



# The Tri-Cities Edifier

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## What We Know in 2021

Happy New Year! Many people have been longing to put the year 2020 behind them. But as of today, in the new year 2021, what has really changed? We are still in the middle of a worldwide pandemic; there continues to be political unrest; things are still not normal at all. Will 2021 be any different than 2020? It is not ours to know but what we do know is...

**God is in control** – “This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.” Daniel 4:17

**All Spiritual Blessings are still found only in Christ** – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,” Ephesians 1:3

**Sufficient for the day is its own trouble** – “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” Matthew 6:34

**We need to Do Good** - “LET HIM TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; LET HIM SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.” 1 Peter 3:11

**We need to be Watching and Ready** – “looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,” Titus 2:13

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**We are the Light of the World** – “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

This list could be much longer but, it should be clear that, what we knew in 2020 is the same thing we know in the year 2021. Our work and purpose remains the same, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” Matthew 28:19-20

STACY

## The Blessings of Being in Christ (Redemption)

Don Wright

The best decision that a person can ever make is to obey the gospel of Christ. Doing so makes a person a child of God and puts him in the best location possible, that is, in Christ. If you have not obeyed the gospel, our prayer is that you do

so before it is too late. If you have already become a child of God, I hope that you realize how blessed you are now that you are a Christian.

***Ephesians 1:3 (ESV)***

<sup>3</sup>*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,*

Every spiritual blessing that is available to man is found in Christ. This week I want us to consider some of these great blessings that we, by the grace of God, have and can enjoy.

The first blessing I want to consider is redemption.

***Ephesians 1:7 (ESV)***

<sup>7</sup>*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,*

Redemption is a great word. We usually use the word from the standpoint of being atoned for something, and it is always used in a positive way in which the story ends well. Whether it is a troubled youth who uses bad judgment and gets his life in a mess, but then recovers and redeems himself; or the story of someone whose reputation is ruined by lies and falsehoods, but in the end, he is found not guilty, redemption is always a beautiful story.

The biblical words for redemption contain this element of atonement, but the basic meaning behind them is the act of being bought, and it is always being bought by someone else. In other words, spiritually speaking, man never redeems himself, but is mercifully redeemed by God.

There are three Greek words for redemption. One of them is *agorazō*, meaning, “to purchase” (Strong), and obviously carries the idea of something being bought. It does not say much about what the buyer plans to do with whatever it is that is purchased, but it does imply ownership by the one who does the buying. As Christians, we should not forget that while redemption is a wonderful blessing, it also points to the responsibility of being the purchased possession of God (1 Corinthians 6:20).

The next word is *exagorazō* and means, “to ransom or rescue from loss” (Strong). The word “ex” added to “*agorazo*” means, “to buy out” (Vine). We were lost in sin and under the cruel captivity of the devil, but Jesus came along and bought us out of that bondage (Galatians 3:13).

The third word translated redemption is *apolytrōsis* and emphasizes the deliverance on account of the price being paid, in this case, that price is the blood of Christ. When we put these words together, we see just how blessed we are in Christ. We have not just been bought, we have been rescued at a very high price. For us to be redeemed, Jesus had to be willing to die a cruel death on the cross. Now in Christ, we can reap many spiritual blessings because Jesus was willing to do so.