1 Corinthians 1:30 But because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us the wisdom from God, namely, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

I want to start this sermon by talking about verses 27-29. They say this: **But God chose the foolish things of the world to put to shame those who are wise. God chose the weak things of the world to put to shame the things that are strong, 28and God chose the lowly things of the world and the despised things, and the things that are not, to do away with the things that are, 29so that no one may boast before God**.

I have to tell you those are deeply profound words. Who could have ever imagined that God would act and move in this world by sending his Son, but not in palaces or with a vast army, but send his son born in a stable, laid in a manger, raised and nurtured by basically poor parents? And when Jesus began his ministry, although he did great and wonderful miracles, those things were ignored as the works of Satan rather than the glories of God. The end result of the ministry of Jesus was that he was put to death. Died the death of the despicable criminal, so that even today his symbol, the cross of capital punishment, is really nothing more than proof that Jesus was one of the lowest of the low. I have concluded that God does all of this simply to counteract our very foolish nature.

Because in truth, we like heroes. We like heroes who lead us in the battle, who fight against our oppressor in ways we can relate to. Think of all the great “hero” movies there are. Star Wars: Luke Skywalker and the Force come to our rescue and help us to overcome and defeat the Evil Emperor. Harry Potter, with his magic and the help of his friends, goes to his death and rises again to defeat the evil of Valdamort! Even the movie series: The Matrix has Neo come along, grow in his grasp of “programming” so that eventually he too leads mankind away from the evil of the “machinery of the matrix.” We like heroes like that. Superman, Thor, Captain America, Iron Man, Wonder Woman…heroes who come along and with their wisdom and brassiness, their strength and powers, help us to work hard to overcome the evils that confront our world. And Jesus, though he puts all of these heroes to shame…Jesus though the true and almighty God, Jesus is accounted as nothing and silly and well, you know what the world shouts at us: “What is wrong with you Christians that you think Jesus the answer?”

Yet Jesus is the answer. I can’t help it that his majesty appears hidden. I can’t help it that his power seems pitiful and worthless, especially as he is dying on the cross. I can’t help it that Jesus choses to continue his work and wonder in this world by calling humans, weak, foolish, sinful humans to be his voice and proclaim his message. But still I will tell you, Jesus is the answer.

But we don’t naturally like his answer. God reveals the truth of sin and the world scoffs and laughs and says that such talk is the dumbest thing. Then seriously, why does this world continue to have problem after problem. Why does this world reel from sickness, disease, disaster, suffering and death? We question God and his wisdom. We wonder why he isn’t doing this or that and why in the world he hasn’t stopped the hurt and harm. We even have those who simply proclaim: “If God is going to judge people as worthy of hell, then I want nothing to do with God!” Seriously the simple arrogance of humans to think they can stand as judges of God! Humans who think they have greater knowledge, greater wisdom, greater love and understanding than the true and only God? The world just does not get that Jesus is the answer.

Do we? Seriously, did you pay attention to what our highlighted verse said to us? In the simplest of ways we are reminded of the awesomeness of God and the marvel of our salvation and in the simplest of ways we are reminded of our greatest hindrance to this awesome gift given to us. Our theme will be: **CHRIST JESUS, THE WISDOM FROM GOD.**

Let’s just boil down what our text says to us. It starts with a simple point: **“Because of Him you are in Christ Jesus.”** The “him” in this sentence is none other than the Lord our God. I don’t want you to think of just God the Father, but I want you to think in terms of the Trinity of God, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together to do something wonderful and marvelous for you and me. What God has done is promised, revealed, sent and fulfilled every promise given to man, that God would take care of and deal with the problem of sin and what that sin has brought to our world. Our Christian faith is about that reality of God. It is about how God did send His Son into our world and because of what Jesus has done we are united to and with this God in a wonderful and awesome way.

That uniting is called: **you are in Christ Jesus.** We are new creations, children of God, heirs of eternal life, co-heirs and co-rulers with Christ. We are washed, cleansed, renewed, forgiven and now strangers to this world because we grasp that heaven is our home. To be IN Christ is to be a member of God’s family, to have the Holy Spirit dwell in us and renew us. It means we have all the blessings and wonders of Jesus and what he has done and accomplished. All of this because of God’s grace and mercy to sinners such as us.

Our verse tells us more: it says, **“Who became for us the wisdom from God.”** That’s Jesus. Our knowledge of God, our understanding of God, our grasp of God is fully and absolutely revealed for us in Jesus. In Jesus we can learn of God’s love and grace. In Jesus we can grasp God’s majesty and power, his wonder and glory. Think of this, though Jesus came into our world lowly and without anything in his appearance that we should desire him, think of all the miracles He did and the power He displayed. I can tell you that Jesus was in a state of humiliation, that means he had set aside the full use of his heavenly power and glory to be our Savior while on this earth. So here is Jesus doing miracle after miracle and He wasn’t even using his full power and glory. He was using a mere little finger of his power and yet what a glorious thing it was.

Think of how Jesus hung on the cross and in that act showed us the true love of God for our very souls. Jesus went to the cross to save us, actually, to suffer and die there for all the sins of all the world. You don’t grasp the love of God, the love of Jesus, this deep, eternal love in that act? This is how Jesus has revealed and displayed for us the marvel, yes, the wisdom from God that is so essential to our eternal life and salvation. Without Jesus and what he has done, we don’t grasp, don’t see, don’t understand at all the absolute marvel of God’s grace, love and mercy or the mind blowing depth of God working in our world, yes, our life to call, gather and grant us the gift so wonderfully won by Jesus. Jesus is the Word. He is the power and wisdom behind all that we grasp and see as God. He is the one who reveals the depths and wisdom, the marvel and love of God.

Our verse goes on. **“The wisdom of God, namely, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”** Those words sum up for us everything I have said above but in a more specific and pointed way. Jesus has revealed the plan of God, fulfilled the promise of God for our righteousness. That means that by faith in Jesus, we are declared righteous, that is, holy and pure before God and thus eligible to enter heaven and be heirs with God. This righteousness is not what we have done, but what Jesus has done for us. He died to atone for us. He rose again from the dead to declare that forgiveness of sins and eternal life are ours because of his power and might.

The marvel of this righteousness is that it is given to us, proclaimed to us, placed upon us because of God’s love and grace. God tells us that just believing that Jesus suffered, died and rose for your salvation is what grants this awesome gift. Name one other religion, any other religion, where the base teaching is that God has done and accomplished everything for you? You can’t. Christianity is the only faith where this wonder and marvel of righteousness, being declare holy and forgiven by God for the sake of Jesus, because of what Jesus has done is ours. It is the only wisdom like it in the world.

Jesus is our sanctification. Be careful here. Remember this word has two distinct uses in Scripture and I think this is a use that encompasses both meanings. In the first sense sanctification means that we are called out of the unbelieving world to faith in Jesus. In other words, it is referring to the gift of faith, our adoption as children of God, our inheritance found in Jesus because of Jesus. God calls us to faith through the Holy Spirit. We are told the whole work of the Holy Spirit is to lead us to, to proclaim and testify to Jesus and his atoning sacrifice on our behalf. Yes, in Jesus we are sanctified.

The second meaning of this word is that because of Jesus we are lead to hate sin and desire lives pleasing to God. In other words, we are motivated and moved to do things God’s way to the glory and honor of God. It is not something God demands of us, but rather something that God says is just going to happen as you grasp what Jesus has done for you. My simplest illustration has always been to say that God has made you a living and vibrant apple tree. And because of God’s work you will bear apples to the glory of his name. Ask yourself, is that what my fruit is? Are my apples the fruit of faith to the glory of God or is my fruit rotten and filled with evil? Now you grasp why Jesus told us: **“By their fruit you will know them.”** He was telling us how we could discern the believing from the unbelieving. Believers are filled with the light of Jesus and that especially includes the issue of repentance and hating of evil in our lives. Yep, Jesus reveals and seals us in sanctification.

And then our text spoke to us of “redemption.” Again a wonderful word. To redeem means to “buy back.” Satan had stolen our very souls and God in Jesus has bought us back. He paid the ransom price, the redemption price for our eternal soul’s sake. Can you know that, can you grasp the hell Jesus endured just for you and not care? So many in the world do just that. They figure they don’t need Jesus and go about ignoring Him and his wonder. I tell you that you have been redeemed. That Jesus has paid for your sins and declared you his brother and sister in His eternal kingdom. You are his! What is there to fear or worry about in Jesus? Yes, Jesus has redeemed.

And then please, just let’s give some thought to that very last verse of our text: **“God did this so that, just as it is written, “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”** Don’t give yourself credit for what the Lord has done. Don’t determine that you are faithful or saved or anything before the Lord because of your wonderful being and wisdom. In truth, we have nothing to brag about, because the gift and wonder of God to us, this righteousness, sanctification and redemption, yes, even the total awesomeness of the life and atoning gift of Jesus has nothing to do with your abilities, strengths or will. It is all of God.

Here is my simple way of telling you this. Imagine that you have been saved from a horrible fire that has broken out where you live. A fireman came in, picked you up, carried you out and got you to safety as you basically laid there doing nothing. When finally someone comes along and asks, “So, you were saved from the fire? How? Who? I am going to guess that not a one of you is going to begin spouting off about how you decided to accept the arms of the fireman, how you put yourself into his arms, willed him to walk out and helped him to do what you needed because you prayed that it should be so? Not a one of you would. You would all very humbly and very gratefully declare: “See that fireman over there! He saved my life! Without him I would not be here!” Jesus is even greater than that fireman. Give to Jesus the same thanks, honor, and praise the fireman would deserve…maybe give to Jesus even greater thanks, honor and praise because He did what no other person could do. He saved you from the eternal fires of hell and damnation. **“Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”**

There it is, this wonder of Jesus. What will it be for you? Honor, praise and thanks to Jesus in whatever way, whenever and however you can? Or will you just ignore this total marvel of God because you are greater, wiser and more powerful than Jesus? It is a simple reality to fathom. Believe in Jesus or don’t. Amen.