




## SERMON: How to Build a Strong Local Church!

**Intro:** Only God knows the local Church. His desire is that the Church exist without blemish, spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5:27). Therefore, upon what divine principles is a local Church built?

1. **Upon a Christ Centered Foundation.** *“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ”* (1 Cor. 3:11); anyone else won’t stand. Thus it is needful to preach Christ (Acts 2:22-41; 8:5,12). Christ must be the center piece of every local congregation or it won’t stand. It is simple Him or nothing.
2. **Upon Sound doctrine.** The only way to build a local congregation pleasing to God is, build it upon the “Gospel message.” It must be preached, believed & obeyed. It molds and shapes man into a God fearing, obeying being. Man must not add to, subtract from or change in anyway God’s divine message (2 Jn 9-11; Gal. 1:6-9). A local Church will not stand if it is built upon a perverted message (Mt. 7:21-23; Jn 12:48).
3. **Upon a unity platform.** Jesus prayed for unity (John 20:20-26), Paul pleaded for it (1 Cor. 1:10), and gave the platform for it (Eph. 4:1-6). No local congregation will ever attract the lost of the world in a divided state. Churches that “fuss or fight” will never arouse any interest in the gospel and salvation. If the local Church has a deep conviction of truth, that Church will “have favor with all the people” (Acts 2:47). If Christians are sold on the gospel and the Church of our Lord, then unbelievers will be attracted to it and what is right!
4. **Upon an aggressive & militant spirit.** The Lord’s Church is the spiritual army of God (Eph. 6). It is engaged in a spiritual warfare. It is fighting the Devil and all his cohorts. The Lord’s “great commission” (Mt 28; Mk 16), gives the marching orders to His spiritual soldiers. “Fight, fight, fight for right,” is the command of the captain of our salvation. Wage war on the “enemy of all righteousness” (Acts 13:10). A soul conscious Church is a Church that sees lost souls being led to obey the gospel. There is nothing that builds a local Church up like seeing the lost saved.
5. **Upon a worshipping people.** Each week must begin with the Church coming together on the Lord’s Day to worship God *“in spirit and in truth”* (John 4:23,24). When Christians empty themselves of the cares of this world and join together to lift high the banner of the cross in worship, the purpose of their existence influence the community. They will attest to the fact that God is the one and only true God. Then, and only then, will Jesus become the central focus of existence. You cannot build a local Church without its members being willing to bow before the almighty on the Lord’s Day to worship the King of Kings.

Only God knows the local Church. Therefore, He ordained the principles upon which every local congregation is built. 

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## SERMON: WHY DID THE SAVIOR COME TO EARTH?

**TEXT:** 1 Peter 3:18, *“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.”*

**Intro:** “Why did Jesus Christ suffer and die?” is the most important question of the twenty-first century! How important is it to YOU? The Cross is the central event in the history of time; it is the central even in Christianity! Jesus died so the human race could be redeemed from sin. Thus, three crosses, two destinies, one way!

1. **The Suffering Passion of the Cross:** *“for Christ also suffered once for sins.”* Cf. 1 Pet. 2:21-22. There is no sacrifice or atonement that can please God other than Jesus’ death on the cross. Even our own suffering won’t pay for our sins. The price has already been paid – Jesus Paid it ALL! Cf. Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 6:20; Matt. 20:28. Since sin separates us from God, Christ’s suffering bought us back!
  2. **The Substitutionary Provision of the Cross:** *“the just for the unjust.”* Cf. 1 Pet. 2:24a. Jesus (*“the just”*) took our (*“the unjust”*) place and died our death. Thus, Christ became a substitutionary sacrifice, paying the price for human salvation! Cf. 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:21. “That was supposed to be me,” should fill our minds each time we consider what Christ did at Calvary.
  3. **The Saving Power of the Cross:** *“that He might bring us to God.”* Cf. 1 Pet. 2:24b. Christ restored our dead and broken relationship with God. Paul calls this – Reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19). Paul bragged about nothing less (Gal. 6:14).
- Con:** The word “bring” is amazing. In ancient literature it described “admission to an audience with the Great King.” In scripture it identifies ACCESS (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18). Thus, it is ONLY through Jesus we have access to God (John 14:6). Will you obey Jesus today (Heb. 5:8-9)?

**- Mark N. Posey**

## SERMON: How to take on the World!

**TEXT:** Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:1

1. **“Rejoice”** (11:9): be happy, enjoy life, love each day you’re given! Cf. Phil. 4:4.
2. **“Remove”** (11:10): remove sorrow, remove evil from your life. Cf. 1 John 2:15-17.
3. **“Remember”** (12:1): always remember God. Prov. 3:5-6.

**Con:** While young, serve the Lord gladly!

*Pulpit Preview* is sent for the purpose of sharing sermon ideas & useful illustrations. It is sent via email on a bi-weekly bases. Editor: Mark N. Posey D.D., preaching minister for the Austinville Church of Christ (2833 Danville Rd. SW Decatur, AL 35603) since 1994. Please send all comments to— [pulpitpreview@austinvillecoc.org](mailto:pulpitpreview@austinvillecoc.org) or address above. **Thanks, MNP.**

**SERMON:** God's Judgment!

**TEXT:** James 2:12-13

**Intro:** Judgment is reality - 2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rom. 14:12; 2 Tim. 4:1. God is the Judge and judgment is coming.

1. Judgment will be leveled on WORDS (v.12a).
2. Judgment will be leveled on DEEDS (v.12b).
3. Judgment will be leveled on ATTITUDE (v.13).

**Con:** We will be judged by "the Law of Liberty!"

**SERMON: Truths That Are Fully Known!**

**TEXT:** Luke 1:1

**Intro:** Luke, in the beginning his account of the life of Jesus to the Gentile world, declared there are some things "most surely believed among us" (Luke 1:1), truths that are fully known. Consider...

1. The Inspiration of Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16).
2. The Trinity of the Godhead (Matt. 28:19).
3. The Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:1).
4. The Atoning Death of Christ (Heb. 9:14).
5. Regeneration, Justification & Sanctification (1 Cor. 6:11).
6. Salvation, Present & Eternal (Heb. 5:9).
7. Future punishment of the wicked (Matt. 25:46).

**SERMON:** This will hurt me more than it does you!

**TEXT:** Hebrews 12:7-11

**Intro:** What does the Bible say about disciplining children, especially from the Proverbs?

1. Discipline reflects the character of God—Proverbs 3:11-12.
2. Discipline reminds children of your love—Proverbs 13:24.
3. Discipline realizes the right path they should follow—Proverbs 22:6.
4. Discipline reduces foolishness—Proverbs 22:15.
5. Discipline rescues from judgment—Proverbs 23:13-14.
6. Discipline receives the character of wisdom—Proverbs 29:15.
7. Discipline relieves anxiety—Proverbs 29:17.

**SERMON:** When He comes in Glory By and By!

**TEXT:** Hebrews 9:28

1. Will you LOOK for His coming? 2 Pet. 3:12a.
2. Will you LONG for His coming? 2 Pet. 3:12b.
3. Will you LIVE for His coming? 2 Pet. 3:11.

**SERMON:** Prepare to meet your God!

**TEXT:** Amos 4:12

**Intro:** Amos prophesied to the 10 northern tribes begging them to repent and turn back to God.

1. Prepare to meet your God: CHALLENGE! Cf. 2 Tim. 3:12-4:8.
2. Prepare to meet your God: CALL! Cf. 2 Peter 3:8-14.
3. Prepare to meet your God: COMMAND! 2 Corinthians 5:9-11.

**Con:** Are you ready to meet God in judgment? Prepare today!

**SERMON:** God is SO Good, He's SO Good to Me!

**TEXT:** Amos 4:13

**Intro:** since God is so good, we should heed and obey Him in every area of our life!

1. He is the God of all creation (*He forms mountains, and creates the wind*).
2. He is the God who is sovereign over man (*who declares to man what his thoughts are*).
3. He is the God with all power over nature (*He makes the morning darkness*).
4. He is the God who rules above all (*who treads down the high places on earth*).

**SERMON:** The Fruit of our Labor!

**TEXT:** Philippians 1:22

**Intro:** Paul knew that living for Christ would produce fruit for Christ's cause! Cf. 2 Corinthians 5.

1. **Compulsion of Soul Winning (2 Cor. 5:9).** Paul was compelled to win souls to please God.
2. **Compensation of Soul Winning (2 Cor. 5:10).** Paul looked forward to future reward.
3. **Conviction of Soul Winning (2 Cor. 5:11).** Lost souls would go to Hell. Paul wanted to save all.
4. **Compassion of Soul Winning (2 Cor. 5:14).** Paul was motivated by Christ's marvelous love.
5. **Confidence of Soul Winning (2 Cor. 5:16-17).** Saved souls are New Creatures in the Lord.
6. **Charge of Soul Winning (2 Cor. 5:18).** We have the ministry & message of reconciliation.
7. **Character of Soul Winning (2 Cor. 5:20-21).** God reconciles us with His perfect sacrifice!

**Con:** "Lord, lead me to some soul today!"

**SERMON:** The FRUIT of my labor!

**TEXT:** Philippians 1:22

1. Fruits of Repentance—Matt. 3:8.
2. Fruits of Redemption—Gal. 5:16-21.
3. Fruits of Righteousness—Heb. 12:11.

**SERMON:** The Fruit of my labor!

**TEXT:** Philippians 1:22

1. "Fruit" - The profit of my labor.
2. "My" - The personal nature of my life.
3. "Labor" - The production of my love.

**SERMON:** Abundantly Blessed!

**TEXT:** Romans 6:22. *"But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life."*

1. **Justification:** *but now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God.*
2. **Sanctification:** *you have your fruit to holiness,*
3. **Glorification:** *everlasting life.*

**SERMON:** Have you stolen something from God?

**TEXT:** Malachi 3:8-9

1. We rob God when we fail to serve Him properly.
2. We rob God when we follow the precepts of men and their doctrines.
3. We rob God when we do not support His followers.
4. We rob God when we go through the motions of worship without putting our hearts into it.
5. We rob God when we replace holy things with that which is evil.

**SERMON:** The Precious Death of Jesus!

**TEXT:** 1 Cor. 11:26; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

**Intro:** Jesus' death is the most important event in the history of time. Is the cross central to you?

1. SAVING death (1 Cor. 15:3).
2. SACRIFICIAL death (1 Cor. 5:7).
3. SUPREME death (1 Pet. 1:18-19).
4. SUFFICIENT death (Isa. 53:11).
5. SUFFERING death (1 Pet. 2:22).
6. SUBMISSIVE death (Phil. 2:8).
7. SUBSTITUTIONARY death (1 Pet. 2:24).

**Con:** When sin entered the world (Gen. 3) everything pointed to the cross; since, all points to the redeemer (Heb. 12:2).

**SERMON:** Paul's "I AM" Passages!

**TEXT:** Romans 1:14-16

**Intro:** In these verses we find three interesting declarations from Paul. He teaches the importance of taking Christianity extremely personal. Notice the following:

1. **"I AM DEBTOR"** (v.14). Paul was debtor to the Greeks, barbarians, wise and unwise. Christians are in debt to good Christian parents (Psalms 127:3-5), Christian teachers (Acts 18: 24-28; Romans 15:25-27), pioneer preachers (II Timothy 4:1-5), Christ (II Corinthians 9:15), Church (Ephesians 3:20-21). Even the Macedonians felt an indebtedness to the Jews for having received the Gospel (Rom. 15:27). The word "ought" (GK. *opheilo*) means, "to owe, to be in debt" (Thayer, p.469). Cf. Matt. 6:12; 18:24; Rom. 8:12.
2. **"I AM READY"** (v.15). Paul was ready to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christians must be ready to answer (I Peter 3:15), live (II Peter 1:3-14), die (II Timothy 4:6-8), meet Christ in the judgment (Matthew 24:44; II Cor. 5:10), defend the gospel (Phil. 1:17; Acts 22:1), correct (II Cor. 10:6), receive instructions (Acts 17:11-12) & engage in every good work (Titus 3:1). Amos told God's people, "prepare to meet the Lord, O Israel!" (Amos 4:12).
3. **"I AM NOT ASHAMED"** (v. 16). Paul was not ashamed of the message from God, nor was he ashamed to proclaim it. Christians must not be ashamed of the basics of the gospel (I Corinthians 1:17-21; Ephesians 4:1-6; I Corinthians 15:1-4), to suffer for Christ (I Peter 4:16), that it is the only gospel (Galatians 1:8,9) the wisdom of the gospel (Luke 14:11), the conditions of the gospel (John 8:21-23) or the plan of salvation (Romans 10:17; Mark 16:16; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:9,10; Acts 2:38).

*- Mark N. Posey*