

SERMON: Why I love the Church of Christ!

TEXT: Ephesians 5:22-27

Introduction: The church of Jesus Christ is the greatest institution in the world! It stands heads and shoulders above and beyond any and all institutions on earth.

1. Because of what Christ SAID about the Church (Matthew 16:18).

- **PERSONAL:** I will build My Church. It was not John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets. It was Jesus!
- **PURPOSEFUL:** I will **build** My Church. According to 1 Cor. 3:11, Jesus is the foundation upon which the Church is built.
- **POSSESSIVE:** I will build **My** Church. This statement of Jesus was a clear claim of ownership; the church belongs to Jesus.

2. Because of what Christ DID for the Church (Ephesians 5:25).

- **RANSOMED THE CHURCH** (Matt. 20:28). Cf. 1 Tim. 2:6. *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* defines “ransom” as “a price paid to release a captive or seized property, or the act of procuring release in this manner.”
- **RECONCILED THE CHURCH** (2 Cor. 5:19). Cf. Rom. 5:1. Reconciliation involves change in the relationship between God & man (Rom. 6:18).
- **REDEEMED THE CHURCH** (1 Pet. 1:19). Cf. Eph. 1:7. Everyone stands in need of redemption! Why? Because every person has sinned (Rom. 3:23). Thus, God gave us a Savior (Mt. 1:21; Jn. 1:29; 1 Tim. 1:15).

3. Because of what Christ PROMISED to the Church (Matthew 16:18b).

- *John 14:2-3* – Jesus promises a dwelling place for the obedient.
- *1 Corinthians 15:24* – When the end comes, Jesus will present the kingdom to God, thus, the church will be presented to God.
- *Ephesians 5:27* – The Church will be presented to Christ as a glorious.
- The Lord’s Promises are “*exceeding, great and precious*” (2 Pet. 1:4).

Conclusion: The beauty and magnificence of the church is due to what Christ has done! I love the Church because Christ loves the Church!

- Mark N. Posey

Sentence Sermons:

- A little sin will add to your trouble, subtract from your energy and multiply your difficulties.
- A big fall begins with a little stumble.
- Sin has two great powers: it reigns and it ruins.
- Sin is not a toy, it is a tyrant.
- Little sins add up to big trouble.
- There is no sin so little as not to kindle an eternal fire!
- Freedom isn’t the right to do as you will, but the power to do as you should!

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 or address above. **Thanks, MNP.**



**PULPIT
PREVIEW**

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SERMON: SEVEN DIMENSIONS OF LOVE!

TEXT: John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*”

Introduction: The world is starving for love. Since “*God is love,*” according to 1 John 4:8, I’m convinced the world is actually starving for God! Consider love from seven different dimensions:

1. **Love BACK** – I look back and see the One who died for me! 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, “*For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.*” See Galatians 2:20.
2. **Love UP** – I look up and see the greatest lover of all! Matthew 22:37, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” See 1 John 4:19.
3. **Love OUT** – I look out and see my neighbor! Matthew 22:39, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” See Galatians 6:10.
4. **Love AROUND** – I look around and see my own spiritual family! John 13:35, “*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*” See 1 John 3:17.
5. **Love WITHIN** – I look inside and see the soul God gave me! Matthew 22:39, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” See Matthew 16:26.
6. **Love FORWARD** – I look ahead and see the Lord that wants me! James 1:12, “*Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*” See Titus 2:14.
7. **Love DOWN** – I look at the uplifted Christ on the cross and hear what He says to me! Luke 23:34, “*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.*” See Romans 5:8.

Conclusion: John 3:16 is one of the all-time cherished & well-known scriptures in the Bible. It is frequently called the “golden text” of Scripture. Martin Luther called it the miniature gospel. It has been called the gospel in a nutshell. It has been called a love letter from God written in blood and addressed to all. If ever there was a verse that Satan would love to blot out of the Bible, it would be John 3:16. If ever there was a verse that makes hell tremble, it is John 3:16. If ever there was a verse that has lightened the path to heaven for multitudes, it is John 3:16. Thank God for His great love!

- Mark N. Posey

SERMON: Christ has NOT changed!

TEXT: Hebrews 13:8

1. Christ has NOT changed His Mind – Phil. 2:5.
2. Christ has NOT changed His Love – 2 Cor. 5:14.
3. Christ has NOT changed His Truth – Mark 16:16.
4. Christ has NOT changed His Offer – Matt. 11:28.
5. Christ has NOT changed His Promise – Jn. 14:1-4.
6. Christ has NOT changed His Holiness – 1 Pet. 2:22.

SERMON: The Numbers of HOPE—3:16.

TEXT: John 3:16

1. God's Grace - For God so loved the world.
2. God's Gift - That he gave his only begotten Son.
3. God's Gospel - That whosoever believeth in him.
4. God's Glory - But have everlasting life..

SERMON: The Difference a Dad makes!

TEXT: Ephesians 6:4

1. INFLUENCE of a godly example.
2. IMPACTING of a genuine faith.
3. IMPARTING of Bible truth.

SERMON: I want to be a Slave!

TEXT: Philippians 2:7

Intro: A bondservant of the Most High God is one of the greatest privileges, noblest professions in the world. Many notable men of God have been called the servants of God.

1. Moses (Deut. 34:5; Ps. 105:26; Mal. 4:4).
2. Joshua (Josh. 24:29).
3. David (2 Sam. 3:18; Ps. 78:70).
4. Paul (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1).
5. Peter (2 Pet. 1:1).
6. James (James 1:1).
7. Jude (Jude 1:1).

Conclusion: It has been said, *“When a man becomes a Christian, though materially bound as a slave, he is spiritually freed from bondage to Satan and sin; on the other hand, such a man, though materially set at liberty, is, in the spiritual sense, bound hand and foot to CHRIST.”*

SERMON: The Word of His Grace!

TEXT: Acts 20:32

1. It has the power to bring one to faith.
2. It has the power to build one up in faith.
3. It has the power to bestow one an inheritance.

The Clock of Life

The Clock of Life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just where the hands will stop—
At late or early hour.

To lose one's wealth is sad indeed,
To lose one's health is more.
To lose one's soul is such a loss
As no man can restore.

The present only is our own;
Live, love, toil with a will.
Place no faith in tomorrow
For the clock may then be still.

Author Unknown

SERMON: How Does Satan Operate?

TEXT: Genesis 3:1, “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.”

Intro: Satan wants you to doubt the scriptures, your salvation & your service. He's dangerous & deadly!

1. If Satan can get you out of God's **purpose** by getting you to make **wrong** decisions, he's conquered your **MIND**.
2. If Satan can get you out of God's **place** by getting you to make **worldly** companions, he's conquered your **WILL**.
3. If Satan can get you out of God's **purity** by getting you to make **wicked** contemplations, he's conquered your **SOUL**.

Conclusion: How should we respond? **Answer:** Jam. 4:7, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

SERMON: Sin, Sin, Sin!

TEXT: 1 John 3:4, “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.”

1. Sin will take you further than you ever intended to stray.
2. Sin will leave you so lost, you think you'll never find your way.
3. Sin will keep you longer than you ever intended to stay.
4. Sin will cost you more than you ever dreamed you would pay.

Con: Sin is a little word with only three letters, but the biggest letter is “I.”

SERMON: I Am A Christian!

TEXT: Acts 11:26, *“And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”*

Intro: They had been called disciples (Acts 1:15), saints (Acts 9:13), believers (Acts 5:14), brothers (Acts 6:3), witnesses (Acts 5:32), followers of the Way (Acts 9:2), and Nazarenes (Acts 24:5). Now they would be called Christians.

Clarification: The name Christian means that you completely identify with Christ because you are his disciple. But for many Christians this identification seems to apply only in a Sunday worship service. During the week many Christians appear to have put aside the Christian nametag that they display on Sundays. Some live for the sake of money; others are in the process of destroying their bodies through chemical dependence; and still others use vile and profane language as a part of their daily speech. True Christianity is a commitment, “Why are you a Christian?” is personal and to the point. (Kistemaker, Simon J. 1990. *New Testament Commentary-Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.).

Particulars: Peter describes FUTURE TENSE MOTIVATION to encourage PRESENT TENSE LIVING in 1 Peter 1:3-5.

1. **We have experienced God's mercy—v. 3a.**
2. **We have been born again—v. 3b.**
3. **We have a living hope—v. 3c.**
4. **We have a guaranteed inheritance in heaven—v. 4.**
5. **We are kept by God's power—v. 5.**

Illustration: *I AM A CHRISTIAN - Eusebius, the famous early church historian, described a believer named Sanctus from Lyons, France, who was tortured for Jesus. As they tortured him cruelly, they hoped to get him to say something evil or blasphemous. They asked his name, and he only replied, “I am a Christian.” “What nation do you belong to?” He answered, “I am a Christian.” “What city do you live in?” “I am a Christian.” His questioners began to get angry: “Are you a slave or a free man?” “I am a Christian” was his only reply. No matter what they asked about him, he only answered, “I am a Christian.” This made his torturers all the more determined to break him, but they could not, and he died with the words “I am a Christian” on his lips. (Eusebius, *Church History*).*

→Christians enjoy wonderful and amazing PEACE! Notice 3 keys to lasting Peace:

1. Fret not--because God loves you (1 John 4:16).
2. Faint not--because God holds you (Psalm 139:10).
3. Fear not--because God keeps you (Psalm 121:5).

→Christians also experience protection! Notice the blessings of The Shield of Faith!

SERMON: The Shield of Faith! **TEXT:** Ephesians 6:16

1. It is a shield against evil principles (Matthew 22:29).
2. It is a shield against evil practices (Psalm 119:9).
3. It is a shield against evil people (Psalm 140:1-2).

Conclusion: The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battleground!

→PEACE and PROTECTION are comforting. Christians need comfort, not anxiety. WHY?

Someone has written that an average person's anxiety is focused on...

- 40% - things that will never happen.
- 30% - things about the past that can't be changed.
- 12% - things about criticism by others.
- 10% - about health, which gets worse with stress.
- 8% - about real problems that will be faced.