

Text: Lk 1.68

When we talk about Redemption, we focus (rightly) on the work of Jesus on our behalf.

Today, for communion, I want to review several doctrines that form:

Things Essential for Redemption

We are going to set our theme from a verse out of Zechariah's song on the birth of his son John, who would grow up to be "the Baptizer."

Lk 1.68 "Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,

Why is redemption needed? How has God visited? What did God do to accomplish redemption? Why does this story make God so blessed to us?

I. The nature of God

A. Ryrie lists 14 characteristics of God's nature (we'll focus on a few key attributes)

B. God's holiness

1. "The nature of God is perfect and complete holiness."¹
2. "holiness in the Bible means separation from all that is common or unclean."²
3. Thus, "sin is repulsive to him. He is allergic to sin, so to speak. He cannot look upon it."³

C. God's love

1. Typically, we would mention this later, but our heading is "the nature of God"
2. "Love seeks good for the object loved."⁴

¹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1998), 820.

² Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1999), 42.

³ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 820.

⁴ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 44.

3. “God who is love allows Himself to love sinful people. That is grace (Eph. 2:4–8)”⁵

II. The status of the Law

- A. The law is not separate from God, but is “the expression of God’s person and will”⁶
- B. When men relate to God’s law, they are relating to God’s person
1. Obeying
 2. Disobeying
- C. If one violates God’s law, one violates God’s person, and is subject to punishment by God
1. Adam and Eve: eat the fruit and you will die (Gen 2.15-17)
 2. The soul that sins will die (Ezek 18.20)
 3. Wages of sin is death (Rm 6.23)
 4. The one who pleases his sinful nature reaps destruction (Gal 6.8)

Gal 6.7-8 ¶ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Cause/Effect: “punishment is an inevitability rather than a possibility”⁷

III. The fact of human depravity

- A. This category of theology is “anthropology” or “the nature of man”
- B. Total depravity
1. Not: “that humans are as wicked as they can possibly be”⁸

⁵ Ryrie, 44.

⁶ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 820.

⁷ Erickson, 821.

⁸ Erickson, 821.

2. Rather, men are “utterly unable to do anything to save themselves or to extricate themselves from their condition of sinfulness”⁹

In God, we have these characteristics that pose an inescapable problem for man:

- God is holy, and can have no part with sin
- God is love, and yet loves sinners
- Yet God is just, and must judge sin
- And man is depraved, and unable to eradicate his sin: lost in a sinful condition

IV. The arrival of Jesus as the Christ

the solution to the problem!

A. The essential core to our salvation: Jesus is God and man

1. As man, he can stand in for other men: his death can count for their death

“Because Jesus was really one of us, he was able to redeem us. He was not an outsider attempting to do something for us. He was a genuine human being representing the rest of us.”¹⁰

2. As God, his death is sufficient to atone for all men
- a. He sacrificed an infinite life
 - b. He offered a sinless life

Conclusion:

These doctrines are essential to our salvation.

You need to know there is a God who demands accountability.

You need to know that offense of God’s law is a personal affront to God.

⁹ Erickson, 821.

¹⁰ Erickson, 821–22.

You need to know that you are not able to overcome your sin and save yourself.

You need to know that in Christ you have the perfect substitute, who can receive the wrath you deserve and give you the life you don't deserve.

Lk 1.68 "Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,