

## [1 Corinthians 1:30-31](#)

### Jesus Is Everything - Boast In Him

#### **Introduction**

First of all, I'd like to give credit to my brother in the Lord, Ken Yew, who has given me much insight into the crafting of ideas for this sermon. In addition, my mentor and brother in the Lord, Kyle Danielson, told me something that I'll always remember when it comes to preaching. He said, "When you preach, you can't go wrong by bragging about Christ." So, that's what I get to do today; I get to brag about Jesus.

That's in essence is what the apostle Paul is doing in the text for today ([1 Corinthians 1:30-31](#)). He's calling for the church in Corinth, as well as the church today, to boast in the Lord. His emphasis is that God is the only reason a believer is in Christ. That's a big deal! And because of that, if you're in Christ, we have much to boast about in the Lord Jesus. He's our wisdom, He's our righteousness, He's our sanctification; He's our redemption. He's everything; He's our all-in-all; He's all we have.

So, here are the following four (4) points that emphasize those in Christ have every reason to boast in Him. That's because Jesus is:

- Wisdom
- Righteousness
- Sanctification
- Redemption

#### **Wisdom**

Christ is the believer's wisdom. The believer's faith rests in the power of God, not in the wisdom of men ([1 Corinthians 2:5](#)). God decreed His wisdom before the world was created; He reveals His wisdom through His Spirit for those who love Him. Here's [1 Corinthians 2:9-10](#).

<sup>9</sup> But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—

<sup>10</sup> these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

[1 Cor 2:9-10](#) (ESV)

According to Scripture, the wisest man who ever lived was Solomon, King David's son ([1 Kings 3:12](#)). Yet, Solomon admitted that he felt like a little child that didn't know how to go out or come in ([1 Kings 3:7](#)). He asked God for wisdom to govern the people of Israel and God granted his request. Even though Solomon's love for foreign women would turn his heart away from the Lord, he wrote the following in the book of Proverbs: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." ([Proverbs 9:10](#))

Wisdom, as portrayed in the book of Proverbs, is to be sought like silver or a hidden treasure ([Proverbs 2:4](#)). Wisdom is associated with knowledge, insight, justice, equity and every good path ([Proverbs 2:5-11](#)). To know Christ is to know wisdom. Why wouldn't someone want to know Jesus as the wise Elder Brother, Savior, Lord, Friend and Teacher? To know Him is to know the One who is wisdom.

If you think about it, there's wisdom and then there's foolishness. Scripture states that fools despise wisdom and instruction ([Proverbs 1:7](#)) Foolishness tends to follow the desires of the flesh, the devil and the world. Perhaps these are things that adversely influence our thoughts, words and actions. For example, God says flee from sexual immorality; then why the temptation to look at pornography? God says to season our speech with salt; then why does gossip take over so many of our conversations? God says to be slow to anger; then why is anger spewing out of people like a volcano? All of these are foolishness. All of these have to do with our greatest problem – sin.

Wisdom on the other hand comes from the Lord ([Proverbs 2:6](#)). Therefore, a person is wise to seek God's face. The Bible is adamant about this when God's Word gives the following exhortation; ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you ([Luke 11:9](#)). Seeking wisdom and discernment from the Holy Spirit keeps a heart vigilant, for from it flow the springs of life ([Proverbs 4:23](#)). Indeed to know Christ is to know wisdom and the fountain of life.

And to know Christ is more than knowing about Him. Knowing Him involves an intimate relationship, as that of a son or daughter with their father. A relationship with the Lord is trusting and loving Jesus. It's about Him; it's not about us. And Jesus' righteousness is the only way anyone can have that kind of a genuine trusting, loving relationship with God as Father.

### **Righteousness**

Christ is the believer's righteousness. He makes us right with God. You and I cannot be righteous on our own. Scripture states that no one is righteous, no not one. Here's [Romans 3:10-11](#).

<sup>10</sup> as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God. [Romans 3:10-11](#) (ESV)

Since Christ is our righteousness, we cannot do anything to lose our acceptance with God. Christ is perfect; we are not. Our righteousness is secure because that's who Jesus is for us. Therefore, when we sin, the believer's salvation is still secure. We can't lose our salvation by what we do or don't do ([John 10:28-29](#)). We can't do anything to make our righteousness in Christ any better or worse. Indeed, there is much reason for rejoicing that God in Christ is our righteousness. Here's [Isaiah 61:10a](#).

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness...  
[Isaiah 61:10a](#) (ESV)

To be clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness is like this: Robed in the righteousness of Christ is like being covered with a white robe. White is a symbol of purity and cleanliness, much like a bride wears a white gown at her wedding. When a person is in Christ, he or she is the Bride of Christ, which is the church. God sees the purity, the completeness and the holiness of Jesus in His Bride. The righteousness of Christ has been exchanged for the unrighteousness of the sinner.

In the four synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, there's an account of the great exchange - Jesus and Barabbas. The guilty man, Barabbas, went free and the innocent man, Jesus, was condemned. Righteousness was exchanged for unrighteousness; holiness was substituted for unholiness; the sinless took the place of the sinner and the King of kings was replaced for a murderer and a robber.

The great exchange of Jesus for Barabbas, which is an often neglected and forgotten story, is proof of God's great love for the unlovable. God, not sparing His own Son, would purpose Jesus' death on the cross in order that people like you and me would be rescued from sin and made right with God. The following two verses of scripture explain it well: [Isaiah 53:10a](#)

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief;  
[Isaiah 53:10a](#) (ESV)

and [2 Corinthians 5:21](#).

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.  
[2 Cor 5:21](#) (ESV)

Jesus' righteousness is truly a gift of God's rich mercy, amazing grace and unfathomable love. When someone places their trust in Jesus, experiencing the righteousness of Christ means the work of the Holy Spirit is already in the sanctification process.

### **Sanctification**

Sanctification means to be set apart by God. The Holy Spirit is at work in the sanctification of all believers. Sanctification means not being conformed to this world, but being transformed by the renewal of the mind ([Romans 12:2](#)). This transformation was planned by God before the world was created; it involves being more like Christ, through whom the believer is saved. Here's [2 Thessalonians 2:13](#).

But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.  
[2 Thess 2:13](#) (ESV)

Do we just sit back and watch the Holy Spirit do His work in the sanctifying process? No. God gives His church a role in believers helping other believers to be more like Jesus. For example, we are to walk in a way that pleases God, abstaining from such things as sexual immorality. Sanctification is God's calling for holiness, not impurity ([1 Thessalonians 4:1-7](#)).

Sanctification involves the whole church. It involves action - building community by bearing one another's burdens, praying for one another, assembling together to stir up one another to love and good works. And above all, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body ([Colossians 3:14-15](#)).

Jesus was set apart by God to love His Bride, the church, and to give Himself up for her. He bore our infirmities, weaknesses and sins in His body on the cross. Likewise, we are to build community by bearing one another's burdens humbly, lovingly and gently in the process of being more like Jesus. What would you say about La Crescent Evangelical Free Church: Are we building community by displaying the love of Christ for our brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as our neighbors? Or are we merely content to attend, listen and leave?

Sanctification is a process. It takes time; in fact it takes a lifetime; its end is eternal life ([Romans 6:22-23](#)). Theologians would tell us that sanctification is the part of a believer's life between the "already" and the "not yet". Justification by faith in Jesus, the "already", has occurred, which marks being born again. Glorification, the "not yet", still lies ahead when God brings to completion the good work that He began in us ([Philippians 1:6](#)). We're somewhere in-between by God's grace. A brother in the Lord once said this concerning sanctification: "You're not who you once were and you're not yet who you're supposed to be."

Sanctification is the Lord's school house. The Teacher is very good. He calls all of us who are weary and heavy laden to come and He will give us rest ([Matthew 11:28](#)). He reminds us to remember that amidst all of the trouble in this world, He has overcome the world ([John 16:33](#)). Yes, Jesus really means it when He says that He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world ([1 John 4:4](#)). So, in this process of becoming more like Jesus, we're pointed to the truth that there would be no sanctification if there were no redemption in Christ.

### **Redemption**

Redemption means to be bought back with a price. For those in Christ, He bought us back from slavery to sin through His precious blood, which was shed on the cross ([Hebrews 9:12](#)). In Christ, there is redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us ([Ephesians 1:7-8](#)). God delivered us from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins ([Colossians 1:13-14](#)). That's the good news message of the cross.

A great example of redemption in the Bible is the account of Ruth in the Old Testament. In the wake of the death of her husband, Ruth finds herself destitute, along with her mother-in-law, Naomi. In fact, she gleaned grain on the edge of fields that have already been harvested. By God's providence, a man named Boaz bought a field where Ruth was gleaning. This meant Ruth belonged to Boaz; he became Ruth's kinsman-redeemer as he purchased his bride for a price.

This is a picture of Jesus as the Kinsman-Redeemer. He bought His people back from the destitution caused by sin; He paid the price with His own blood to redeem His Bride, the church. Redemption through the blood of Jesus for sinners like you and me is eternal. In other words, if a

person has placed their trust in Christ, redemption is secured in Him forever and ever. Here's [Hebrews 9:12](#).

...he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.  
[Heb 9:12](#) (ESV)

Remember the account of the great exchange between Jesus and the criminal, Barabbas, which was alluded to earlier? God wants us to see ourselves as Barabbas. So rebellious. So prone to do wrong. So undeserving of freedom. So deserving of punishment for sin. Yet, God in His grace secures an eternal redemption through the blood of Christ for undeserving people like you and me.

In 1986, God rescued me from sin and set me free in Christ. That was my “Barabbas moment”. Jesus took my place as the criminal. He received punishment for my crimes, past, present and future. Crimes such as adultery, pride and a resentful spirit. Christ, the righteous, was condemned; Steve Thompson, the unrighteous, went free. That's what redemption in Christ is all about.

What about you? If you haven't trusted Christ, you're still in prison with the door locked. Jesus is your only hope of freedom. When the guards came for Barabbas, did he stay? No! Why would anyone stay? My plea is that God would open your eyes to see that Jesus holds the key to your freedom. This could be your “Barabbas moment”. Right now, you can receive God's gift of redemptive love, grace and mercy through simply trusting Jesus. What will your response be?

What about those of us already trusting Jesus? If you're like me, the troubles of the world can seem like shackles around the wrists and ankles. Whether we realize it or not, the shackles came off when we first believed. And they're still off! Jesus has overcome the world and promised to take the heavy burdens from us and give us rest. Trust Him at His Word! We're still free in Christ; He is our redemption and nothing can change that. That's worth boasting about.

### **Conclusion**

Here's a final thought. If we don't boast in Jesus, who or what will we boast in? To answer that question, here's a final good word from God's Word - [Jeremiah 9:23-24](#).

<sup>23</sup> Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, <sup>24</sup> but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”  
[Jer 9:23-24](#) (ESV)

In God's amazing grace, rich mercy and deep love, Jesus is everything. He is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Jesus is our all-in-all. Indeed, all we have is Christ. Amen.