**Sermon Title: The Fixation of the Church in a Christ-less Culture**

**Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to a fixation on Jesus Christ and Him crucified in a Christ-less culture.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 5 fixations of the church in a Christ-less culture.**

**Introduction:** “Why is preaching necessary? Is preaching necessary? The preaching of the gospel is the main way that God has chosen to convert sinners and help Christians grow in their faith, through discipleship. Preaching is absolutely necessary because it is God’s chosen method for nourishing, strengthening, and protecting the church.” The fracturing of the church at Corinth, as well as today, was a result of human wisdom and human philosophy. The solution for today is a repentance and return to the preaching of God’s wisdom in God’s power, Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

[**The Reformation Study Bible Student Edition, ESV. P. 2031**]

**I. The importance of divine delivery. V.1a**

**II. The importance of divine declaration. V.1b**

**III. The importance of divine determination. V.2**

**IV. The importance of divine dependence. V.3**

**V. The importance of divine demonstration. Vv.4-5**

**I. The importance of divine delivery. V.1a**

 The preacher is not to come with lofty speech and human wisdom. That which was influenced by Greek culture, some may have been critical of Paul for not using the rhetorical or speaking techniques of his contemporaries.

 **2 Corinthians 11:5-6** For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. **6** Even though *I am* untrained in speech, yet *I am* not in knowledge. But we have been thoroughly manifestedamong you in all things.

 (Extent) **Colossians 1:24-29**

 (Perverted) **Galatians 1:6-9**

 (Counted as foolishness) **1 Corinthians 1:18-21**

**II. The importance of divine declaration. V.1b**

 Paul did not come as a philosopher, psychologist, sociologist, or a social justice advocate, but as a witness. The word testimony (marturion) means just that – to be or give a testimony or a witness. A witness in a courtroom or an incident is to report only what they know objectively, factually, and personally. Believers are to be a witness of God’s revelation, not to his own human understanding or reason.

 People should not come to church to hear a pastor’s opinions about politics, psychology, economics, or even religion. We should come to hear the Word of God, through the preacher.

 “Most people are not looking for a Word from God to obey, but a word from man to consider.”

 [**John MacArthur Commentary 1 Corinthians, p.55**]

 **Galatians 6:14** But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whomthe world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

**III. The importance of divine determination. V.2**

 Though Paul expounded the whole counsel of God to the church (**Acts 20:27**), and taught the Corinthians the Word of God (**Acts 18:11**), the fixation of his preaching and teaching to believers and unbelievers alike was Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

 **Acts 20:27** "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

 **Acts 18:11** And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

 Who paid the penalty of sin on the cross.

 **Acts 20:20** "how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,

 **2 Corinthians 4:2** But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

 **2 Timothy 4:1-2** I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead atHis appearing and His kingdom: **2** Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

 Until someone understands and believes the gospel, there is nothing more to say to them. “The proclaiming of Christ in the early church was so dominate, that early believers were accused of worshipping a dead man.” [**John MacArthur Study Bible, NKJV, p.1731**]

**IV. The importance of divine dependence. V.3**

Some saw Paul’s preaching, speaking as falling short of the standards of Greek rhetoric, form, and fashion and his personal appearance as unattractive.

 **2 Corinthians 10:10** "For *his* letters," they say, "*are* weighty and powerful, but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible."

 **Galatians 4:12-15** Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I *became* like you. You have not injured me at all. **13** You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. **14** And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus. **15** Whatthen was the blessing you *enjoyed*? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.

 Self-confidence, if it rests on arrogance of one’s own ability, gifts, skills, looks, or sound style, reflects a mindset of independence from God. Paul has learned, as we all must learn, that God can use human weakness to show forth His power, wisdom, and glory. (**2 Corinthians 12:7-10**)

**V. The importance of divine demonstration. Vv.4-5**

 A. The **negative** demonstration that is human. V.4a

 B. The **positive** demonstration that is divine. V.4b

 C. The **productive** demonstration that is transforming. V.5

 The trust is no longer resting in human wisdom, but on God’s power, achieved only by a fixation on the message that saves and transforms a sinner into a saint!

**Conclusion:** “Charles Spurgeon said: ‘The power that is in the Gospel does not lie in the eloquence of the preacher, otherwise men would be the converters of souls, nor does it lie in the preacher’s learning otherwise it would consist in the wisdom of men. We might preach until our tongues rotted, till we would exhaust our lungs and die, but never a soul would be converted unless the Holy Spirit be with the Word of God to give it the power to convert the soul.’” [**The John MacArthur Commentary 1 Corinthians, p. 57.**]