

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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What Did It Cost To Be There?

Introduction

As I write this the World Soccer Championships are being played in Brazil. Thousands of people around the world have taken time off work, paid air fares and lodging, at times to watch no more than ninety minutes for one game. Not being a sports fan I have little interest in the outcome, although I do appreciate the amazing skill and endurance these men have. Yet I wondered, what would people pay to be there? To thousands it is a dream come true. The thrill and excitement of ninety minutes will for some individuals be worth it all. For me the thought of going to a soccer match at five hundred euros is foolishness, and to spend more than ten times that is beyond comprehension. For thousands this is the opportunity of a lifetime which they would not miss for the world. Before going to Brazil and afterwards, when at home the consideration for many will be, "What did it cost to be there?"

For certain matches, while none were cheap, some were very expensive. The price for some seats can be determined by the following table:

Match	Euros	British Pounds	USD	Cdn.
USA & Portugal	545	435	741	797
Cameroon & Brazil	900	719	1223	1316
Semi final	2590	2069	2813	3788
Final	5850	4675	7955	8557

As I thought about this I was made to think of the place the saint has in Christ Jesus and consider, "What did it cost for me to be there?"

The Deeper Question

Paul began his Ephesian letter by reminding the saints, or possibly informing them, that they were blessed "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). What does this mean, especially when added to the matter is

the expression “heavenly places” which is better translated “heavenlies” which is not a common expression? Perhaps an illustration might help.

Illustration: If one were to say that, “John, due to his association with Nelson, has been blessed (enriched) with all material blessings of the Americas”, it would be easily understood that every material blessing (enrichment) in Northern, Central, and South America is available to John because of his association with Nelson. God takes that truth and paraphrasing says: “You have been blessed with every spiritual enrichment in the heavenlies”. That is, any and every blessing that can be associated with Heaven, because you are in Christ and He in Heaven’s highest place, is secured to be enjoyed by you”. What a place to be in!

The Difficulty

The “difficulty” with this verse (as with all God’s truth) is that it is too big for us to grasp. Consequently, the Holy Spirit caused Paul to enumerate some of the blessing we have through Christ and His work.

- a) “He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4)
- b) “In love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself” (Eph. 1:4-5)
- c) “He hath made us accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6)
- d) “We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Eph. 1:7)
- e) “We have obtained an inheritance” (Eph. 1:11)
- f) At the moment of salvation we were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise who is the earnest of our inheritance. (Eph. 1:13-14)
- g) We are partakers in the redemption of the purchased redemption (Eph. 1:14)

These are blessings nothing of earth could ever procure. No positional influence can assist in this, nor can any earthly prestige of any or all nations of the world. These blessings and placements are exclusively through the grace of God and His gift, provided by virtue of the vicarious sufferings of the Lord in the three hours of darkness at Calvary. Only as the Holy Spirit enlightens us and the depths of Calvary and the cry of being forsaken is entered into can we grasp a little of, “What did it cost for me to be there?”

When we think of salvation we naturally think of what we have been saved from, Hell and the Lake of Fire for eternity. However, Paul does not speak about such here as he is dealing with the blessings we have now in Christ, and the attributes of God which prompted and secured such blessings. How blessed and privileged we are to be the recipients of: “The riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7); “The exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:7);

We Are Chosen In Him

This is a beautiful clause and it naturally breaks into three thoughts:

- a) “Chosen”
 - i) This Greek word means “to choose for oneself”; “from all others”; and the tense indicates “once for all”. There is scarcely a day goes by when a man asks a lady to be his bride and wife. By that request he is “choosing her for himself, among all other young ladies”. There are other ladies but she is special. In like manner the Lord chose us as individuals, among all others, and it is an action never to be repeated. (I want to be very clear here that I am not teaching hyper Calvinism, for I am more than contented that not only is God sovereign, but in His sovereignty gives man a free will to choose his own destiny). That lady is given that option because of the love he had for her. The same with the Lord, He chose us because “He loved us”, but at what a cost. “The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). That is the price that was paid for us to be among the chosen of the Lord.
- b) “In Him”
 - i) What does it mean to be “in Him” (Eph. 1:4); “in Christ” (Rom. 16:3); or “in the Lord” (1 Thess. 3:8)? While they each present a different slant, one of the basic truths of being “in Christ” is that before salvation we were in Adam, that is under his headship (Rom. 5:12-19), but when the individual accepts Christ as Lord and Saviour, they are transferred from the headship of Adam and are, by position, put “in Christ”. He is their new Head. Being “in Christ” (Eph. 2:13) means the individual has all the spiritual blessings God can bestow.
- c) “Before the foundation of the world”
 - i) Precious is the truth that before there was an angelic song, or the slightest trace of earth’s existence, God thought on us! Job will inform us that when the earth was created the sons of God shouted for joy (Job

38:4-7). Glorious truth that in the incomprehensibility of eternity past, God thought on us, devising a way by which “his banished be not expelled from Him” (2 Sam. 14:14).

In Love

This clause: “in love” (Eph. 1:4) can refer to verse 4 or 5. In either case, the activity of God was not cold functioning, but the activity of love to have a people before (katenōpion) Him for His own good pleasure (Eph. 1:5). Just as a lady would have her lovely things, i.e. Dalton figurines set somewhere she could enjoy and admire them, so also the saints are set before the Lord. This was all done in love.

We Have Been Made Accepted In The Beloved (Eph. 1:6)

Again there are several sections in this clause:

a) Have been made:

i) How could we who, “dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1); were dead in sins” (Eph. 2:5); give life to ourselves any more than Lazarus, Jairus’ daughter, or the widow of Nain’s son? (Jn. 11:14; Matt. 9:18; Lk. 7:12). We like them had to be made alive by an outside power who had life in Himself and power to give life, not only physically, but more importantly, spiritually. How were we made acceptable? It was by: “His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ”; in raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His own right hand, setting Him over all things (Eph. 1:19-23). That is the power that “quickened us” (Eph. 2:1); “quickened us together with Christ” (Eph. 2:5). That was when we were made acceptable. That is what was done to put us in that place of acceptability, but what was the cost? It was: “His blood” (Eph. 1:7); the “death of the Lord” (Eph. 1:20); the “blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13); “by the cross” (Eph. 2:16).

b) Accepted

i) The word used, “charitoo”, carries a series of beautiful truths. We have been made acceptable, we are the recipients of divine favour, are the objects of His grace which was freely bestowed, and in the Beloved we are lovely before God! We ask again, “What was the cost to put us in such a favored place?”

ii) I am sure there are times in the life of every believer when they contemplate how unworthy they are of any kindness from God. The enormity of self corruption and fleshy determination is awakened in them and they feel like giving up, for how could God ever use them? To all the saints Paul restates the truth that our acceptance (fulness of Divine favour which we have) before God is not on us being all that we ought to be, for there is no aspect of salvation that is dependent on works (Eph. 2:8-9). It is totally founded in God’s delight in Christ.

c) In the Beloved

i) It will be observed that in contrast to our being “in Him”, “in Christ”, or “In the Lord”, this is the only time in the scriptures we are said to be “in the beloved”. There are three recorded times when God speaks of Christ, or refers to Christ as “Beloved”:

1. “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17)
2. “While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” (Matt. 17:5)
3. “Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.” (Lk. 20:13)

ii) Christ is the One who, as the Servant of God, God delighted in (Isa. 42:1); the only One who could never be among those who can say: “We are unprofitable servants” (Lk. 17:10). Christ is the “Son of His Love” (Darby, ASV, Young’s Literal) (Col. 1:13)

As we review these and meditate upon them the question comes again, “What did it cost for me to be there?” The life giving sacrificial blood of our Lord is the price paid at Calvary, when in those three hours of darkness the judgment of God for sin was executed on Him. This infinite price referred to is: “His own blood” (Acts 20:28); “the blood of Jesus” (Heb. 10:19); “blood of the Lord” (1 Cor. 11:27); “the blood of Jesus Christ His son” (1 Jn. 1:7); “His blood” (Eph. 1:7); and “by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13).

Peter caught the infinite wonder of the value of the blood of our Lord when he wrote: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:18, 19). If an individual could evaluate that Blood then they would understand the price for us to be there. However, not even in eternity shall we ever be able to fully evaluate how precious that blood, or the sacrifice of the Lord was, for we will never know the depths of darkness He endured when hanging on the tree, being made a curse for us (Gal. 3:3).

. . . . *Rowan Jennings*

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