

## The Reason for My Hope

by Billy Graham, [\*The Reason for My Hope\*](#)



God's Plan: Redemption

Eventually we all find ourselves staring into the face of truth. The Bible says that man's soul is "*full of troubles*" (Psalm 88:3), filled with bitterness, grief, pain, and guilt.

Adam and Eve paid a price for their disobedience. They were driven out of the Paradise of God, His very presence, into the world they had chosen — a world where God's enemy, Satan, "*works in the sons of disobedience*" (Ephesians 2:2).

But that is not the whole story. Genesis portrays not only the beginning of the human race, but the start of God's redemptive work in history. The salvation of the human race was put in place at the very beginning. Because God so loved His creation He initiated a way to make amends for man's sin. This is the greatest search-and-rescue mission ever carried out — redemption of those made in God's image.

In the greatest story ever told we see this remarkable hope.

*As through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men... For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.* — Romans 5:18-19

The love and mercy that overflowed from the heart of God would someday flow in the crimson blood of His Son. From the heart of God to the cross of Christ, redemption came into view. God was not willing to turn His back on the human race. His love was too deep, His mercy too wide. He longed to recover, redeem, and bring us back to Himself.

*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.* — John 3:16

This is what God did for us. God took Heaven's best — the Lord Jesus Christ — to redeem earth's worst.

The Son of God died on a cross, an instrument of Roman torture made for the vilest offenders.

We, as a race, have been enticed into the service of Satan, but our unfaithfulness and waywardness have not cancelled out God's love for us. Instead, He has made the way for our rescue through His Son, Jesus Christ. He made the sacrifice and paid a price unthinkably greater than our true value. We are redeemed, recovered, and restored, not with money — silver and gold — but with the precious blood of Christ.

You may not believe in Satan and his vise-grip on the human race, but it is brutally real, just as real as the overpowering love of God. I can testify to this. I came to believe by faith that God's redemption plan conquers Satan's entrenched wickedness that seeks refuge in our souls. God's forgiveness of sin overcomes Satan's contempt for God's redeeming love. God's forgiveness has the power to cleanse us and restore the relationship He longs to have with us. This is why He has provided the way of salvation. This is why the Bible says we "*must be born again*" (John 3:7).

It took me a while to grasp this great and wonderful truth. As a young man, my head resisted what my soul longed for — peace from an inner conflict. I fell miserably short of God's standard of goodness. I wanted to make my own decisions, never considering that some of my choices altered the happiness I desired.

*God was not going to force His way on me.* I could receive Him and live according to His high standard, or I could reject Him and live in a lowly state with Satan snapping at my heels. How could I resolve this bitterness of soul? The answer came when I considered the Bible's great redemption story.

I came to the place of repentance for my sin against God, believing in what He had done for me. In order to know the peace that comes from God, I had to confess my sin and come to God.

On the night of November 1, 1934, my hardened soul was redeemed. I exchanged my will for God's way. I traded my calloused heart for a cleansed soul.

I had sought thrills. I found them in Christ.

I had looked for something that would bring perfect joy and happiness. I found it in Christ.

I had looked for something that would bring pleasure and would satisfy the deepest longing of my heart. I found it in Christ.

I had been redeemed and knew firsthand the promise of the Bible:

*In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.* — Psalm 16:11

God says to the human race, *"I made you, and you are Mine. I have redeemed you. Return to Me"* (Isaiah 43:1 and Joel 2:12, author's paraphrase). God's gift of redemption says, *"I will buy you back with My blood because I love you. I will free you from the chains of sin. I will settle the conflict within and give peace to your soul. But you must come to Me with a repentant heart. You must be willing to be redeemed. You must exchange your sin-blackened heart for a new heart that is cleansed by My blood."*

### **Redemption is the Bible's great theme.**

God's redemption plan is what turned a sordid story into a great story. His rescue mission was executed through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. He completed His mission more than two thousand years ago, when He hung on the cross and shed His blood in ransom for the souls of mankind. He died for your sin and my sin. When He conquered death and was raised from the grave that could not hold Him in bondage, He reached out His nail-scarred hands and said, *"I've come to free you from your bondage and give you new life."*

This story is great because God gives each of us the choice to accept His forgiveness and live with Him eternally. The Bible says that *"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"* (Matthew 22:32). God is alive and well and wants no less for those He loves.

From the cross Jesus offered each soul a gift that will last eternally — with no expiration date. His precious blood was applied to your sin. He put His life on the line for you, and His blood is credited to your account. He has covered your sin with His blood, which takes the sting of sin away.

Will you receive it? Have you read His redemption plan? It's written in blood with you in mind. Have you reached out to accept it? You cannot buy it with money; it has already been purchased for you. But you must surrender all you are hanging on to for something far better — the redemption of your soul.

*After you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation... having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.* — Ephesians 1:13-14

Perhaps you think your life is going great and you'll wait until you are in need of rescue. We live in an uncertain world. None of us knows when our time on earth will be over. Don't take for granted the gift that God offers you. Don't presume upon His favour. Jesus has bought back our inheritance of eternal life. None of us deserves it — but He stands patiently with His hand outstretched.

When Jesus walked among men, many believed He had come to save them, but they lost all hope when He was taken down from the cross and buried in a tomb. His followers hid in disgrace and despair. Their Saviour had died and left them alone. They were despondent that He had not done what He had promised — saved them from their enemies. They considered all

that He had claimed and saw only the blaze of defeat. How could their Rescuer save them if He couldn't save Himself?

But the Special Force that had come down had not yet completed His mission. His followers had forgotten what He had told them: *"I will come again"*. — John 14:3

Redemption was fulfilled, as promised, on the third day when He rose from the grave. His resurrection conquered the enemy of death, and shortly afterward, Jesus appeared to His dejected followers who had lost faith. They looked at Jesus, the Man who had shed His blood to put to death the curse of sin. He had returned to them in all of His glory. He had won the victory over death and over sin that entangled humanity.

When Jesus revealed Himself as the resurrected Christ that day, all barriers came down.

He came into the disciples' presence and offered up His wounds as proof that He had been faithful to His mission — to *"preach the gospel"* and to *"proclaim liberty to the captives"* (Luke 4:18). It is His message for people of every generation and of every race and of every nation. Look at Jesus. He came down for you.

*Hear a just cause, O Lord... Save those who trust in You.* — Psalm 17:1, Psalm 17:7

And He will. You are His precious cargo. He stands ready to break through the conflict that keeps you in bondage. Will you take His hand and let Him free you from the chains of sin?

*After you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation... having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.* — Ephesians 1:13-14

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