

Schlax, Silas
Speech and Debate: 1:30pm
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December 12, 2024

The Importance of Human Flourishing Through Christ's Foundation

Men and women of our postmodern culture, I see that self-identity—individualism—and personal flourishing are important to you. You say that human flourishing can not happen on a cultural, or global level, but rather something on an individual and very personal level. But I propose that humanity can only flourish through the love of God together, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Without the continual care and love for us by God, humanity cannot flourish, progress forward, or achieve any meaning. The culture has removed Christ from the picture, it has stripped religion from all aspects of life, leaving an empty void, that cannot be filled. Not even the devil can fill this void, or remove man's longing for a higher purpose, or calling. The culture says that human flourishing cannot work on a large scale, but that everyone should strive for personal flourishing, and deconstruct established hierarchies, replacing it with their own to achieve some sort of fulfillment. But the Bible teaches that anyone who is in Christ has been born again, a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), but those who reject him will have the full wrath of God against him (John 3:36). Therefore, I propose that true human flourishing can only be achieved when individuals and societies build their lives upon the foundation of Christ, whose love and truth provide the purpose, community, and stability that no other worldview can offer.

Before there can be human flourishing, there must first be a foundation, culture says that foundation is science, and reason. But the Bible teaches that it is Christ: “For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11). Christ is the

cornerstone, the foundation, the one to save us all. Humanity, in their fallen nature, needs a goal to flourish well. Christ gave us that goal when he came and became man, so that we could become like him. Man needs a goal, the culture says this is individualism, the individual each has their own goal, their own plans, their own purpose. But for Christians, that is participating in worship, communion, and community with God both together and by ourselves. Humans are to participate in the communion with God, as man was created in his image so that they could worship him. While Christians are in this Divine communion or friendship with God, they are also in community with each other, humans are beings of community and do better together. Take, for example, the tower of Babel. Man, all, had one goal: to build a tower to reach the heavens. If God had not intervened, there was no telling what man could have accomplished. Man works better together, and Christ gives the world a foundation to regain this lost attitude towards one another, a foundation to rebuild upon.

Culture says that personal flourishing is key, if this is true, why would anyone help another if it did not help them? If everyone has this mindset, we all might end up like Scrooge from *The Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. But thankfully we have a solution, and together with the help of Christ, we can achieve this goal of human flourishing, to a degree that fallen man can. As it says in John 14:6 “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” Without Christ and the Incarnation, there is nothing, he is the way, the truth, the life, and the Word. Over the years there has been a degrading of culture, and some started to realize that Christianity provides things that no other religion, or humanism, or way of life can. It provides Christ, the Incarnation, a transcendent God. Christianity provides substantial material and writings to build a better culture on a firm foundation that no other religion does.

Without a firm foundation, the culture is like the man who builds his house on the sand. It is fragile and the smallest of trials will destroy it. A good culture must be built on the rock of the firm foundation of Christ, or it will fail and leave those within in chaos and disarray. Christianity provides the foundation upon which humanity can flourish in the presence of God, till the new creation, where all the worries of this Earth will be washed away. Through the Incarnation, Christ gives a foundation that when used will build a culture and society that will not fail with the largest of trials, or the toughest of times, but will push through to the end.