**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ in the Church, Part 3**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 1:28-29**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to a prioritized commitment to ministry in and out of the church.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 4 aspects of ministry that God empowers.**

**Introduction:**

**I. The strategic aspect of ministry through the church. V.28a**

**II. The stability aspect of ministry through the church. V.28b**

**III. The strenuous aspect of ministry through the church. V.29a**

**IV. The strength aspect of ministry through the church. V.29b**

**I. The strategic aspect of ministry through the church. V.28a**

 A. The strategic subject is **Christ**.

 Paul now proclaims and preaches this Christ who now dwells in Gentile believers and Jewish believers. Believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Christ) the hope of glory. They are thus “in Christ.” (**2 Corinthians 4:1-7**)

 **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

 **Ephesians 1:4** just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

 **Colossians 3:3** For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

 Kantangello (proclaim) means to publicly disclose a truth.

 B. The 1st strategic style is **warning**.

 (Nouthetountes) “Admonishing” “Counseling”

 This speaks of encouraging counsel in view of sin and coming punishment.

 **Acts 20:31** "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

 **2 Thessalonians 3:14-15** And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. **15** Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

 **Romans 15:14** Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

 If there is sin in the life of believers, other believers have a responsibility to admonish.

 C. The 2nd strategic style is **teaching**.

 (Didaskontes) “instruction” Teaching refers to imparting positive truth.

 D. The 3rd strategic style is **wisdom**.

 1. Warning and teaching must be done with wisdom.

 Wisdom refers to practical discernment – Understanding the biblical principles for holy conduct, the end product of biblical wisdom is holy conduct by the wise.

 2. The context of general doctrinal truth is the Word of God.

 3. Doctrinal teaching was and is always to be followed by practical admonition.

 This is the pattern for all ministry and all Christians.

**II. The stability aspect of ministry through the church. V.28b**

 A. The **goal** of this stability.

 (teleion) “mature”

 **James 1:4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

 Paul was concerned that these would not remain spiritual babies or infants (**1 Corinthians 3:1-2**) but should focus on becoming spiritually mature.

 **Hebrews 5:11-14** of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. **12** For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. **13** For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. **14** But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

 Their complete sanctification is the goal.

 **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

 B. The **guardian** of this stability.

 Paul preached the fullness of Jesus Christ, by preaching the fullness of the gospel about Christ and its outworking. (**Ephesians 4:10-16; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Hebrews 4:1-7**)

 **John 10:10** "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

 **Acts 1:8** "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

 **Christ is sufficient is Paul’s point!!!**

**III. The strenuous aspect of ministry through the church. V.29a**

 A. The strenuous labor produces **sweat**.

 (Kapio) or wearisome toil

 **1 Corinthians 15:10** But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was* with me.

 **1 Corinthians 15:58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

 **Galatians 4:11** I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

 **1 Thessalonians 1:3** remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

 B. The strenuous labor produces struggle.

 (agonizomenos) struggle or agonizing like an athlete in the Olympics arena.

 (**Colossians 2:1; 4:2**)

 **1 Corinthians 9:25** And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*.

 **1 Timothy 6:12** Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

**IV. The strength aspect of ministry through the church. V.29b**

 This is the power or energy for the labor and struggle of wisdom, teaching, warning in reference of the goal of maturity, with subject being Christ. This strength comes from God working in and through the called children of God, who serve in and out from the church.

 (**2 Corinthians 3:1-5; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5**)

 **Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.