



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

“The Effectual Application of Redemption”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We are being constantly reformed by the word of God. And I don't mean to indicate by that that we are adherence of reformed theology in the historic sense. There are aspects of it that I am, and there are aspects of it that I have questions about, but we should always be subject to the reformation that comes from serious or honest or fervent or diligent study of God's word. That really is our final authority.

Today we're going to begin a short series of messages. The subject that we are going to be looking at for the next few Sundays is “The Method of Grace in our Redemption.” And so it's essentially a doctrinal study and a textual study, although we'll be expounding certain texts specifically of this subject “The Method of Grace in our Redemption.” “Effectual Application” is the subject for today, and we're turning to 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 26 through 31 for the Scripture reading which will give the context of the text that we will be looking at in detail, 1 Corinthians 1:30, one of the great texts of the letter that Paul wrote to the church in Corinth. Verse 26 of chapter 1 of 1 Corinthians, the apostle writes,

“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world

to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. 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.”

Now, there's one point that I'd like to make because the message will bear upon it. It concerns verse 30 where Paul writes, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Now if you were reading this text in the English text as I've just done, you might think that these four nouns, “Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption,” are parallel in force, that is Christ is made unto us wisdom, point 1, righteousness, point 2, sanctification, point 3, and redemption, point 4. Greek however has a way of further definition, and I don't want to become technical, but by the use of a certain series of particles it is evident that Paul intends the three, the second, third, and fourth of the nouns, to be in apposition with the first noun. In other words, the latter three, or the last three nouns define wisdom. So to render it properly we would say in English, this is one alternative, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God has made unto us wisdom, that is, a wisdom that consists of righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. So the wisdom is the wisdom of righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The apostle is interested in the three nouns but they may be called wisdom. We'll expound the text in the light of that.

Let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the privilege that is ours. We thank Thee for the word of God and for the way in which Thou hast given us all that we need to have life and to have a life that pleases Thee. We confess, Lord, our failure. We so

often have turned and followed the words of men, the opinions of men, and the thoughts of men rather than listen intently to the word of God. Forgive us, Father, for our disobedience and sin. Enable us, by Thy grace, to perceive the true nature of reality. Enable us to be submissive to the holy Scripture and submissive to the one of whom they speak, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who has been made for us wisdom. We pray, Lord, that we may be seekers and finders of the true wisdom in him. We thank Thee for his saving work, for the redemption, for the forgiveness of sins, for the way in which Thou hast dealt with the church of Jesus Christ through him, all of these marvelous spiritual blessings. We are so unworthy. We deserve the opposite, but Thou hast in marvelous, overflowing, super abounding grace ministered to you us. We thank Thee and we give Thee praise.

We pray, Lord, for the whole church of Jesus Christ today. We ask that by Thy grace Thou wilt minister the Lord Jesus Christ to them in a rich and full and magnificent way so that the triune God is glorified through the true church of Jesus Christ.

We thank Thee for this country of which we are a part. We pray Thy blessing upon it as well. Bless the ministry of the word in the United States and to the four corners of the earth.

Today, O God, may the Holy Spirit apply the truth to many individuals. May the church of Christ be increased in number. Bless the ministry of the word wherever it goes forth.

We pray for the ill, for the sick, for those who are troubled, for those who are weak, and for those who have trials and difficulties and problems. We commit them all to Thee. And we especially mention those who are of special concern to us. And now bless, as we listen to the Scriptures, may this be a memorable day. For Jesus' sake.
Amen.

[Message] The subject in our study this morning is “The Method of Grace in our Redemption - Effectual Application.” To know the Lord Jesus Christ and his infinite immutable love is the highest attainment of wisdom and knowledge in this life. The Lord Jesus is the source of all that is true wisdom. In fact, the Apostle Paul puts it this way, he says that, “In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” We know, for example, he himself said, “This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” So, it’s true to know the Lord Jesus Christ and his infinite immutable love is the highest attainment of knowledge in this life.

This knowledge and its benefits however come only by application, effectual application. Now, one can see the importance of effectual application if you just reflect upon some of the common experiences of life. If, for example, I am wounded in some way, and if it is possible for my wound to be cured or healed by the application of a bandage with medicine upon it, it’s clear that the bandage, though properly prepared, is of no use to me if it’s not applied. If, for example, I am an individual who is cold and, so cold that I am suffering, it’s of no value to me that there is a costly beautiful coat nearby if that coat is not worn. If, for example, I am hungry, and there is a large table laden with all kinds of marvelous and tasty food. It is no value to me if it remains uneaten. When we talk about the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and when we say that to know him and his infinite immutable love is the highest attainment of knowledge in this life, it’s clear that that is of no value to me if Christ and his benefits have not become mine by application, by the effectual application of the Holy Spirit.

John Flavel, one of the Puritans, said, “Adam’s sin hurts none but those that are in him; and Christ’s blood profits none but those that are in him.” Of what value is it to an individual that Jesus Christ has made it possible for men to have life and the benefits of life if what Christ has done is not applied to us? Do you know it is possible for an individual to hear and actually believe marvelous things about Christ? But if they are not applied, they’re of no use to him. How much hangs upon application? I had a man come

into my study this past week, regular attendee at Believers Chapel. He could hardly speak. He was weeping and crying. I tell you, I was shocked. I would never have believed this individual had it within him to do this. But he was. He said, “To think that I have been such a fool for all of these years.” He had never applied the things that he had known. You see it is of no value for us to know marvelous things about Christ if they’re not ours by application.

Now, Paul puts it very aptly in this text that we have before us today. The apostle in this section has been weighing the saving capability of human wisdom, and he doesn't think very much of it. For example, he says in verse 18, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” Verse 21, “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” Verse 23,

“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, (for they looked for a sign) and unto the Greeks foolishness; (for they were enamored of human wisdom, of science, of intellectual attainments) But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

And then the apostle in the 26th verse looking, I would think in his mind, at the church in Corinth says why don't you take a look at yourselves? Take a look at yourselves and see if you can learn from what God has done in Corinth, some things about him. So in the 26th verse he says, “But you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.” In the church at Corinth there were not many mighty. There were not many wise by worldly standards, and there were not many noble. The apostle is trying to lay stress upon the fact that the saving knowledge of God is not found in human reason, such as the Greeks loved and practiced. And it's not found in the religion of the Judaism of his day or the

religion of any group of people in our day. It's found in the crucified Messiah. “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

Now we're not trying to say that Christianity does not appeal to people who have wisdom or that Christianity does not have any intellectual standards or standing, just the opposite. We would say, as Paul will go on to say, that true intellectual attainment is found in Christianity, but not the kind of attainment that the world loves, for the world is blind, as Paul will later say, not to many sentences after the statement we're going to look at. The man who is “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: they are foolishness to him: nor can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” So the fact is the world is disqualified from understanding spiritual things as long as it is the world. The Lord Jesus said in the upper room to the apostles that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit as long as the world is the world. Christianity is not against wisdom. It's for wisdom, the true wisdom, the true reason, the reason of God.

Now in the early church it was not surprising that individuals thought that Christians did not appeal to true wisdom. Celsus one of the pagan enemies of both Christianity and Judaism, has a statement in one of his writings referred to by Origen in a work entitled, *Contra Celsum*, or against Celsus.” Origen cites him, and this is Celsus, a second century opponent of Christianity. It almost sounds as if it comes out of the Kremlin because the same attitude prevails there. The same attitude prevailed in Marx and others that is if you're ignorant, you might follow Christianity. It appeals to the ignorant and to the weak. This is what Celsus said, according to Origen. “Their (that is the Christians) their injunctions are like this: ‘Let no one educated, no one wise, no one sensible draw near. For these abilities are thought by us (us Christians) to be evils. But as for anyone ignorant, anyone stupid, anyone uneducated, anyone childish, let him come boldly.’ By the fact that they themselves admit that these people are worthy of their god,

they show that they want and are only able to convince only the foolish, dishonorable and stupid, and only slaves, women and little children.”

Now the apostle counters that very idea in the next chapter when in effect he says look we have a wisdom. We speak a wisdom, but it's a wisdom among those that are mature, those who understand by Thy grace of God the Holy Spirit. Now the apostle in verse 30 of chapter 1, which is the text we want to look at , in this particular text he will point out the necessity of the application of the true wisdom. Look at it. It's a very important passage. It's one of the important texts of the earlier part of this great epistle. “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

Now what Paul has been saying is essentially this, human values, human values, values determined by human thought and experience. Human values are grounded in sin, and thus they are not God's values. But Paul doesn't just say human values are not God's values. He says that God is against those values, and furthermore that he goes out of his way to refute those values. The apostle will go on to say that God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and he's chosen the base things, the weak things to confound the things that are mighty. And so God is not only a person who does not approve of the things of the world, he's opposed to them, and he constantly fights them. And he fights them with his own wisdom.

In other words, he's not interested in our standards of excellence, whether they're intellectual, whether they are the influences that our society loves so much, whether they are social statuses that we are so occupied with. God's wisdom is a wisdom that is above human wisdom. We are so occupied with the intellectual things of our human life, the social things of our human life and the things that have to do with the influential people of this world that we have forgotten what is true wisdom. So Paul will say look let's look at what we were. Let's look at what we have in Christ, and let's see where the true wisdom really is.

Now, I'm going to try to answer the question, “What were we?” Now if you look at this text at first glance you might think it doesn't tell us what we were. It says, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Now wait a moment. Think about it for a moment. It doesn't tell us positively what we were, but it tells us by negative inference what we were because it says now that Christ has been applied to us we have wisdom. So it's obvious that we didn't have wisdom. Furthermore, as a result of the application of our lives to Jesus Christ, we now are righteous, so it's obvious we weren't righteous. We have sanctification. We were not sanctified. And we have redemption, and so we do not have the hope that redemption represents. Looking at it then more carefully, we can see precisely what we were. We were guilty, as Paul states in other places. We were not justified. We were guilty. We abode under the penalty of sin which is death. Further, we were polluted. We were not sanctified. We were polluted. That's precisely what we are, and Paul will point that out in this very epistle for in the 6th chapter he will say to these Corinthians who are now Christians, he calls them sanctified. But he says look this is what you were. Verse 9 of chapter 6,

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are sanctified, but ye are washed, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

So, what were we? We were senseless. We had no wisdom. We were senseless, and we were at a complete loss concerning the divine remedy for our lost condition. That is human nature, naturally, never forget it.

Now, secondly, the apostle turns to what we have. The positives he now highlights. “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” But notice that it is all related to our position in Christ Jesus. If you want to understand the New Testament and if you want to understand Paul, you must understand that little phrase, “In Christ Jesus.” Isn't it a strange thing to say that a person is in another person?

Now we can think of some analogies, of course. We can think of a man whose father was of a certain type of character, and we can see the father in the son. And so we can say, “I see his father in him.” If you knew my father, you would see some things in me that reflect him, certain values, certain other things that were characteristic of him are characteristic of me. But to be in a person in this full sense, well that's something rather unique. In what way are we “In Christ?” biblically? Well we are “in Christ” like all men were “in Adam” to start with, that's the analogy Paul draws in Romans the 5th chapter. In other words, we stood “in Adam” as our representative head. On Wednesday night a few weeks back I sought to show and I succeeded, as far as I'm concerned, I sought to show that this was the most gracious and loving way by which God could ever deal with humanity, to deal with us by representative individuals.

Now we were “in Adam” as our representative, and when Adam fell, the race fell. You don't have to read the Bible very far to see that you've got to contend with that idea. And if you keep reading it, you'll see I not only have to contend with it, it's the teaching of the word of God. We were “in Adam,” and if you have any doubt about it, the penalty that God said Adam would suffer when he disobeyed is a penalty that is passed upon every one of us. And we all shall die if Christ does not come in our lifetime. You will die every one of you. Those two or three in the audience who are little children, not even in school, you will die. And you gray heads; you will die, more likely before the young, but not necessarily. We all shall die for we all were “in Adam.”

Now when the Scriptures say that by God’s grace we are “in Christ” the meaning is plain. He was our representative, and what he did, he did for those who are reckoned to be in him. In other words, he was the covenantal federal head of the people of God. We are “in him” representatively. We are also “in him” vitally.

Now the Lord Jesus uses the figure of the vine and the branches to set that forth in detail. He said he was the vine and we’re the branches. So this is not simply a theological doctrine, a great thing. All theological doctrines if they’re true to the Scriptures are the fundamental facts of human existence, but the truths that they represent must be applied. You cannot do away with theology. The minute you do you’ve spoken a theological sentence. But it’s important that it be applied. So we are “in Christ” representatively, and as believers we are “in him” vitally. He’s the vine. We’re the branches.

And we’re “in him” consciously when in our experience we’ve been brought to a personal trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. And all saving benefits to us flow out of this relationship “in Christ Jesus” for he has the blessings. And when we’re in him, we’re heirs to the blessings. Notice too, it’s a personal relationship. It’s doctrinal for to define him is to speak doctrine, but it also is doctrine brought to personal experience. In fact it’s something like getting married in the sense that it’s a covenantal relationship. We talk about the marriage covenant. What do we mean by that? Well we talk about two people who give themselves to each other and then they enjoy the benefits of that relationship. In other words, there is the commitment that is personal and then the enjoyment of the benefits. And so likewise in the relationship to Christ, this is a representative relationship. It is a vital relationship. It’s a conscious relationship of faith, and in coming to him, being brought to him by the Holy Spirit, we enter into the kind of relationship with him that is personal. We accept him personally and enjoy the benefits of that relationship. That’s our position.

Now to spell out those benefits Paul just gives a few of them here. He says we have wisdom, divine wisdom. We possess wisdom in Christ. We know truth about human nature, what we are, what Christ has done for us and what we now are by divine intent and purpose and consummation. He just lays stress upon righteousness. We are justified. We have been declared righteous by God. This is a legal relationship as well as a personal relationship. A declaration by God through the doctrine of imputation that we are righteous in Christ, declared righteous. Now, we're still sinners. But our position before God in Christ is that of a person who has been justified. So we have been declared righteous

We possess all kind of original sin and daily sin. It goes all the way back to our distant relative. Thomas Adams, one of the Puritans, used to say, “Inequity can plead antiquity.” I have a friend who has traced the ancestry of him back to Adam. We all can do that. Inequity can plead antiquity. We're all sinners. We go back to Adam for our sin. But by virtue of what Christ has done in the law court of God, for this word righteousness is a word of the court, in the law court of God we have not only been pardoned and we have not only been acquitted, but we have been declared righteous by the grace of God.

William Cunningham used to define justification or righteousness in this way. He would say, “The righteousness of God is that righteousness which his righteousness requires him to require.” Well that's what we have in Christ. That's our position in him, if we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. But it's bound up in him. John Bunyan who wrote the greatest of the allegories said, “My righteousness has been in heaven for seventeen hundred years,” Christ, his representative; as the Puritan's used to say, “That public person to whom the saints of God belong.” Righteousness, sanctification, this is not daily holiness. This is positional holiness. That's evident if you just read Corinthians. Look at the 2nd verse of the 1st chapter, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus,” have been sanctified in Christ Jesus. That's why we're called saints.

Now, of course, the saints are to become more saintly, but once we become a believer in Christ, we're declared righteous, and we are made saints. Think of that. Just look around at your friends. That's a saint in the thought of God. Hard to believe, isn't it? Well if you can believe in a God who can change what seems to be the unchangeable, then you can believe that because that's what he is going to do for the saints of God. He's going to make us saintly. He's working at through the Holy Spirit, constantly accomplishing his wonderful will for us, and just as righteousness cures us of the guilt of sin, so sanctification will cure us ultimately of the dominion of sin. That's a word of the temple for those who went into the temple had to have a ceremonially holy relationship to the Lord God. So when we have been justified, we have been declared righteous before God. Since we have become sanctified, we have the right to approach God and worship him in the temple. Do you take advantage of your opportunity? Do you go into your room, or by your bedside, or in your study, or wherever you might be, or even in your automobile as you're carrying on your business, do you really enter into the temple of God spiritually and commune with him? That's your privilege. That's your responsibility.

And finally he says, “Redemption.” Well redemption in the context since it follows justification and sanctification; he's talking about the ultimate redemption in which the redeeming work is completed by the giving of a new body in resurrection. It's the thing of which he speaks in Romans chapter 8 and verse 23 where the apostle writes these marvelous words, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” And so redemption in this text is accomplished by the glorification to which we look forward, by which we are cured of a corrupt body and of all of the miseries and frailties that belong to it. Now some of you who are young and handsome and beautiful, you may think that you're always going to be that way. But

you're not. Look at me. [Laughter] Take a good look. Take a good look. You see the effects of corruption. I've fought it, but it's overtaking me and overcoming me.

You know it only seems like yesterday when I was a little boy in Birmingham, Alabama before I moved to Charleston, South Carolina, my greatest sport at a certain period in my life was to make a little wooden gun, to which I fitted a rather large rubber band cut out of my father's cardboard shirt, the pieces of cardboard that held the shirt that came from the laundry, to cut them out into little squares, to get my friends and go down in the woods on the side of the hill back of our house and wait for the street car to come by which we shot these little quarters of cardboard at the people in the street car.

[Laughter] And we were pretty good at it. [Laughter] It was not uncommon for the patrolman to stop the street car and chase us up the hill. It didn't hurt; maybe sting a person a little on the cheek, but it irritated him. And while we waited for the street car we would sit down and smoke rabbit tobacco. [Laughter] Now, I don't know whether in Texas you know what rabbit tobacco is, but, and I haven't seen any in sixty years so I'm not sure I would know, but it was a little bush that had something like cotton on it and a little seed on it. And you'd take that off and you'd roll it up in a leaf, and then you would strike it, and you would smoke while you waited for the street car to come and while you were reloading. [Laughter] Now I want you to know that that does not seem to me but as if it were last week. That's how fast time flies. It's well for us to remember that. “In Christ” we have righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. How wonderful.

Now, Paul speaks finally, of how we obtained these benefits. I've passed it by because this is really the most important thing in this text. Look at that first clause, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom.” Christ and his benefits are ours by the work of God, by the application by God of these benefits to the saints of God.

Now he's been talking about the wisdom of this world, the mighty people of this world, and the noble people of this world. “Of him are ye in Christ Jesus.” You know

when Paul wrote this, he put a little emphasis on “Ye.” If you read it in the original text, he goes out of his way to do that. He’s talking about the wise and the mighty and the influential, and he says, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus.” These poor people are generally speaking not in him, but you are in him, and in him you have the true divine, eternal, immutable wisdom. What a blessing it is to be in Christ. “Of him are you in Christ Jesus,” made unto us wisdom. But listen; don’t pass by that first little phrase, “Of him.” Do you think for one moment that it is because of you that you’re in Christ? You’re not wiser than the world. You’re not better than the world. You’re not in Christ by your good works. You’re not in Christ by your religion. You’re not in Christ by your free will. That’s very plain. John makes it so plain when he says in the very 1st chapter of his marvelous gospel, in verse 13, “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, (nor of the will of man) but of God.” So we’re of him brought into this relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. The one who applies these marvelous benefits to us in Christ is the Lord God. “Of him are you,” that is, you people, not wise, not mighty, not influential, “Of him you are in Christ” and possessed of the true wisdom.

The work that distinguishes a man from another man, a woman from another woman, is the work of God, of him. If a person is not in Christ, it’s ultimately traceable to the fact that he has not had the work of Christ applied to him at this moment, not yet. That’s the work that distinguishes men from men, and it yields all the sensible sweetness and refreshing comforts that men have in the Lord Jesus Christ. John Flavel said, “After this work, though a man be the who, yet not the what, he was.” How easy it is to be confused. How easy it is to feel that you’re in and not be.

When that man came to me in my study on Friday and sat down, the first thing he said to me was, “Do I look different?” And I looked at him, and I said, “Don’t you wear glasses?” And he said, “Yes, I just took them off and put them in my pocket.” Well that’s all I saw. Then he went on to say, “I’m a new man. I’ve sat in the chapel for a long

period of time. I've been in other churches. I was so foolish. I cannot believe,” and then he would burst into tears. “I cannot believe that is was so ignorant of the realities of spiritual things. I cannot believe it.” He grew up in a Baptist church, officer in a Baptist church, been in Believers Chapel, it's coming up higher but [unintelligible 42:43] still didn't have the vitality of a true experience of the Lord.

Do you remember the story of Christian in Bunyan's beautiful allegory? How Christian with the burden on his back was pointed toward the wicked gate and the light, and how he was making his way? Do you remember the two people who came along to have some fellowship with him? Obstinate, Mr. Obstinate, he sought in every way to keep Christian from going to that gate. And then there was Mr. Pliable. Bunyan has such understanding of human nature. Mr. Pliable, he was persuaded by Christian, but he had no burden on his back. That's very interesting. You know Mr. Bunyan, good Calvinist, he understood human nature. He didn't have any burden on his back, but everything else sounded as if he was with Christian. He was impressed by him as so many people are by Christians. They'll follow Christians, Pliables. They have no firmness deep down within, but they'll go with them, and particularly if it's the crowd. And so he went but no burden, no sense of his sin, no sense of his guilt, no sense of a need of mercy like Christian with the burden on his back that rolled off when he came to the cross of Jesus Christ. I sense there may be some Pliables in Believers Chapel. There was one. So, it's like a beggar dreaming that he's king and waking up to find that he's a beggar. I'm afraid there are a lot of dreamers in the evangelical church today. They really think that they belong, but they're dreaming. They've never had any sense of despair, any sense of their lostness, any sense of what it means to be under divine judgment and they've never fled to the cross to receive the mercy of God that comes freely from him, and their hearts have not been touched by divine grace, but yet they think that they are there. They think that they are in, Mr. Pliables.

Luther used to say that the sweetness of the Christian faith and Christian theology rested in the pronouns, mine, thine, your, those things that laid stress upon the personal relationship to the Lord. Let me sum up in just a few sentences what I've been trying to say. What a naked, destitute, empty thing a sinner is and the saint too for that matter. I've enjoyed reading a number of the Puritans. I'm amazed at times how these men who lived in the 17th century were so modern.

Listen to Mr. Flavel as he describes the insolence and vanity of a man who doesn't realize that what he has is really from Christ, “What intolerable insolence and vanity would it be for a man that wears the rich and costly robe of Christ's righteousness, in which there is not one thread of his own spinning, but all made by free-grace, and not by free-will, to jet proudly up and down the world in it, as if himself had made it, and he were beholden to none for it?” I love that expression, “To jet up and down in this world,” sounds as if he's in a 747 going back and forth like to many of us do. “O man! Thine excellencies, whatever they are, are borrowed from Christ, they oblige Thee to him, but he can be no more obliged to Thee, who wearest them, than the sun is obliged to him that borrows its light, or the fountain to him that draws its water for his use and benefit.”

What a naked and destitute thing a sinner, without Christ, though wise, noble and mighty, is. How unreasonable to reject Christ and his mercies. What monsters men must be to not receive the Lord Jesus Christ and the benefits that are freely offered to us. Are you in love with death? Is it a sweet thing to perish for eternity? Do you think it's the wise thing to live your life to please yourself and then to discover that this was a time that passed in the light of eternity? Less than that in time, is it wise? How sensible to hold out the hands to Jesus Christ, to flee to him and to beg for his mercy and grace which he offers to sinners and how contented a Christian who has Christ must be if he knows that by God's grace he's in him. May God help you to know that experience. We invite you to come to Christ. Believe in him by God's grace may it be able to be said of you, “But of

him are you in Christ Jesus made unto you wisdom, justification, sanctification and redemption.”

Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are so thankful to Thee. When we look at the texts of holy Scripture and reflect that we are reading eternal truth, the thing that Thou hast intended that we embrace in grace, we are so grateful. Words cannot express, Lord, what we feel to Thee. May we truly love Thee and serve Thee as Thou shouldest be loved and served. And if there are some in this audience who like Pliable have never felt the burden, O God, give them a sense of the burden of sin, and give them also a look at the wicked gate and the light beyond. Through the blood that was shed on Calvary's cross...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]