

THE FOURFOLD TREASURE

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A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

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

WE meet somewhere in the Old Testament with the expression “salt without prescribing how much.” Beyond all question the name, person, and work of Jesus are the salt and savor of every true Gospel ministry, and we cannot have too much of them. Alas! that in so many ministries there is such a lack of this first dainty of the feast, this essence of all soul-satisfying doctrine.

We may preach Christ without prescribing how much, only the more we extol Him the better. It would be impossible to sin by excess in preaching Christ crucified. It was an ancient precept, “With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.” Let it stand as an ordinance of the sanctuary now, “With all thy sermonizings and discoursings thou shalt ever mingle the name of Jesus Christ. Thou shalt ever seek to magnify the alpha and omega of the plan of redemption.”

The apostle in the first chapter of this epistle was anxious to speak to the Corinthians about their divisions and other serious faults, but he could not confine himself to that unpleasant theme. As naturally as possible his heart bounded over the mountains of division to his Lord and Master. Divisions did but remind him of the great uniting one who has made all His people one, and human follies did but drive him nearer to the infallible Christ who is the wisdom of God.

Though Paul had to write many sharp things to those ancient Plymouth Brethren at Corinth, yet how sweetly did he prevent all bitterness by dipping his pen in the honeyed ink of love to the Lord Jesus, and admiration of His person and work! Let us, dear friends, if we have to preach, preach Christ crucified. And if we are private persons, let us in our household life and in all our conversation, make His name to be as ointment poured forth.

Let your life be Christ living in you. May you be like Asher, of whom it is said, he dipped his foot in oil. May you be so anointed with the Spirit of your Lord that wherever you put down your foot, you may leave an impression of grace. The balmy south wind bears token of having passed over sunny lands—may the ordinary bent and current of your life bear evidence in it that you have communed with Jesus.

Tonight we have before us a text which is extraordinarily comprehensive, and contains infinitely more of meaning than mind shall grasp or tongue shall utter at this hour. Considering it carefully, let us observe, first, that the apostle here attributes the fact that we are in Christ Jesus to the Lord alone. He shows that there is a connection between our very being as Christians, and the love and grace of God in Christ. “Of him,” (that is of God) “are ye in Christ Jesus.”

So we will first speak about *our spiritual existence*. Then Paul goes on to write of *our spiritual wealth*, which he sums up under four heads—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. But which indeed, I might say, he sums up under one head, for he declares that Christ is made of God unto us all these four things. and then he closes the chapter by telling us where *our glorying* ought to go—it should return to the source of our spiritual existence and heavenly wealth. “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

I. To begin, then, where God began with us—OUR SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE.

“Of him are ye in Christ Jesus.” Different translators have read this passage in divers ways. “Of him,” they think properly should be, “Through him,” that is, “Through God we are in Christ Jesus.” Are you this day united to Christ—a stone in that building of which He is both foundation and topstone—a limb of that mystical body, of which He is the Head?

Then you did not get there of yourself. No stone in that wall leaped into its place. No member of that body was its own creator. You come to be in union with Christ through God the Father. You were ordained unto this grace by His own purpose, the purpose of the Infinite JEHOVAH, who chose you, or ever the earth was.

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” The first cause of your union with Christ lies in the purpose of God who gave you grace in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world. And as to the purpose, so to the power of God is your union with Christ to be attributed. He brought you into Christ. You were a stranger, He brought you near. You were an enemy, He reconciled you.

You had never come to Christ to seek for His mercy if first of all the Spirit of God had not appeared to you to show you your need and to lead you to cry for the mercy that you needed. Through God’s operation as well as through God’s decree you are this day in Christ Jesus. It will do your souls good, my brethren, to think of this very common-place truth.

Many days have passed since your conversion, it may be, but do not forget what a high day the day of your new birth was. And do not cease to give glory to that mighty power which brought you out of darkness into the marvelous light.

You did not convert yourself. If you did, you still have need to be converted again. Your regeneration was not of the will of man, nor of blood, nor of birth. If it were so, let me tell you the sooner you are rid of it, the better. The only true regeneration is of the will of God and by the operation of the Holy Ghost.

“By the grace of God I am what I am.” He “hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.” “He that hath wrought us to the selfsame thing is God.” “Of him are ye in Christ Jesus.” Through the operation and will and purpose of God are you this day a member of Christ’s body and one with Jesus. Give all the glory, then, to the Lord alone.

But suppose we read it as we have it in the text, and then we shall not have an allusion to the source of our spiritual life, but to the dignity of it. “Of God are ye in Christ Jesus.” Being in Christ, you are of God. Not of the earth earthy now, not of Satan, not of the bondage of the law, not of the powers of evil, but of God are you—God’s husbandry, God’s people, God’s children, God’s beloved ones.

“Ye are of God,” little children, “and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” On you has God’s light shone, to you has God’s life come, in you God’s love is made manifest, and in you shall God’s glory be fully revealed. What a dignity is this to be “of God!”

Some have thought it a great thing to have it said, “These are they which are of the prince’s household,” and others have been yet more boastful when they have been pointed at as parts of an imperial court. But you are of the divine family, descended from Him who only has immortality. “They shall be mine, saith the LORD, in the day when I make up my jewels.”

“For the LORD’S portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.” Of God, are you, every one of you who are in Christ Jesus—you are Christ’s and Christ is God’s. The Creator, the Upholder, the Sublime, the Invisible, the Infinite, the Eternal claims you. You have a part and lot with Him, and you are herein uplifted to the highest degree of exaltation because you are in Christ.

Here, then, you have the dignity of the Christ-life—it is *of* God, as its source is through God.

But note the essence of the Christian life—“Of God are ye *in Christ Jesus*.” You have no life before the Lord, except as you are in Christ Jesus. Apart from Him you are as the branch that is severed from the vine—dead, withered, useless, obnoxious, rotten. Men gather these branches and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

A ghastly sight it must be on the battlefield, to see on all sides—arms, legs, and various portions of limbs torn away from the bodies to which they belonged, and scattered in hideous disorder! Once of the

utmost service, these severed limbs are useless now. Everyone knows that they are dead, for they cannot live divided from the vital regions.

Even thus if you and I could be separated from Christ, our vital Head, death—spiritual death—must be the inevitable result. Our life hinges upon union to our Lord. “Because I live, ye shall live also.” Out of Christ we abide in death, but in Christ we live and we are of God. Our spiritual being, and the fact that our spiritual being is an exalted one, both hang upon this—that we are in Christ.

Beloved Christian friends, I can congratulate you upon your being able to know that you are in Christ and that you are of God. But I must not speak so broadly to all this congregation. I must rather put a grave inquiry and ask each of my hearers—Are you all in Christ Jesus? Could the apostle write to you and say—“Of God are you in Christ Jesus”?

Have you ever been the subject of a work of God, putting you into Christ Jesus? Are you now of God in Christ Jesus, so as to be depending for everything upon Him, dwelling in Him, and He in you? Feeling His life within you and that your life is hid with Him in God?

Beloved hearer, there is no joy in this world like union with Christ. The more we can feel it, the happier we are, whatever our circumstances may be. But if you are without Christ, you are without hope. Joy comes not where Jesus comes not. No Savior, then no peace in life or death.

Oh remember, beloved hearer, that you will soon die. Where, where will you look for consolation in your last moments? Your soul will soon have to fly through tracks unknown and face the burning throne of judgment. What will you do then, without the hand of love to guide you and the righteousness of Christ to cover you?

He who wraps himself about with Christ’s matchless robe can say—

*“Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who ought to my charge shall lay?
While through Thy blood absolved I am
From sin’s tremendous curse and shame.”*

But he that has no Savior, it were better for him that he had never been born. That day is cursed and has no blessing on which he first saw the light. Jesus Christ is willing to receive you if you desire to come to Him. Noah’s ark was shut, but not until the flood came. It was open till then—Christ is the ark of the covenant and the door is not shut yet. Let not this, however, cause you to delay, for the flood will rise, and the rains will fall, and then to those who shall knock at the door, it will be said, “Too late! Too late! You cannot enter now.”

Of Him, beloved believers in Christ, are you in Christ Jesus. All you are—even to your bare existence as Christians, you have to trace to “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.”

II. Now let us turn to the second part of our subject and contemplate OUR SPIRITUAL WEALTH.

Christ Jesus is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Here are four things—only it is to be noticed that in the original Greek the second and third have a peculiar connecting link, which the others have not. The wisdom stands alone, and the redemption—but the righteousness and sanctification have a special link—as though we should be taught that they always go together, that they should always be considered as united—a warning to modern theology, which so often divides what God has joined together.

Let us take the first blessing first, asking to be partakers of it at this very moment. Jesus Christ is made unto us *wisdom*. You noticed when we read the chapter that the apostle had been speaking of some other wisdom which he treated somewhat roughly. It had set itself up in opposition to the cross of Christ, and the apostle handled it with no gentle handling.

There have always been those in the world who have conceived that wisdom would come to them as the result of the exercise of their own thoughts assisted by culture. That is to say, they hoped to know divine truth by their own thoughts and the additional light arising from the thoughts of other men. They fancied that wisdom would rise out of the human mind and would not need to be taught us from above.

There were those in Paul's days who were always ruminating, considering, contemplating with themselves, and then disputing, dialoging, and conversing with others. These were the philosophers of the time. They looked for wisdom through man and expected to find it in the shallow brain of a poor son of Adam.

They so believed that they themselves were wise, though they affected modesty and did not call themselves "the Sophoi, or wise," but "the Philosophoi," or lovers of wisdom. Yet for all that, in their innermost hearts they esteemed themselves to be an inner circle of instructed persons, and they looked upon the rest of mankind as the unilluminated and the ignorant. They had found a treasure which they kept to themselves and virtually said to their fellow men, "You are almost without exception hopelessly ignorant."

Now, the apostle, instead of pointing to his own brain, or pointing to the statue of Socrates or Solon, says Jesus Christ is made of God unto us wisdom. We look no more for wisdom from the thoughts that spring of human mind, but to Christ Himself. We do not expect wisdom to come to us through the culture that is of man, but we expect to be made wise through sitting at our Master's feet and accepting Him as wisdom from God Himself.

Now, as it was in the apostle's day, so is it very much at this present. There are those who will have it that the Gospel—the simple Gospel—such as might have been preached by John Bunyan or Whitefield, or Wesley, and others, was very well for the many and for the dark times in which they lived—the great mass of mankind would be helped and improved by it.

But there is wanted, according to the wiseacres of this intensely luminous century, a more progressive theology, far in advance of the evangelism now so generally ridiculed. Men of mind, gentlemen of profound thought, are to teach us doctrines that were unknown to our fathers. We are to go on improving in our knowledge of divine truth till we leave Peter and Paul, and those other old dogmatists far behind.

Nobody knows how wise we are to become. Brethren, our thoughts loathe this. We hate this cant about progress and deep thought. We only wish we could know as much of Christ as the olden preachers did. We are afraid that instead of getting into greater light of God through the thinkings of men, the speculations and contemplations of the scribes, ancient and modern, and the discoveries of the intellectual and eclectic, these have made darkness worse, and have quenched some of the light that was in the world.

Again has it been fulfilled, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

It seems to me to be greater wisdom to believe what Christ has said than to believe what my deepest thoughts have discovered. And though I have thought long upon a subject, and turned it over and over, and think I know more of it than another man, yet, in one simple word of Christ there is more wisdom than in all my thoughts and ruminatings.

I am never to look to myself for wisdom, and to fancy that I am the creator of truth or the revealer of it—but ever to go to Him, my Lord, my teacher, my all, and to believe that the highest culture, the best results of the highest education are to be found by sitting at His feet, and the best results of the deepest meditation, too, are to be gained in lying down in the green pastures, beside the still waters, where He, as the good Shepherd, leads me.

Brethren, when we read that Christ is made of God unto us wisdom, let us recollect what wisdom is. Wisdom is, I suppose, the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great

deal and are all the more fools for what they know. There is no fool so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom.

Now, that man is wise in three respects who has Christ for his wisdom. Christ's *teaching* will make him wise of thought and wise of heart. All you want to know of God, of sin, of life, of death, of eternity, of predestination, of man's responsibility—Christ has either personally, or by His Spirit in the Word of God, taught you.

Anything that you find out for yourself, anything over and above revelation, is folly, but whatever He has taught is wisdom. And He has so taught it that if you learn it in the spirit in which He would have you learn it, it will not be dry, dead doctrine to you, but spirit and life. And His teaching will endow you with wisdom as well as knowledge.

Scholars at the cross-foot let us always be. Never let us go to any other school than Schola crucis, for the learners of the cross are the favorites of wisdom. Let Corpus Christi be the college in which we study. To know Jesus and the power of His resurrection—this is wisdom.

But in addition to profiting by our Lord's instruction, the Christian learns wisdom through his Master's *example*. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" How shall I be made wise in action? Policy says, "Adopt this expedient and the other," and the mass of mankind at this age are guided by the policy of the hour.

But policy is seeming wisdom and real folly. Remember it is always wisest to act in any condition as Jesus would have acted, supposing Him to have been in that condition. Never did He temporize. Principle guided Him, not fashion nor personal advantage. You shall never be a fool if you follow Christ, except in the estimation of fools. And who wishes to be wise in a fool's esteem?

But sometimes it may be said, "To do as Christ would have done would involve me in present difficulty or loss." It is true, but there is no man who loses aught in this life for Christ's sake who shall remain a loser, for he shall receive tenfold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. The wisest action is not always the most pecuniarily profitable.

It is wise sometimes for men to be poor, ay, even to lose their lives. Truest wisdom—not sham wisdom, not temporary wisdom—you shall manifest by following the example of Christ, though it lead you to prison or to death. His teachings and His example, together, will give you the wisdom which comes from above.

Above all, if you have the redeemer's *presence*, He will be made of God unto you wisdom in a very remarkable sense. Never forget or doubt that Jesus is still with His people. They who know how to enter into the secret place of the tabernacle of the Most High, find Him still at the mercy seat. He feeds among the lilies, and they who know the lilies know where to find Him. And those who live with Him and catch His Spirit, have their garments perfumed as His are with myrrh, and aloes, and cassia.

These may be thought to be mad by some and others may call them fanatical enthusiasts, but these are the wisest of mankind. O happy men that live at the gates of heaven while yet on earth, that sit at the feet of the blessed in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus while they are toiling along through the pilgrimage of this life! This is to be wise, to have Christ's teaching, Christ's example, and above all, Christ's presence. So may the poorest find the Lord Jesus made of God unto them wisdom.

Pause just a minute. Let none of us ever be so foolish as to suppose that when we have received Jesus and His Gospel, we have occasion to blush when we are in the company of the very wisest of the present day. Carry a bold face when you confront the brazen-faced philosophy which insults your Lord. The man who does not believe the Bible does not know so much as you do.

Blush not, though with mimic wisdom the unbeliever tries to laugh or argue you down. He who knows not Christ, though he propounds wonderful theories as to the creation of mankind and the formation of the world, and though he has a glib tongue, is only an educated fool, a learned idiot, who thinks his own rushlight brighter than God's own sun.

"Ah! but he has been to college, and he has a degree, and he is esteemed by men, for he has written books that nobody can comprehend." "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." And I do not

care even if he be a Solon, if he has said that there is no God, he is a fool. Do not blush, then, if you find yourself in his company. Do not make yourself the blushing one because the fool is there.

Self-conceit were to be avoided and loathed, but this is not self-conceit, but a holy courage in a case which demands of you to be courageous. To know Christ is the best of all philosophy, the highest of all sciences. Angels desire to look into this—but I do not know that they care a fig for half the sciences so valued among men.

If you know Christ you never need be afraid of being ashamed and confounded whatever company you may be in. If you stood in a senate of emperors, or amidst a parliament of philosophers, and only told them of the God who came in human flesh, and loved, and lived, and died to redeem mankind—you would have told them a greater mystery and a profounder secret than reason could discover. Be not ashamed, then, amid the intellectual pride of this boastful age.

At the same time, let me remind you of another evil. Do not seek to complete your wisdom at any other source. Be satisfied that in keeping close to Christ you have the highest and truest wisdom. As I would not have you cowed before the pretender, neither would I have you envy him, or seek to supplement the wisdom that is in Christ Jesus by the wisdom that is of man.

Are you so foolish, having begun with Jesus, will you end with a German neologian, or a French wit, or a Puseyite dreamer? Have you taken Christ's Word to be your guide, and will you go and tack on to some decree of Convocation, some rubric of a church, some minute of Conference, or other invention of human brain and fallen fancy? God forbid! Array yourself solely in this armor of gold, and go forth and gleam in the sun, and angels themselves shall marvel at you as they see your brightness. "Jesus Christ is made of God unto you wisdom."

It is high time for us to proceed to review the next blessing. He is made of God unto us *righteousness*. This was a great want of ours, for naturally we were unrighteous, and to this hour in ourselves we are the same. Righteous we must be to be acceptable with God, but righteous we certainly are not personally and by merit. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags and we are unable to stand before the great King.

But there is one who says, "Take away his filthy garments from him," and that same Deliverer, even the Lord Jesus Christ, is made of God unto us righteousness. You know how we usually speak of this as a double work. His blood cleanses us from all guilt—by it pardon is bestowed upon the believer. He that looks to Christ is absolved from all sin—completely so.

Then, in addition to that cleansing, which we call pardon, there is the clothing, the arraying in the righteousness of Christ—in a word, there is justification by faith. The doctrine of imputed righteousness seems to me to be firmly established in the Word of God. Yet I have sometimes fancied I have heard a little too much stress put upon the word "imputed," and scarcely enough upon the word "righteousness."

For though I know that righteousness is imputed to us, yet I believe it is not all the truth that we are righteous by imputation. It is true, most true, but there is something true beyond it. Not only is Christ's righteousness imputed to me, but it is mine actually, for Christ is mine. He who believes in Jesus, has Jesus Christ to be his own Christ, and the righteousness of Christ belongs to that believer, and is his.

We are not merely imputedly righteous, but the righteousness of our Substitute is legally, actually, truly our righteousness. I am not now speaking of nature—that would have to do with sanctification—but I am speaking of repute before God. He reckons us to be righteous in Christ and He does not reckon wrongly. The imputation is not a legal fiction or a charitable error. We are righteous.

Depend upon it, God's imputation is not like human imputation, which makes a thing to be what it is not—we are in Christ made actually righteous—because we are one with Him. Do you think that there is an unrighteous member of Christ's body? God forbid! Do you think Christ mystical to be a building with an unholy stone in it? Is Christ a vine with branches which bear deadly fruit?

As He is, so are we also in this respect. His salt has seasoned the whole lump. In the mystical body, every member is made righteous before God, because joined to the living Head. Here is an actual

righteousness given to us through the righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord. He is made of God unto us righteousness.

Consider this, O believer—you are tonight righteous before God. You are a sinner in yourself worthy to be condemned, but God does not condemn you, nor ever will He do so, for before the eye of His justice you are arrayed in perfect righteousness. Your sin is not upon you—it was laid upon the Scapegoat's head of old.

All your iniquities were made to meet upon the head of the Crucified Savior—He bore your transgressions in His own body on the tree. Where are your sins now? You may ask the question without fear, for they have ceased to be. “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” “He hath cast our iniquities into the depths of the sea.”

Glory be to His name, there is no sin in existence against a believer. Is it not written, “He hath finished transgression, made an end of sin [what stronger expression can there be?], and brought in everlasting righteousness”? And that is true of you tonight, Christian, as true of you tonight as it will be when you are in heaven.

You are not so sanctified tonight as you will be in the glory land, but you are as righteous as you can be even there. In God's sight you are as much “accepted in the Beloved,” as you will be when you stand on the sea of glass mingled with fire. You are beloved of God, and dear to Him and justified, so that even tonight you can say, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?”

You cannot lift up a louder boast than that, even when you shall see your Savior, and shall be like Him because you see Him as He is. By faith this righteousness is yours at this present moment, and will always be yours without a change—yours when your spirit is cast down, as much as when your joys abound. You are accepted not because of anything in yourself, but because you stand in the Lord your righteousness.

I remarked some time ago that the next blessing in our text is pinned on to this one. I need not say much about that fact, but just note it. Righteousness and sanctification must always go together, and though they are two different things, or else there would not have been two different words, yet they blend into each other most remarkably, hence the Greek joins the two words by a close link.

Our *sanctification* is all in Christ—that is to say, it is because we are in Christ that we have the basis of sanctification, which consists in being set apart. A thing was sanctified of old, under the law, when it was set apart for God's service. We were sanctified in Christ Jesus when we were set apart by the divine Spirit to be the Lord's own peculiar people forever.

Election is the basis of sanctification. Moreover, the power by which we are sanctified comes to us entirely by virtue of our union with Christ. The Holy Spirit who sanctifies us through the truth, works in us by virtue of our union with Jesus. That which becomes holy in us is the new life.

The old nature never changes into a holy thing. The carnal mind is not reconciled to God, neither, indeed, can be. The old man is not sent to the hospital to be healed, but to the cross to be crucified. It is not transformed and improved, but doomed to die, and to be buried. The ordinance of baptism, which is placed at the outset of Christian life, is meant to show, by our immersion in the liquid tomb, that it is by death and burial that we pass into life by the power of resurrection.

If any man be in Christ, he is not an old creature mended up—he is a new creature. “Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” Now, it is because this new life is the great, the true matter of sanctification, and because it comes to us by virtue of our oneness with Christ, that Jesus Christ is made to us the power and the life by which we are sanctified.

Beloved, let your hearts add another meaning—let Jesus always be the motive for your sanctification. Is it not a strange thing that some professors should look to Christ alone for pardon and justification, and run away to Moses when they desire sanctification? For instance, you will hear persons preach this doctrine, “The Christian is to be holy, because if he be not holy he will fall from grace and perish.”

Do you not hear the crack of the old legal whip in all that? What is that but the yoke of that covenant which none of our fathers were able to bear? It is the bondage of Egypt—not the freedom of the children of God. Christ talks not so, nor His Gospel. Think not to make yourself holy by motives of that kind. They are not right motives for a child of God.

How then should we urge the child of God to holiness? Should it not be in this way, “You are God’s child—walk worthy of Him who is your Father”? His love to you will never cease. He cannot cast you away. He is faithful and never changes, therefore love Him in return. This is a motive fit for the child of the free woman and it moves his heart.

The child of the bond woman is driven by the whip, but the child of the free woman is drawn by cords of love. “The love of Christ constraineth us.” Not fear of hell, but love of Christ. Not fear that God will cast us away, for that He cannot do, but the joy that we are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation constrains us to cling to Him with all our heart and soul, forever and ever.

Rest assured, if motives fetched from the Gospel will not kill sin, motives fetched from the law never will. If you cannot be purged at Calvary, you certainly cannot be cleansed at Sinai. If “the water and the blood, from the riven side which flowed,” are not sufficient to purify you, no blood of bulls or of goats—I mean, no argument from the Jewish law or hope of salvation by your own efforts—will ever furnish motives sufficiently strong to cast out sin.

Let your reasons for being holy be found in Christ, for He is made of God unto you sanctification! I have always found, and I bear my witness to it, that the more entirely for the future as well as for the present, I lean upon my Lord, the more conscious I am of my own emptiness and unworthiness. And the more completely I rest my whole salvation upon the grace of God in Christ Jesus, the more carefully do I walk in my daily life.

I have always found that self-righteous thoughts very soon lead to sinful actions, but that, on the other hand, the very faith which leads to assurance, and makes the heart rest in the faithfulness of God in Christ, purifies the soul. “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” Jesus, the Savior, saves us from our sins and is made of God to us “sanctification.”

Now, the last item of our boundless wealth cataloged in the text is “*redemption*.” Somebody says, “That ought to have come first, because redemption, surely, is the first blessing that we enjoy.” Ay, but it is the last as well. It is the *alpha* blessing, I grant you that—but it is the *omega* blessing too. You are not yet redeemed altogether. By price you are—for He that redeemed you on the tree did not leave unpaid a penny of your ransom. But you are not yet altogether redeemed by power.

In a measure, you are set free by divine power, for you have been brought up out of the Egypt of your sin, you have been delivered from the galling bondage of your corruption, and led through the Red Sea, to be fed upon the heavenly manna. But you are not altogether redeemed by power as yet. There are links of the old chains yet to be snapped from off you, and there is a bondage still about you from which you are ere long to be delivered.

You are “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.” You will fall asleep, rejoicing that you were redeemed, but you will not, even when you die, have received the full redemption. When will that come—the full redemption? Only at the second advent of the Lord Jesus. For when the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, then the bodies of His saints, which have long been lying in the prison-house of the sepulchre, shall be redeemed by a glorious redemption from the power of death.

“I know that my redeemer liveth.” The bodies of the saints shall come again from the land of the enemy. Then their body, soul, and spirit—their entire manhood, which Christ has bought, shall be altogether free from the reign of the enemy. Then will redemption be completed.

Remember the saints in heaven without us cannot be made perfect, that is to say, they wait till we arrive among them. And when all the rest of the chosen ones shall be gathered in, and the fullness of time has come, then shall the bodies of the dead arise. And then, in body and soul made perfect, the year of the redeemed shall have fully come. “Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

Here, then, is my joy—that Christ is my redemption. My soul is free from slavery, but my poor trembling and much suffering body feels the chains of death. Weakened by pain, my body shall in all probability bow before the stroke of death’s sword. Unless the Lord soon come, it must be the portion of this frame to feed the worm and mingle with the dust—but, O my body, you are redeemed, and you shall rise in power and incorruption. You shall yet adore the Lord without weariness, and without pain shall you serve Him day and night in His temple. Even you, O my weary body—even you shall be made glorious like unto the Lord Himself. You shall rise and live in the brightness of His presence.

All, then, that you can possibly want, O Christian, is in Christ. You cannot conceive a need which Jesus does not supply. “Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption”—you have all in Him. Some gather a flower here, some gather another there, some will go farther, and pluck another there. And some will go yet beyond to grasp a fourth. But when we win Christ, we have a posey. We have all sweet flowers in one.

*“All human beauties, all divine,
In my beloved meet and shine;
Thou brightest, sweetest, fairest One,
That eyes have seen or angels known.”*

But we cannot stay on this tempting subject, though even amid my present pain I would fain talk on by the hour together, and therefore I must finish with the last point. And on that only a word.

You see then, brethren, our very existence as Christians, and all that we possess as Christians, we get from God by Jesus Christ. *Let all our glory then be unto Him.* What insanity it is to boast in any but in our Lord Jesus! How foolish are they who are proud of the beauty of their flesh—worms’ meat at the best!

How foolish are they who are proud of their wisdom! The wisdom of which a man is proud, is but folly in a thin disguise. How foolish are they that are vain of their wealth! He must be a poor man who can think much of gold. He must be a beggar indeed who counts a piece of dirt a treasure. They that know Christ always value these things at their right estimate, and that is low indeed.

If any glory—and I suppose it is natural to us to glory, there is a boasting bump on all our heads—let us glory in the Lord. And here is a wide field and ample sea-room. Now, put out every stitch of canvas, run up the topgallants, seek as stiff a breeze as you will—there is no fear of running on a lee shore here, or striking a rock, or drifting on a quicksand!

O men, O angels, O cherubim, O seraphim, boast in Jesus Christ! Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption is He—therefore you may boast and boast, and boast again! You will never exaggerate. You cannot exceed His worth, or reach the tithe of it. You can never go beyond the truth, you do not even reach beyond the skirts of His garments.

So glorious is God that all the angels’ harps cannot sound forth half His glory. So blessed is Christ that the orchestra of the countless multitudes of the redeemed, though it continue forever and forever its pealing music, can never reach to the majesty of His name or the glory of His work. “Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name.”

Let time and space become great mouths for song. Let the ocean roll up its waves. Let all creatures lift up their voices in praise of Him that lives and was dead. But chiefly, O my soul, since to Him you owe in a double sense your existence, give your praise to Him from whom all blessing comes.

Give you the homage of your intellect to Him who is your wisdom. Let your conscience and love of rectitude adore Him who has made you righteous. Give the tribute of your soul to Him who sanctifies you. Let your sanctified nature consecrate itself continually. And to Him that has redeemed you give you never-ceasing praise.

I wish it were possible for me to rise to the height of my text, but my wings flag. I cannot ascend as the eagle and face the full blaze of the sun. I can but mount a little as the lark, and sing my song, and then return to my nest. God grant you to know the Lord Jesus in His fullness in your personal experience.

O you to whom Christ is no wisdom, how foolish are you! O you to whom He is no righteousness, you are condemned sinners! O you to whom He is no sanctification, the fire of God's wrath will consume you! O you to whom He is no redemption, you are slaves in hopeless bondage! God deliver you! May you be led to put your trust in Jesus even now.

Mr. Spurgeon earnestly requests the prayers of the Lord's people for his restoration to health. He has now been laid aside for eight most painful weeks, and at present there are very feeble signs of recovery.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—1 CORINTHIANS 1

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.