusalem for 1000 years…

 This is a fuzzy area of Scripture and Scripture can be found that seems to support each view….

 But whatever view we may personally take, Jesus could return in our lifetime!

 Especially if we hold to a pre tribulation view of the return of Christ!

 That Christ will come for His Church before the 7-year tribulation periods begins!

 If we hold this view and Christ does indeed come to take His Church away before the tribulation period starts then know this: that absolutely nothing else has to yet happen prophetically before Christ can return!

 Jesus can come at any moment!

Listen to what Jesus has to say about the day and hour of His return….

**32 "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near.**

**33 Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.**

**34 I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.**

**35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.**

**36 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.**

**37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.**

**38 For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark;**

**39 and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.**

40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.

**41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.**

**42 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.**

**43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.**

**44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him**.

 The plain simple truth is that no one knows the exact time of Christ return..

 That is why when someone may get arrogant enough to predict an exact day you can almost be sure Christ will not come on that day! It may be the day before or the day after but it will not likely happen on any day that is predicted by men!

 But even though we don’t know the exact day Jesus does give us general signs to watch for that will indicate that His return is drawing near!

Verse 32, Jesus said:  **"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near.**

**33 Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.**

Some theologians understand these verses to mean when Israel would be re-established as a nation..

 If that is the case then this was fulfilled in 1948 when Israel, for the first time in over 2000 years came back to their homeland and was given nations status.

 If that is true then catch what Jesus says in the next verse

**34 I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.**

In other words, if Israel once again becoming a nation is the leaves coming forth from the fig tree that Jesus was referring to, Israel sprouting as a nation then the Word of God says that the generation that is alive when that happens will see the earthly return of Christ!

 That before that generation passes away, before the youngest person born at the time Israel was established as a nation dies, Christ will return!

 But no one knows that day or hour of Christ return!

But what we do know is this… It is close…at the least the return of Christ is closer today than it was yesterday…..

 And if the Lord delays and doesn’t come today, tomorrow His eminent return will be even closer than it is today!

 Each day that we get out of bed we are a day closer to the Return of Christ and receiving the promise of all promises!

 With each new day we are a day closer to that moment when **16 the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**

**17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.**

 Because of this fact, as Christians who are awaiting this event, we have been admonished to

**Encourage each other with these words.**

 Jesus is coming back! All the redeemed, All who have died with a saving faith in Christ will rise Again! All those with that same saving faith in Christ who are still living when Christ returns will be changed and transformed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord as he comes on the clouds of Glory and we will live with Him forever!

Are you encouraged by these words?

 Are you encouraged to know that today, that day, the day of Christ return is closer then it has ever been!

Are you ready for that day?

 Jesus closes this portion by saying..

**43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.**

**44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him**.

 Are your ready to hear the trumpet call of God and meet the Lord in the clouds!

 Do you take encouragement from these words?

Are you among the redeemed who will experience this grand and glorious event? If so then praise God and anxiously await His return..

If you are not amoung the redeemed then why not beome one of the redeemed today?