

Title: **WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION**

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:30-31

Subject: *Full Salvation In, By and With Christ*

Date: Tuesday Evening — February 24, 2009

Tape # Z-63a

Readings: *Rex Bartley and David Burge*

Introduction:

If you can remember four words, you will be able to remember the title of my message and all four points of my outline: — **WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS, SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION**. My text will be 1 Corinthians 1:30-31.

(1 Corinthians 1:30-31) “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

“*But*” — What a magnificent word this is in this place! Paul has just declared that God makes foolish the wisdom of this world, and that he has chosen to use insignificant, weak human beings to confound the wisdom of the world. “*But of him are ye in Christ!*”

Wondrous grace! God almighty has put us in Christ. — “*In Christ Jesus!*”

- Eternally in Christ!
- Immutably in Christ!
- Experimentally in Christ!
- Accepted in Christ!
- Blessed in Christ!
- Saved in Christ!
- Truly in Christ — One with Christ!

‘Twixt Jesus and the chosen race
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne’er dissolve nor rend in vain

Hail! sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace, how sweet the song,

**WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION**

That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!

One in the tomb, one when He rose,
One when He triumphed o'er His foes,
One when in heaven He took His seat,
While seraphs sang all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all He is or has is theirs;
With Him, their Head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety, and their all."

— John Kent

Now, look at what the Spirit of God tells us it means to be in Christ. He is made of God unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption.

WISDOM

We are in Christ by the rich, free grace and goodness of God the Father, who put us in him in sovereign election before the world began. In him we were and are preserved and blessed from everlasting. That secret, everlasting union with Christ was made manifest in time, when God the Holy Spirit gave us life and faith in Christ, by the operation of his mighty grace.

Our being in Christ is altogether God's work. Our conversion, our saving union with Christ is not the result of something we have done. We are not in Christ because we are wiser, or better, or have made a better choice than others. We are in Christ because God put us in Christ. — "*Salvation is of the LORD!*" It is the purpose of God to make this apparent, and to force all men to acknowledge it. He dispenses his grace in such a way that he makes men see with regard to others, and to acknowledge with regard to themselves, that salvation is his work alone.

Though we are foolish creatures by nature, by virtue of our union with him, Christ is made of God unto us Wisdom. He is the one who gives us wisdom and understanding in all things spiritual. He is the shining light that

WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION

dispels darkness in our souls. Christ is our Wisdom objectively, too. I mean by that that our highest wisdom is knowing him. Under the personification of Wisdom, our Savior says, “*He that findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain the favour of the Lord*” (Proverbs 8:35).

(Proverbs 8:12) “I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.”

(Proverbs 8:14-21) “Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. (15) By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. (16) By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth. (17) I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. (18) Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable riches and righteousness. (19) My fruit *is* better than gold, *yea*, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. (20) I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: (21) That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.”

(Proverbs 8:22-31) “The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. (23) I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. (24) When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water. (25) Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: (26) While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. (27) When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: (28) When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: (29) When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: (30) Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him; (31) Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.”

(Proverbs 8:35) “For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.”

**WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION**

Christ is the Head of his body the church; and as all the wisdom of the body is in its head, so all our wisdom is in him. **The Lord Jesus acts for us as our Wisdom representatively**, speaking for us in the everlasting covenant of grace and peace; and he is our Advocate with the Father, still pleading our cause and interceding for us in heaven.

It is by Christ Jesus that the triune God is made known and revealed to man. **He is the embodiment of God, the embodiment of Wisdom, the Word, the Revealer of God**. As all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him, so all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are his. By him alone they are made known to men. — “*No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him*” (Luke 10:22).

And this union with Christ makes the heaven-born soul truly wise, because when Christ is formed within, we are given the mind of Christ and know all things (1 Corinthians 2:16).

(1 Corinthians 2:14-16) “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. (15) But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. (16) For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

Wisdom is given by which God, whose glory is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, is made known in the soul. All true spiritual knowledge is derived from Christ, and it is only those who are taught of him who are made wise unto salvation. Christ is our **Wisdom within** to direct our paths, guide us in his way, and order our steps day by day.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

“*Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom — and Righteousness.*” — Many use the words “*righteousness*” and “*holiness*” interchangeably, as if they were synonyms. They are not. **Righteousness is primarily a legal term**. Though it may be and is used to refer to one’s character, it primarily refers to his deeds. Righteousness refers to **that**

WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION

which is right before the law, or right in the eyes of the law. Holiness, on the other hand, is a word that is used to describe one's character.

Yet the Word of God makes it abundantly clear that none are righteous (right before the law) and none are holy in character (sanctified) except the Lord Jesus Christ. And he alone is the Righteousness and Holiness (Sanctification) of his people. If we have righteousness before God, Christ must be our Righteousness; and he must be "*of God made unto us Righteousness.*"

This is the blessed doctrine of the gospel revealed in Holy Scripture. The Son of God came into this world in human flesh that he might magnify the law and make it honorable as a Representative man, to bring in everlasting righteousness for his people. God's demand is plain and clear: — "*Walk before me, and be thou perfect.*" It is written, "*It must be perfect to be accepted.*"

The Lord Jesus Christ did what none of us could ever do. He walked before God all the days of his humiliation in absolute perfection, totally obedient to the will of God and to the law of God. This he did, not for himself but for us, to bring in everlasting righteousness for us. When he died upon the cursed tree as our Substitute, he met and fully satisfied every demand of God's law and justice for his elect and made us, by his obedience unto death, the righteousness of God.

Just as we were made sinners by the disobedience of the first man Adam, we are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, the last Adam (Romans 5:12, 18-19). That means that every sinner for whom Christ lived and died and rose again is right (righteous) before the law.

(Romans 5:12-19) "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (13) (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. (14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. (15) But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath

WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION

abounded unto many. (16) And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. (17) For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) (18) Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. (19) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Christ is made of God unto us righteousness and we are made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21; Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16; 50:20), by virtue of our union with him.

(Jeremiah 23:6) "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

(Jeremiah 33:16) "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness."

(Jeremiah 50:20) "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve."

(2 Corinthians 5:21) "For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

When our Substitute obeyed God's law and paid our debt to divine justice, we obeyed in him; and we died in him. When he was "justified in the Spirit" by his resurrection from the dead, we were justified in him and raised up from the dead in him. Is that not the very language of Holy Scripture? — "I am crucified with Christ!" — "Risen together with him!" — "Seated with him!"

**WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION**

Christ is our righteousness in such a sure way, and with such everlasting value and efficacy, that being one with him and redeemed by his blood we have his righteousness by right and title as the purchased possession he obtained for us, when he obtained eternal redemption for us. It is a righteousness that can never be lost, or even lessened. It is everlastingly perfect.

This is the righteousness for which we shall be fully and everlastingly rewarded in heavenly glory. What a blessed thought! It seems too great to be believed. Indeed, it could not be believed were it not written in the Book of God. Even though it is plainly written in Holy Scripture by the finger of God in inspiration, it can never be believed by any man until it is inscribed in his own soul by the experience of grace. **Yet, when God the Holy Spirit grants a sinner the grace of life, giving him faith in Christ, this is the first and most blessed article of saving faith.** — As God has made him sin for us who knew no sin, so he has made us the righteousness of God in him, though we are nothing but sin!

SANCTIFICATION

“Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, — and Sanctification.” — The Lord God demands that we walk before him and be perfect (Genesis 17:1; Leviticus 22:21). He cannot and will not accept less than perfection. **And what he demands he performs. What he requires he gives.** Christ is made of God unto us perfection in three ways.

- *First*, perfection requires **perfect obedience**; and Christ obeyed the law of God for us.
- *Second*, perfection requires **atonement, or satisfaction**; and our Lord Jesus Christ fully satisfied all the demands of God’s law by his sin-atonement death as our Substitute, redeeming us from the curse of the law.
- *Third*, perfection requires **a perfect nature**; and Christ formed in us in regeneration (sanctification) is that perfect nature. Thus, by righteousness, satisfaction and sanctification, God makes his elect *“meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light”* (Colossians 1:12).

**WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION**

When the Spirit of God declares that Christ is made of God unto us “*sanctification*,” he is telling us that our sanctification is, like our righteousness and redemption, altogether the work of God. **It does not, in any way or to any degree, depend upon us.** It is **not a progressive work** that begins with God planting a “principle” of holiness in us in the new birth, which grows by our disciplined determination to be holier and holier, until we are ripe for heaven. No! Christ is our Sanctification. **Sanctification is accomplished by God the Holy Spirit forming Christ in us, causing us to be made partakers of the divine nature** (Colossians 1:27; 2 Peter 1:4).

Sanctification is ours in Christ from eternity, by virtue of our union with him (Jude 1); and it is ours in the sweet and blessed experience of grace, when, being born again by the mighty operation of God the Holy Spirit, we are given that “*holiness*” of nature “*without which no man shall see the Lord*” (Hebrews 12:14). In fact, the word translated “*sanctification*” is exactly the same word that is translated “*holiness.*” Christ is made of God unto us “Holiness.”

The believer’s new nature is perfect. It is Christ in you, that **new man created in righteousness and true holiness** (Ephesians 4:24). This new nature formed in us in the new birth, John tells us, does not sin and cannot sin, because it is born of God (1 John 3:9).

(1 John 3:1-9) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. (4) Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. (5) And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. (6) Whosoever abideth in him **sinneth not**: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. (7) Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. (8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. (9) Whosoever is born of God

WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION

doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he **cannot sin**, because he is born of God.”

The believer is a person with two natures, flesh and spirit, the old man and the new man. The old man will never surrender to the new. The flesh will never surrender to the spirit. Yet, we live not after the flesh but after the spirit (Romans 7:14-25; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 8:1-11).

(Romans 8:1-11) “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (4) That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (5) For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. (6) For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. (7) Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (8) So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. (9) But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (10) And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. (11) But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

There is within every believer, so long as he lives in this world, both an old Adamic nature, that can do nothing but sin, and a new righteous nature, that which is born of God that cannot sin, that can only do righteousness. This new man is Christ in you, “*who of God is made unto us Sanctification.*”

REDEMPTION

“*Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and — Redemption.*” — The word here translated “*redemption*” (apolutrwsiv) means “**complete deliverance**”

**WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION**

by ransom.” It is used to declare that all God’s elect are completely delivered from sin and all its consequences by the ransom price of Christ’s sin-atonement blood poured out for us at Calvary.

Always look upon God’s works of grace as broadly as your faith’s imagination will allow you. Never limit them. When you have taken in all you can of it, your faith’s imagination will not have begun to reach the fulness of God’s grace as it is revealed in Holy Scripture. And, of all the words used to describe God’s grace, none is so rich, full, and assuring as this word, “*redemption.*” — Christ is made of God unto us Redemption.

The Lord Jesus Christ was made redemption unto his chosen in eternity, before the world was made. He is the Lamb who, verily, was foreordained and slain before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8). The Lord God made Christ our Redemption before we needed redemption. We were **justified** in him, **accepted** in him, **blessed** in him with all spiritual blessings, **sanctified** in him, and **glorified** in him, with him, and by him before time began (Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:3-6). Christ was made our complete deliverance from sin before there was such a thing as sin!

When the Son of God bore our sins in his own body on the tree, he was punished to the full satisfaction of justice in our stead. The holy Lord God drew forth his dreadful sword and buried it in the Savior’s being. Jehovah smote Jehovah with all the fierceness of holy anger, until **all anger against our sins wore itself out on him**, and our sins were forever put away! When the Lord Jesus died in our place, he was made of God unto us Redemption!

In the new birth every chosen, blood-bought sinner is effectually delivered from death in sin by the merit of Christ’s blood and by the omnipotent power and grace of God the Holy Spirit. Graciously sprinkling our hearts with the blood of Christ, God the Spirit purges our consciences of guilt (Hebrews 10:2, 22), and makes Christ Jesus unto us Redemption!

(Hebrews 10:1-2) “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the

WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION

comers thereunto perfect. (2) For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.”

(Hebrews 10:22) “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”

But there is a day of redemption yet to come (Romans 8:22-23; Ephesians 1: 13-14; 4:30).

(Romans 8:22-23) “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. (23) And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.”

(Ephesians 1:13-14) “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

(Ephesians 4:30) “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

Soon, when our Savior comes again “*to be glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe,*” he will cause a great change to take place. Our bodies, sown the grave in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption. These mortal bodies shall put on immortality. Mortality shall be swallowed up in life.

(1 Corinthians 15:51-55) “Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. (54) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,

WISDOM, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SANCTIFICATION AND REDEMPTION

then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (55) O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?"

Then, Christ shall be made of God unto us Redemption in the complete deliverance of his elect (body, soul and spirit) from all the consequences of sin!

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." — Now, here's the reason for all this. God saves sinners this way — *"That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."*

(Jeremiah 9:23-24) "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: (24) But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD."

Amen.