

4 PROVISIONS IN CHRIST

The first and primary purpose of the wisdom of God in salvation is that Christ be glorified. **No man** will ever have a reason to **boast before God**. Foolish, weak, base humanity can do nothing for himself.

God also has a purpose for those who are saved. He has many provisions in Christ, four of which are mentioned in verse 30. If any will come to God in Christ Jesus, they receive God's **wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption**.

First, believers are given God's wisdom. They not only are saved by God's wisdom through the blood and the cross but are given God's wisdom to replace their own.

Christians can say, without pride or self-boasting, that they have become wise/wiser in Jesus Christ.

God in His wisdom chose the sinful, the weak, and the unwise in order to make them righteous, strong, and wise. That He might be glorified, that it might be clearly seen that the wisdom Christians have is not their own but is by His power and grace.

The wisdom received from God through Christ is both instant and progressive. The first thing a believer learns is knowledge of God's glory. The glory of God signifies His majesty and His greatness. It represents all that God is—all of His attributes, His whole nature, the fullness of His divine being. We come to know personally the creator of the universe and the source of all life and all goodness.

Godly wisdom also has a progressive aspect. Paul prayed for the Ephesian believers to be given "spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him" that is, of Christ (Eph. 1:17). They already had the initial gift of God's wisdom, received when they first believed. But the apostle was concerned that they continue to grow in His wisdom and truth (cf. 2 Pet. 3:18).

Wisdom from God also has a future aspect. In this same prayer Paul asks, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph 1:18). Both "hope" and "inheritance" suggest future fulfillment of wisdom and knowledge.

Second, believers receive God's **righteousness**. They are made right with God and they participate in His righteousness, His rightness. Rightness means to be as something or someone *should* be—right as opposed to wrong, good as opposed to evil, sinless as opposed to sinful. God is totally

righteous because He is totally as He should be. For “to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:5). God “hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5:21). When God looks on a Christian He sees His Son and His Son’s righteousness. When a person trusts in Christ, his unrighteousness is exchanged for Christ’s righteousness, “which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil. 3:9).

Man has never had any righteousness of his own and can never have any righteousness of his own, that is, which originates in him. The only righteousness he can have is that which God gives him through His Son. It is perfect righteousness.

Third, believers receive God’s sanctification. The word sanctification means that in Christ we are set apart, made holy. We are declared righteous in Christ and are made holy in Christ.

As we spiritually mature the frequency of sin decreases. Christians aren’t *sinless* but should *sin less*. The righteousness that is counted to us judicially also becomes ours in actuality—in holiness, in sanctification.

We are given life in the Spirit and we begin to walk in the Spirit (Rom. 8:4-11). We begin to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) as we are being transformed into Christ’s image (2 Cor. 3:18). Our new nature is “created in Christ Jesus unto good works,” for holy/doxological living (Eph. 2:10).

Fourth, believers receive God’s **redemption**. The word *redeem* means to buy back. God by Christ has purchased us from the power of sin. Christ “is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1:14). Peter reminds us that we “were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

1Co 1:31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Although in Christ we have received God’s wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, we have no grounds for pride or boasting, because we did not deserve, earn, or produce any of them. Man’s wisdom can only produce pride, misunderstanding, strife, and division.

As Jeremiah had written hundreds of years before Paul paraphrased him, **“...let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD.”**

More than anything else in the world, God hates human pride.

Proverbs 6:16-17 says "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him" and the first one mentioned is "a proud look"

In Psalm 101:5 David speaks for God and says, " Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer."

Proverbs 16:5, "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD."

Isaiah 2:11, "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day."

This is the root problem in the church at Corinth. Let's take a quick survey of the letters to Corinth to see if this is so, and also to see just what pride is.

Ask these two questions as we go: is pride the root problem at Corinth, and what actually is pride?

1 Cor. 1:29 - "That no flesh should glory in his presence. . ."

1 Cor. 1:31 - "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

1 Cor. 3:7 - "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

1 Cor. 3:21 - "Therefore let no man glory in men."

1 Cor. 4:6 (at the end) - "... that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." (The end of verse 7 -) "Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

1 Cor. 4:18 - "Now some are puffed up/arrogant, as though I would not come to you."

1 Cor. 5:2 - "And ye are puffed up/arrogant!"

1 Cor. 8:1 - "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth/builds up."

1 Cor. 13:4 - "charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not arrogant/puffed up."

2 Cor. 1:9 - "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead"

2 Cor. 3:5 - "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."

2 Cor. 4:7 - "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

It is not hard to see that the root problem in the church at Corinth is pride.

It is not hard to see either what that pride is.

- It is boasting in self and not the Lord.
- It is taking credit ourselves for what God alone can do, does and has done.
- It is relying on self and not God.
- It is feeling sufficiency in our own strength and not in God's.
- It is what I have termed a 'casual reliance' upon God rather than a desperate, beggar's dependency upon Him.
- It is the subtle resistance in our spirit to admit that we are merely earthen vessels while another gets the glory.
- It is the reluctance to admit weaknesses that may accent the power of Christ.

If you have caught on to the essence of 'do [-ing] all to the glory of God', you will know that when God delights in this, he delights in what we experience as the deepest, most satisfying human experience possible.

How? Why? Because:

- we were **made** to boast in God.
- We were made to **give him credit** for all good.
- We were made to **rely on his power**.
- We were made to **magnify his glory** and his all sufficiency in our weakness.

This is the source of all ultimate joy and satisfaction.

Pride diverts our capacity for exultation from the galaxies of God's glory to the gutters of our puny achievements. It is a decorated dead end street.

"God forbid," he wrote the Galatians, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14).