

Week 1

Christ as Our Ransom

READ

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 10:45



When you hear the term ransom, what is the first thing that comes to mind? Likely it's a payment made to someone for the release of a captive or a victim of a kidnapping. The general idea is that someone is in a dangerous circumstance and unless a payment is made they cannot be rescued from that circumstance. In movies, TV shows or books, that payment can often come at great cost to the person paying the ransom. But if they love the person who is in danger enough, they will leverage whatever they need to in order to get him or her back.

The Bible tells us that what Jesus did on the cross for us was this level of love. As humans we had rebelled against God. We were enslaved to sin and death; we were completely unable to free ourselves unless someone would intervene on our behalf to free us. The ransom price could not be cheap. Paul explained in his letter to the churches in Rome that the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). We have been enslaved to sin, having rebelled against God and the cost to cover our sin is our lives. But there is a problem. How can we pay the price for our lives if the only thing we can offer is our lives? We cannot! We cannot save ourselves from danger. We cannot ransom ourselves out of death. And here is where the beautiful picture of Jesus comes in. He owed us nothing and yet out of his great love for us, he leveraged everything he had. God, in Jesus, gave up his glory and became a human, and he lived the perfect life that we could not live but even still he suffered the wages of sin... on the cross Jesus died. That was what it cost him to save us. Nothing else could do it. The Apostle Peter put it this way,

“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect”

1 Pet 1:18-19

No amount of money, good works, social justice, religious observance, or personal suffering could pay the ransom to free us from death. No person on earth had the resources to ransom us. Only God could do it but it cost him immeasurably more than we can understand. And yet he did not hesitate. He, like a good parent, desperate to get a beloved child back from certain death, did not stop at anything; no cost was too high to bring us home to him. How can we not love a God like that!



Questions to Ponder:

(If you are doing this as family or with others share your answers)

1. Think of someone that you deeply love. Imagine that this person has been kidnapped and you know that if a ransom is not paid he or she will die. What would you be willing to give up or go without forever to get him or her back?
2. Read through John 19:1-37, as you do make a note of everything you can identify that shows a cost to Jesus (don't just think physically but also emotionally, spiritually, socially). When you are done take some time to thank Jesus for the price he paid and the love he demonstrated for you.

Kids Corner:

Do you know what a ransom is? A ransom is something valuable that you have to pay to get something or someone back. Imagine that you have a brother or sister who takes your favourite toy and they tell you that if you want it back, you have to give them all your Halloween candy. The Halloween candy is a ransom. Sometimes in wars when a soldier is captured, if his country wants to get him back, then the country has to pay a ransom. And sometimes criminals capture people and then they send a message to that person's family and tell them that if they want to get her back, the family has to pay a ransom. If that person's family loves her, it won't matter how much money the ransom is, the family will do whatever they can to get her back, even if it makes their lives harder because they have less money. The Bible tells us that we were captured by sin (slaves to sin Rom 6) but that Jesus loved us so much that he wouldn't stop until we could be brought safely home to him. The Bible says in the book of Matthew that Jesus told his disciples that this was why he came. He didn't come to have lots of power or so that everyone would like him. In fact he gave up his power, he left his home, he even gave up his life. He said to them, "...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt 20:28). Jesus was telling his disciples that his life was the price that had to be paid for us to be free. He was like the family who did whatever they could to get the person they loved back from criminals! What an amazing picture of his love for us. Aren't you thankful that Jesus loved you so much that he would give up everything, even though it was so costly to pay for you to come home? Let's take some time to thank him together!

Week 1

Christ as Our Ransom

Discuss | Reflect





Take a few minutes to read through the following passages of Scripture and then discuss/answer the questions below.

Read:

Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice, that he should live on forever and never see the pit... But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me.

Psalm 49:7-9,15 ESV

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 ESV

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:13-14 (NIV)

Going Deeper:

1. Psalm 49 claims that no person can ransom himself or herself, but we often try. What are some ways you have tried to pay your own ransom?
2. According to Psalm 49, to who is your ransom owed? Is that surprising to you? How do you feel about that?
3. In the 1 Timothy passage, Jesus is called our mediator. What does a mediator do and why do you need one?
4. In the world that the Bible was written, the word redemption has the connotation of someone who pays off an outstanding debt to free someone from slavery. In essence it is the person who pays the ransom. In the passage above from Colossians it claims that God is our redeemer. What does the passage claim that redemption consist of? What are the implications for how you ought to view yourself if this act of redemption by Jesus has indeed taken place? How might that change the way you live?

Week 1

Christ as Our Ransom

PRAY





Take sometime to read through the prayer below and then speak it out loud. As you do, think through each line, ask the Spirit to stir your heart and your mind to understand and feel the implications of each line of prayer.

Jesus, thank you for coming to ransom me with your own life. I love you, worship you, trust you. I give myself over to you to be one with you in all things.

I receive all the work and triumph of your cross, death, blood, and sacrifice for me, through which my every sin is atoned for, I am ransomed, delivered from the kingdom of darkness, and transferred to your kingdom; my sin nature is removed, my heart circumcised unto God, and every claim being made against me is cancelled and disarmed.

I take my place now in your cross and death, dying with you to sin, to my flesh, to this world, to the evil one and his kingdom.

I take up the cross and crucify my flesh with all its pride, arrogance, unbelief, and idolatry [and anything else you are currently struggling with]. I put off the old man.

Apply to me all the work and triumph in your cross, death, blood, and sacrifice; I receive it with thanks and give it total claim to my spirit, soul, and body, my heart, mind, and will.

- John Eldredge

Pray Throughout the Day:

As you go through your day, take time to pray through the following items.

1. Ask the Spirit to search your heart and reveal any areas where you may be trying to pay your own ransom instead of resting in Jesus' finished work. If he reveals anything to you, take time to confess this to God and to someone else, and to pray in repentance, asking the Spirit to help you grow in your identity in Jesus, free of needing to earn your salvation.
2. Ask Jesus to continue to stir your heart with affection for him and grow your understanding of the great cost it was for him to ransom you.

3. Ask Jesus to help you see situations in your own life in which he wants to use you by leveraging your time, talents, and treasures to participate in his work of redemption in the lives of others.
4. Pray that Jesus would reveal one person in your life that needs to know the good news that Jesus paid their ransom and so they can be free from trying to pay or earn their own forgiveness and freedom.



Week 1

Christ as Our Ransom

CELEBRATE | GO



Today you are invited to take some space to worship Jesus for what he has done. As a family or as an individual look up “How Deep the Father’s Love For Us - Austin Stone Worship Live” (see all song links in the resources section) on YouTube and use the following words below to sing along.

How Deep the Father’s Love for Us

By Stuart Townsend

[Verse 1]

How deep the Father’s love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

[Verse 2]

How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

[Verse 3]

Behold the man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers

[Verse 4]

It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

[Verse 5]

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection

[Verse 6]

Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Application:

Jesus came and redeemed us by paying the ransom for our rebellion against God. The ransom was not cheap. It cost him everything and yet, to win our freedom, Jesus was willing to leverage his entire life. We know that as disciples of Jesus, we are called to follow him. This means that whatever God does to us, he also wants to do through us.

Take some time to think (and share if you are with others) how you can leverage your life to see others ransomed from the power of sin. What are some things that you can give up or open up if it will mean another person experiencing the rich love of Jesus through you? Think through categories such as your time (spare time, use of time, downtime), your talents (skills, abilities, gifts), and your treasures (money, possessions). Once you have identified something, then go out and do it.