

WHAT DOES JESUS DO FOR US? FORGIVES

Colossians 1:13-14

August 26, 2007 Sunday p.m.

INTRODUCTION

A. Hidalgo Illustration

Hidalgo is the story of a man named Frank Hopkins who is seeking to find redemption from his painful past as the mixed-race son of a cavalry scout and an Indian chief's daughter.

At the beginning of the movie, Hopkins learns the government is rounding up wild horses used by the Native Americans and is planning to shoot them. The price for purchasing the horses is too great for the Indians. Hopkins enters a 3,000-mile race across the Arabian Desert, competing against great arabian horses with his mustang, Hidalgo. After winning the race, he returns to the United States with \$100,000 in prize money.

The final scene pictures men preparing to shoot the captured horses. As they take rifles from a wagon and head toward the corral, they suddenly notice a lone rider on horseback approaching from a distance.

"What's this bloke doing," the sergeant wonders aloud, "bringing them in one at a time?"

Hopkins rides up and asks, "Lieutenant McNalty?"

"Who are you?" demands the sergeant.

"Hopkins. Frank Hopkins."

The lieutenant says, "Hopkins? You bring a dispatch?"

"Yes, sir."

Hopkins hands them the dispatch. The two men read it and look up in disbelief.

"Paid in full?" McNalty asks.

Hopkins turns away as the men are ordered back from the corral and return their rifles to the wagon. The gate to the corral is opened, and the wild horses are released. From a hilltop, Hopkins watches as the redeemed animals race to freedom.

B. This is what Jesus did for us. He paid the price of our redemption.

1. This is what Paul says in our text-Co. 1:13-14.

2. Notice what Jesus did to provide our forgiveness.

I. FIRST, JESUS RESCUED US

A. This is what v.13 a says "For he has rescued us..."

1. "Rescue" means "to draw to oneself", as a lifeguard would reach out to a drowning person.

2. God, like a lifeguard, reached out to us-2 Peter 2:9.

3. One hymn writer put it like this..... (Love Lifted Me, 462).

B. Subway rescue illustration

After entering a New York City subway station in the first week of 2007, 19-year-old film student Cameron Hollopeter suffered a seizure while waiting for a train. As his body convulsed out of control, the young man stumbled down the platform and fell onto one of the tracks—directly in the path of an inbound train. Fortunately, a 50-year-old construction worker named Wesley Autrey noticed his distress.

Standing on the platform with his two young daughters, Autrey realized that nobody else in the station was going to help. According to later interviews, he decided: "I'm the only one to do it." Placing himself in great danger, Autrey jumped down onto the tracks and grabbed hold of Hollopeter. With only seconds to spare, he rolled with the younger man into a drainage trough cut between two tracks. An instant later, the train cars thundered over both of them with only inches to spare. Amazingly, neither man was injured.

In the ensuing days, Autrey was rewarded handsomely for his bravery. Mayor Michael Bloomberg presented him the city's highest award for civic achievement, calling him "a great man—a man who makes us all proud to be New Yorkers." Autrey was also given

\$10,000 from Donald Trump, a trip to Disney World, and a year's supply of MetroCards from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. His boss even bought him a "hero" sandwich.

When asked about his invitations to appear on *The Late Show with David Letterman* and *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, Autrey noted that "good things happen when you do good." Still, he is modest about his new status as the Hero of Harlem. "I just did it because I saw someone in distress," he told reporters. "Someone needed help."

Other observers respectfully disagree. Elliot Sander, executive director of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, called Autrey's rescue "a death-defying act of bravery. We truly have not seen anything like this.... He was at the right place at the right time and did the right thing."

In the end, Wesley Autrey is just glad that he could help. "It's like a fairy tale come true," he said. "What better way to start the year off than saving a life?"

Associated Press (1-4-07)

C. What did Jesus rescue us from?

1. Paul reminded his readers they were once prisoners of darkness-v.13b "the dominion of darkness...."
2. So were we until Jesus rescued us-John 8:34.

II. SECOND, JESUS REESTABLISHED US.

A. This is what v.13c. says, "and brought us into the kingdom...."

1. The word "brought" means to be transplanted, to be uprooted from one place and planted in another.
2. Jesus didn't just rescue us from sinking sand. He also firmly planted us on solid ground.

B. What solid ground did Jesus reestablish us on? His kingdom.

1. "Kingdom" means rule or reign.
2. Once we were ruled by sin and Satan, but now by Christ.

III. THIRD, JESUS REDEEMED US.

A. This is what v. 14a says, "In whom we have redemption".

1. Paul's readers were acquainted with slavery, some probably were slaves.
2. They also understood the idea of being bought back or redeemed from slavery.
3. None of us have first hand knowledge of slavery today.

B. "The Life of a Slave Girl" by Harriet Jacobs...

In her book *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Jacobs wrote these words about her years of slavery: "Only by experience can any one realize how deep, and dark, and foul is that pit of abominations."

Harriet was born in 1813 in North Carolina. For the first six years of her life, she lived in a comfortable home with her parents and brother, not realizing she was a slave. But when her mother died, Harriet learned she wasn't free.

At age 15, her new master, Dr. James Norcom, pursued and harassed Harriet, while Norcom's wife oppressed her. Seeking to protect herself, Harriet turned to a white, unmarried lawyer and bore him two children.

Norcom retaliated by sending Harriet to a plantation to work as a field hand. Not wanting her children to become plantation slaves, she ran away before they could join her there. With the help of sympathetic neighbors, both black and white, she made her way to her grandmother's home. For the next seven years Harriet lived in a tiny cubbyhole under the front porch roof. The confined space was nine feet by seven feet, with a sloping ceiling only three feet high at one end. She shared her hiding place with rats and mice.

During this time Harriet wrote to Norcom, asking him to sell her the children. He refused. However, the children's father did buy the boy and girl, allowing them to stay with Harriet's grandmother. Hiding even from her children, Harriet would squint through a peephole, hoping to catch a glimpse of them playing outside.

In 1842, Harriet escaped to the North, and two years later her children joined her. Still, she was in danger of being returned to slavery by Dr. Norcom and the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Complete liberation did not come until Harriet was forty years old, when her employer bought her freedom for \$300.

Harriet Jacobs knew about slavery, fear, and brutality. She experienced the pain of a family torn apart, the indignity of being sold as property, and the uncertainty of living at the whim of someone else. Harriet wrote about her life experiences, and in 1861, the year the Civil War began, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* was published.

Harriet concluded her book with these words: "Reader, my story ends with freedom."

*Lev Grossman, "Reader, My Story Ends with Freedom," Time magazine (2-9-04), p. 75;
500 Great Books by Women: A Reader's*

So does ours!

IV. FOURTH, JESUS RELEASED US.

- A. This is what v. 14b says, "the forgiveness of sins."
- B. Released from what?
 - 1. Sin's penalty-Romans 6:23.
 - 2. Sin's power-Romans 6:6.

CONCLUSION

- A. What has Jesus done for us?
- B. Forgave us. How? Rescued, Reestablished, Redeemed, and Released.