

In the books of Proverbs, we get a picture of Jesus as a craftsman. Now it's true, at one time in his life, he was a carpenter. But in these verses, we see him doing more advanced work.

You might not expect to find Jesus in the book of Proverbs. Most of the time we meet him in the Gospels. But here he is, “hiding out” in the Old Testament. The chapter begins by talking about wisdom. Wisdom is personified. Wisdom speaks as though it's a person. For example, in verse 12, Wisdom says, “I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence, I possess knowledge and discretion.” But then, in verse 22, as wisdom talks, it starts to sound like Jesus. And by the time the chapter is over, you know for sure that this is Jesus that is talking. And that's not a coincidence. The Bible tells us that wisdom isn't just a concept – it's a person – Christ is wisdom, and wisdom is Christ.

When we picture Jesus Christ, we almost always picture him as the Son of God who started his work after his Christmas birth. But according to the Bible, Jesus was working long before the first Christmas. Look at verse 22: “I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began.” Jesus existed before the world began. Verse 23: “When there were no oceans, I was given birth.” Or verse 24: “Before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth.”

We confess that truth in our Nicene Creed, when we say that we believe in Jesus Christ, who was “begotten of his Father before all worlds.” God the Father and God the Son existed together before they made the world. They were closely united together, before the world was made. Now on one hand we acknowledge the deep mystery here, but on the other hand, do you see how God is described? Before creation, God existed in a relationship. That's not too terribly hard to understand. We get relationships. Well, the God of the Bible tells us He has always lived in a relationship from Father to Son with the Spirit. It is that relationship idea that keeps a discussion about the Trinity from being just an exercise in wordplay. That relationship helps us understand who He is.

For instance, many people picture Jesus as the Savior of all mankind, and that's it. But the Bible tells us here in Proverbs and in other places (like the first chapter of John) that He was also involved in the creation of the world. Verse 27: “I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep...” Verse 30: “I was the craftsman at his side.” Jesus was the craftsman, the skilled worker, crafting the world alongside of God the Father, the two of them, as one God, working closely together. The Father speaking; and Christ, the living water, crafting the lakes and the oceans. The Father speaking, and Christ, the rock of salvation, crafting the hills and mountains. And notice how Jesus felt after he was finished crafting his creation, verse 30: “I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in the whole world, and delighting in mankind.” What an absolutely beautiful picture this is of Father and Son working in relationship with each other, and out of their love creating a world...creating us...delighting in us.

And yet, that delight, that love, would cost God dearly. Wisdom would be put to the test. Because it was not enough for man and woman to be the object of God's delight. They doubted His words. They wanted to know what He knew. They believed a lie. They crossed the boundary. Their decision introduced the sickness of sin and the cold certainty of death into the created world. They rejected the relationship they had been created for. The actions of Adam and Eve have set the standards for sin and death ever since—doubting God's Word. Wanting to be God. Looking for love in all the wrong places. Prioritizing God right out of life. If the Bible is right, and Jesus is wisdom, then it looks like we don't got very much.

And so, after crafting the world, Jesus set about crafting something else – our salvation.

Verse 31 of this passage tells us why Christ was willing to die for us. It's because he "delighted in mankind." That's his inexplicable love the Bible calls grace. In verse 35, Jesus says, "Whoever finds me finds life, and receives favor from the Lord." And that's absolutely true. But it sounds so easy. The fact is, the blueprint that Jesus followed when he crafted our salvation was a very difficult one. He had to stop being the craftsman AT THE FATHER'S SIDE. He had to leave His Father's side and go to the cross. There on the cross, Jesus was separated from his Heavenly Father. Jesus even expressed that when he said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me." This was the real pain of the crucifixion—not the nails, not the struggle to breathe, but breaking of relationship. Father and Son had created together; they had delighted in mankind. But Jesus crafted our salvation by allowing himself to be torn away from his Father's side, dying as a sacrifice for sins. For our sins.

On that Friday the church calls Good, Christ stormed the hill of Calvary. He was a man, but he was also God from eternity, and there on that hill he crafted our salvation by sacrificing his life.

Then, the Father raised his Son from the dead on Easter morning, and forty days later, Jesus ascended into heaven, and what happened there? Do you see it? He took his place at his Father's side again, the Architect and the Craftsman reunited. Today the Father and the Son share the Holy Spirit with you, who works in you, once again like a craftsman. What is it that the Holy Spirit crafts inside of you? It's your faith. And what does faith do? It brings you into relationship with the God who is a relationship, so that you can know what it means to be perfectly, completely, sacrificially loved.