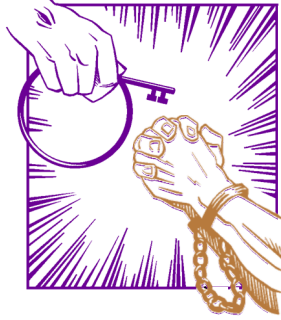


makes you free, you

Therefore if the Son



shall be free indeed.

Voice of Freedom

Good-news Message from
Cedar Valley Church
Prison Ministry

Volume 22

Issue 3

March 2024

One Cup, One Cross, One Redemption by Roger M

May God the Father's grace, love, peace and hope surround you and fill your hearts with confidence. Listen to the Apostle Paul's words: ***"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life"*** Romans 5:8-10 (NAS). Christ Jesus needed only to come once as man, walk once to His cross, die once for our sins, and rise once from the dead, all for our salvation.

During the Last Supper, ***"He [Jesus] took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them [His disciples], saying, "This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me"*** Luke 22:19 (ESV). Breaking one piece of bread represented the one time Jesus died on the *one* cross. He died in place of all people so each one might choose eternal life through His act of redemption. Then Jesus said, ***"This cup is the new covenant between God and His people — an agreement confirmed with My blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you"*** Luke 22:20 (NLT). Serving one cup of wine represented the life-given blood of Jesus offered to bring heavenly peace between God and people. God gives us the faith it takes for us to believe in Christ Jesus and receive the forgiveness He offers. Believers continue to observe and remember Christ's sacrifice by taking bread and wine during communion (an enactment of the Last Supper). In your prayers offer thanks to Jesus for His saving grace. Every day embrace the joy of Christ's salvation!

Soak Isaiah 53 into every part of your heart, mind, body and soul. Verses 5-6 of Isaiah's prophecy tell us why God the Father allowed His Son to be the scapegoat for us sinners, ***"... He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on Him the sins of us all."*** Have you wondered why Jesus cried out from the cross, ***"It is finished!"*** (John

19:30b)? This is the why – ***"When He sees all that is accomplished by His anguish, He will be satisfied. And because of His experience, My righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for He will bear all their sins"*** Isaiah 53:11 (NLT). We cannot imagine what God felt as He watched His Son who never committed a sin, take upon Himself all people's sins. We cannot imagine the joy God felt when Jesus rose from the dead on the third day into new life and walked up the heavenly steps to the right-hand side of God's holy throne.

If needed to help understand Christ's redemption, try in your mind's eye this earthly scene: You are standing on a sidewalk next to a busy street. In frozen silence you watch your young son run toward the street. You see your son, as if in slow motion, push his little sister out of a speeding car's path. You hear the sickening sound of metal ripping into flesh. You run to your son, lift his bloodied, broken body into your arms and hear his dying words, "Dad . . . is she safe? Don't blame her; love her and hold her in your arms like you are holding me. I can feel your love. Don't leave me!" Think of this as Jesus throwing His precious body in front of the speeding satan-train and praying to His Father, ***"I do not ask for these [disciples] only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. The glory that You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one even as***



*... for all have sinned
and fall short of the glory
of God, being justified as a
gift by His grace through the
redemption which is in Christ
Jesus. Romans 3:23-24*

If you would like to be on our mailing list, or if you would like to be taken off, please send a note!

CEDAR VALLEY
CHURCH
Prison Ministry Bill Summy
Voice of Freedom
3520 Ansborough Avenue
Waterloo, Iowa 50701

We are One, I in them and You in Me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them even as You loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, may be with Me where I am, to see My glory that You have given Me because You loved Me before the foundation of the world" John 17:20-24 (ESV). Brothers and sisters, never put the sorrow and pain of God the Father below that of an earthly father mourning the loss of a son or daughter. Never put the love of God for us below that of an earthly father. Always remember, it took only *one cup*, the cup of Christ's blood in the New Covenant, for the remission of our sins. I cannot imagine God's grief while watching His Son die on the cross.

Believers have through time illustrated the crosses, and in different ways. Some show one empty cross; some show Jesus on His cross: some show only three empty crosses. I prefer pictures with three crosses that show Jesus in-between the two criminals, one who denied Jesus and one who accepted Jesus. Jesus said to the new believer, "I assure you, today you will be with Me in Paradise" Luke 23:43 (NLT). This reminds me that Jesus was not worried about what the world thought of His association with common criminals or common sinners. This powerfully demonstrates that Christ Jesus understood our sin and shame, and He was willing to take anyone's deadly sins upon Himself. Consider two important elements about why a cross was used. First, crucifixion was the common form of punishment for people who committed the worst crimes so that maximum pain could be inflicted while the criminal was dying. Second, the cross represented the wrath of God. Deuteronomy 21:22-23 explains, ***"If a man has committed a sin worthy of death, and he is executed, and you hang his body on a tree, you must not leave the body on the tree overnight, but you must be sure to bury him that day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not defile the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance"*** (BSB). The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 3:13a, ***"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us"*** (NKJV).

God will someday bring about His justice and the full force of His wrath against sin. When Christ Jesus took on my sins and your sins, God did not change His mind about His eternal will that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). For anyone who chooses to believe in Him, Jesus took on all of His Father's wrath so that when believers stand before God their sins are *covered and not counted against them* (Romans 4:7-8). Christ Jesus only needed to come to this earth once to offer all people His *One Cup, One Cross, One Redemption* to take all of our sins away! For my prisoner friends – say you did something that ticked off someone in the iron pile or the kitchen and they came up to you face to face and wanted to kick your lunch all the way through you. Would you

just smile and say "Hey, that would feel pretty good. Do it!?" I don't think so! Remember, God exhausted His fearsome wrath upon His Son at Calvary. Christ Jesus took the kicking for you.

God's wrath against all sins of every person who ever lived, lives or will live is covered under one blanket-redemption. Redemption means the action of buying back or re-purchasing what was previously forfeited or lost. We sold ourselves to sin, so satan owned us, thus we lost our right to live in Heaven. Christ Jesus obeyed God's will by shedding His blood on the cross of Calvary, which was the price for freeing us from satan's ownership. So, Christ Jesus fulfilled the terms of redemption by freeing the purchased souls from sin and returning them back to His Father. Think about it this way: Jesus signed this redemption agreement called the New Covenant with His blood on the bottom line entitled "purchaser." This agreement also listed the names in *The Book of Life*, so only one agreement was needed, . . . but,

to escape the wrath of God, you must receive Christ Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior. You must believe in faith, by asking Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins, repenting of them, and asking the Lord to live in your heart. Changing your old way of thinking and living also comes through accepting encouragement from the indwelling Holy Spirit, received when you accept Jesus (John 16:7; Ephesians 1:13-14). Warning! On Judgment Day, those who have not chosen to come under the *one blanket of redemption* and receive Christ Jesus as their Savior will be sent to the fires of hell and suffer the wrath of God . . . all because they did not run for cover under Christ's holy blanket.

The only way your name will be in God's *Book of Life* is for you call out to Jesus and confess to Him that you believe in Him, which is spiritually comparable to going to His cross, laying your sins before Him and asking for His forgiveness. Only Christ Jesus has the power and strength to take your sins upon Himself, which cleanses and covers you by His blood sacrifice from all sin (1 John 1:7), and you are seen as righteous by God (Romans 3:21-31), and He will no more remember your sins (Hebrews 8:12). You cannot work off the penalty of sin in some community service project like the parole board may ask as part of your punishment and payment for crime. Good works may show your love for Christ and your obedience to Him, but they cannot save you! Christ Jesus did all the work asked of Him by God to pay for your sins. Christ's redemptive work of *One Cup, One Cross, One Redemption* was completed with His announcement to the world from His cross, ***"It is finished!"*** - Roger -

Whose names are in the Book of Life? A few scriptures to read around: Revelation 20:11-15; Luke 10:20b; and Philippians 4:1-8. In Luke, Jesus said to 72 followers/disciples, "Rejoice because your names are registered in heaven." In Phil. 4, Paul referred to fellow laborers, "because you belong to the Lord" (2b) " . . . whose names are written in the Book of Life" (3b).

Are you in the count? Have you chosen to follow Jesus and develop an awesome relationship with Him?

