

The theme chosen for our time together this weekend is—Complete in Christ—and the text we will be considering is 1Cor.1:30—I want to first read the text—and then suggest two points of introduction, 1Cor.1:30—"but of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption..."

Notice [1] salvation is all OF GOD—here I think of the phrase—"but of Him you are in Christ Jesus"—or as the NAS has it—"but by His doing you are in Christ Jesus" or the NIV—"it is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus"—that point being—it's God who saves sinners—if we are in Christ—it's because God has put us in Christ—this is also seen in that our text (v30—is bookended with similar statements that stress the reason why salvation is all of God, v29—"that no flesh should glory in His presence" v31—"that, as it is written, He who glories, let him glory in the LORD..."

Notice [2] salvation is all IN CHRIST—here I think of the entire verse—"but of Him who are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption"—that is—the whole of our salvation—from beginning to end—is found in Christ—wisdom from God (which refers to our conversion—or being made wise), righteousness (or justification), sanctification (our holiness), and redemption (which refers to that future aspect of deliverance we wait for)...

- I. What is wisdom?
- II. How is wisdom in Christ?
- III. How is wisdom given from Christ?

I. What is wisdom?

1. There are two closely related phrases that explain what is meant by wisdom—knowing God and fearing God...
2. Simply put—true wisdom consists in—knowing and/or fearing God—a wise man both knows and fears God...
3. Prov.9:10—"the fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding..."
4. Notice [1] to fear God is wisdom—"the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" Job 28:28—"the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom..."
5. Notice [2] to fear God is to know God—we find within this verse what is often called—Hebrew parallelism...
6. That is—a single truth told in two ways—"the fear of the Lord" and "the knowledge of the Holy one" are synonymous...
7. To fear God is to know God—or—to know God is to fear God—this is nature of true wisdom or understanding...
8. The next question becomes—what does knowing the Holy One entail—or what does it mean to know God...
9. Let me suggest—to know God—is to know God [a] personally, [b] intimately, and [c] savingly—notice [a] personally...
10. Notice [b] intimately—that is—true wisdom—entails a true and intimate knowledge of God—as He truly is...
11. Notice [c] savingly—this of course is rather evident—we know God in Christ—in a saving and redemptive way...
12. Jer.9:23-24—"thus says the LORD: Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty *man* glory in his might, nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches; 24 but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I *am* the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment [justice], and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight, says the LORD..."
13. This text is relevant for a couple of reasons—first—the apostle quotes it back in 1Cor.1:31—just following our text...

14. Secondly—it's important because it contrasts worldly—wisdom, strength, and riches—with knowing God...
15. In other words—true wisdom, strength, and riches is found in knowing God—this is what we should boast about...
16. Thus—we find the three descriptions of knowing God I earlier suggested—it's personal, intimate, and saving...
17. Notice [a] personal, v24—"let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD..."
18. Notice—it's more than merely knowing about God—but it's knowing God—it's knowing God for one-self...
19. Notice [b] intimate, v24—"let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD..."
20. To know God—is to understand God—that is—in a certain sense and degree—Christians really—know God...
21. Notice [c] saving, v24—"I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness in the earth..."
22. These are found in Christ—to know His lovingkindness—is to know Him—personally, intimately, and savingly...

II. How is wisdom in Christ?

1. If anything is clear from our text—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption—are found in Christ...
2. Thus—my question I want to address under this second heading is—in what way—is wisdom found in Christ...
3. Notice [1] by eternal generation—that is—wisdom exists in Christ eternally—as God's eternally begotten Son...
4. Simply put—all wisdom—that is true wisdom—is found in God—God alone—is natively and infinitely wise...
5. Thus—what's true of God the Father—is equally true of God the Son—He not only has wisdom—but is wisdom...
6. Job 12:13—"with Him *are* wisdom and strength, He has counsel and understanding" Prov.8:14—"counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom; I *am* understanding, I have strength..."
7. Notice—counsel and wisdom is His—that is—He possesses it in the fullest sense—and that from eternity...
8. Yet—He goes further—"I am understanding"—that is—He not only perfectly understands God—but all things...
9. The eternal Son of God—the Wisdom and Word of God—possesses perfect knowledge of God—as God...
10. Now—remember how we defined wisdom—knowledge of God—thus—the Son perfectly knows the Father...
11. Jn.10:15—"as the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father"—that is—their knowledge (wisdom) is equal...
12. Notice [2] by mediatorial office—by this I refer to Christ as the GodMan—Christ as mediator between God and man...
13. Found in God—wisdom was too high for us—thus—He made wisdom accessible to us—in Christ the God-man...
14. Perhaps I could say—He brought wisdom down to man—He deposited it for man—in the person of Christ...
15. Thus—I want to take a few minutes—and examine two classic texts—that portray Christ—as God's wisdom...
16. 1Cor.1:22-24—"for Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God..."

17. Notice [a] native man, v22—"Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom"—wisdom divorced from God...
18. Notice [b] elect man, v24—"but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks"—those called—from Jews and Greeks...
19. This—has reference to the elect—who are called with a selective and effective calling—a calling that saves...
20. To these—Christ becomes both—"the power of God and the wisdom of God"—that is—in a saving way.....
21. Col.2:1-3—"for I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and *attaining* to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge..."
22. Notice [a] a longing—Paul had a deep desire or longing—for both the Colossian and Laodicean Christians...
23. That they would together—come to the full assurance of understanding—to the knowledge of the mystery of God...
24. This phrase—"the knowledge of the mystery of God"—refers to—the knowledge of God as revealed in Christ...
25. Notice [b] a treasury, v3—"in whom [that is—in Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge..."
26. Christ is likened to a treasure-house—in whom are stored—all the treasures of true wisdom and knowledge...
27. In other words—the knowledge of God—called the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—is only found in Christ...

III. How is wisdom given from Christ?

1. Here I want to address the question—how God makes foolish sinners wise—or how Christ becomes our wisdom...
2. Perhaps—I can put it like this—wisdom is not only found in Christ—but true wisdom—comes from Christ...
3. The text says—"Christ...became for us wisdom from God"—that is—we received wisdom from God in Christ...
4. Barns—"Christ is to us the source of wisdom; it is by him that we are made wise. This cannot mean that his wisdom becomes strictly and properly ours; that it is set over to us, and reckoned as our own, for that is not true. But it must mean simply, that Christians have become *truly wise* by the agency, the teaching, and the work of Christ..."
5. Thus—what we are now about to consider—is Christ as our Prophet—teaching foolish sinners—true wisdom...
6. Now—before I suggest how Christ becomes unto us wisdom—I want to briefly consider—a text that summarizes this truth...
7. Matt.11:27—"all things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him* [Isa.50:4]..."
8. Notice [a] Christ has wisdom—"no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son..."
9. That is—no one knows the Father—natively and perfectly—except the Son—that is—Christ has wisdom....
10. Notice [b] Christ gives wisdom—"nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him..."
11. Now—we mustn't think that our knowledge of God is identical to Christ's—or else—we would be God as Christ...
12. But—the point is this—we can truly and really know God—we can—through Christ—truly—become wise...

13. Notice [1] by His Spirit—throughout Scripture—we find that "wisdom" and the Spirit—are untied together...
14. This means—that Christ makes poor foolish sinners wise—by His Spirit—opening their eyes and teaching them...
15. Isa.11:1-2—"there shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD..."
16. Notice [a] a prophecy of Christ, v1—"there shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots..."
17. Notice [b] a gift of the Spirit, v2—"the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD..."
18. Notice a few things about the Spirit—first—He would rest upon the Messiah—this took place publicly at His baptism...
19. This—"resting" underscores the fact—that the Spirit was given to Christ—without measure—or with no limit...
20. Secondly—He would be given to Christ—as the Spirit of—wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of the Lord...
21. That is—not only would the Spirit—communicate these graces to His humanity in full—but also to His people...
22. Let me put it like this—no man can ever have Christ to become wisdom from God—but by the work of the Spirit...
23. Notice [2] by His Word—that is—Christ makes foolish sinners wise—by His Spirit—through/with His word...
24. 2Tim.3:14-15—"but you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus..."
25. The relevance of this text to our present theme—I trust is evident—let me simply suggest a few things about it...
26. Notice [a] wisdom is found in the Holy Scriptures—"the Scriptures are able to make you wise for salvation..."
27. Notice [b] wisdom is had through faith in Christ Jesus—"through faith which is in Christ Jesus"—by faith in Christ...
28. This supplements—what I stressed in the introduction—that salvation is of God—by His doing you are in Christ...
29. While God unites us to Christ—He unites us to Christ by faith—that is—His Spirit puts faith within our hearts...
30. Thus—what Paul says is true—it is because of God that we are in Christ—but we are in Christ—by faith...

IV. Lessons

1. Notice [1] man by nature is a foolish creature—that is—he refuses to come to Christ—that he might be wise...
2. Prov.1:29-30—"because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, 30 they would have none of my counsel *and* despised my every rebuke..."
3. Let me briefly offer a few descriptions of a foolish person—[a] a fool has no knowledge of himself—as a sinner...
4. That is—the reason they have no need of God's wisdom—is because they have never come to see their need...
5. Let me say it this way—essential to true wisdom—knowing God—is the knowledge of oneself as a guilty sinner...
6. No one has ever come to know God—without first knowing oneself—this is the first step in learning wisdom...

7. Calvin (The Knowledge of God the Creator)—"Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves..."
8. Thus—regardless what you know—if your mouth has never been shut before God as a guilty sinner—you are a fool...
9. Notice [b] a fool lacks proper knowledge of God—that is—the god they claim to know—is not the God of Scripture...
10. Jer.9:24—"let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I *am* the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment [justice], and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight, says the LORD..."
11. Thus—those professing Christians—who portray God merely as a God of love—don't know God—and are fools...
12. Those who have never come to see God as—just and righteous—as well as loving—are but religious—fools...
13. Notice [c] a fool has no knowledge of God in Christ—we may speak much about God—but little about Christ...
14. Oh dear people—you can have an orthodox view of God—and yet be a fool—a theologically precise—fool...
15. Notice [2] only Christianity provides wisdom—man prides himself in being wise—as possessing wisdom...
16. I earlier quoted 1Cor.1:22—"Greeks seek after wisdom"—that is—they seek after wisdom outside of God...
17. Oh—dear friends—let us be very clear on this point—true religious wisdom—is only found in Jesus Christ...
18. It is very possible—dare I say common—for a person to become very wise in many ways—and remain foolish...
19. Put my primary purpose under this lesson—is to stress the good news—that true wisdom—is found in Christ...
20. Notice [3] the truly wise will grow in wisdom—Christians are not only wise—they need to become wiser...
21. Prov.1:5—"a wise *man* will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel..."
22. How do Christians grow in wisdom—but the same way they became wise—they mine out wisdom from Christ...
23. Phil.3:8—"I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord...10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection—that is—it was Paul's driving desire to know Him more intimately..."
24. 2Pet.3:18—"but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ"—grow in true wisdom...