

SERMON: Why I Love the Lord!

TEXT: Psalm 116:1, "I love the Lord!"

Intro: The greatest command is—"Love the Lord" with everything you have (i.e., with all heart, mind, soul and strength) and we love Him because He first loved us! There are reasons for loving the Lord. Notice...

1. **I love the Lord because He is so good to me (Romans 2:4).** See Psalm 107:1; 31:19; Hosea 3:5. The goodness of God is not only an attribute of God but a foundational truth every Christian should embrace. Thank God for His goodness!
2. **I love the Lord because He never breaks a promise (Psalm 89:34).** The strength of any promise is based upon the ability of the promise maker to fulfil the promise made. Hebrews 10:23, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful." God keeps every promise made!
3. **I love the Lord because He gives to all especially the undeserving (Romans 5:8).** We are not deserving of God's love; we are not worthy to be loved by Him; we are most unlovable. Even so, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." God's love is *agape* love!
4. **I love the Lord because He teaches me how to love and forgive (Ephesians 4:32).** I know how to love and forgive because I've learn how to love and forgive: God is my teacher. As I love and forgive like God, I am fulfilling His will. Illustration: A college student made an appointment with her preacher. She wanted to know God's will for her life. She explained to him that she prayed often to know God's will, but she was not making any progress. After a lengthy conversation, he said, "Would you do God's will if you knew it?" She paused and smiled, then she said, "Well, it depends on what it is." The preacher responded, "That may be the reason you don't know God's will." Cf. James 1:22.
5. **I love the Lord because He wants me even when others may not (John 3:16).** John 3:16 tells us of the love God has for us and the extent of that love—so great that He sacrificed His only begotten Son on our behalf. In the short epistles, John says that Jesus died for the sins of the "whole world" (1 John 2:2). God's grace is universally available to all that will "receive it" (2 Cor. 6:2).

Con: Sin need not be a barrier between God and man, if man will obey Jesus!

SERMON: The Greatest Gift of ALL! TEXT: Romans 6:23

Intro: "The wages of sin is death," is a serious and sobering statement! Minimum wage = \$7.25; however, sin pays much more – DEATH! God's gift is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ.

1. **The Gift of God - James 1:17.** God's giving (Jn. 3:16) demonstrates His love! The gift is unlimited, unspeakable & unchanging!
2. **Is Eternal Life - John 17:3; 20:30-31; Mt. 25:46.** Every soul will inherit life eternal or everlasting punishment.
3. **Through Jesus Christ - Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; 8:35.** The Bible from beginning to end is about JESUS!

Con: "Our Lord," is what a Christian can say!

Pulpit Preview is sent for the purpose of sharing sermon ideas & useful illustrations. It is sent via email each month. 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

December 20, 2016 ● Vol. 8, No. 12



Things I want to give *MYSELF* for Christmas

It was priceless! I was in Walmart recently and saw a little boy secretly lifting a toy over into the shopping cart as his mother was looking the other way. She turned just in time to see it fall in and said, "Derek, what are you doing? You know Christmas is almost here. We can't buy that today." To which he replied, "But mom, I want to get *ME* this for Christmas." I had to laugh and say under my breath, "At-a-boy!" Since then I've thought long about that scene and decided that there are some things I want to give MYSELF for Christmas; not physical, but spiritual. Consider the following:

1. **I want to give myself a GREATER FAITH IN THE PROVISIONS OF GOD.** God provides all our needs (Phil. 4:19). We shouldn't think that the Philippians were wealthy benefactors of Paul who could easily spare the money. As Paul described them in 2 Corinthians 8, it is plain that their giving was sacrificial. This promise meant something to them! The promise is to supply ALL your need; but it is all you NEED (not a promise to go beyond needs). In this, the promise is both broad and yet restricted.
2. **I want to give myself a GREATER HOPE IN THE PROMISES OF GOD.** God is faithful and true in everything that He says and does. You can count on the promises of God in the Bible to be absolutely trustworthy. Christians draw great hope from the words of the well-known song "Standing on the Promises of God." Cf. 2 Pet. 1:4; Heb. 6:12; 10:23. Read Romans 4:19-21. The promises of God don't depend on our abilities, but God's. Abraham was 100, Sarah 90 when Isaac was born. They themselves had ZERO ability to bear children. The key was Abraham's confidence that GOD had power to DO what He had PROMISED.
3. **I want to give myself a GREATER LOVE FOR THE PERSON OF GOD.** The strongest message in the Bible is God's love in redeeming man through Jesus Christ. Everything revolves around God's love. God, who created the universe by His Word, is the source of love, which is love in its truest, purest and perfect form. Thus, we love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). Let us grasp how wide and long and high and deep the love of God is. God's love endures forever (Psalm 118:1). The earth is filled with God's love (Psalm 119:64). His love is even better than life (Psalm 63:3) and surpasses knowledge (Ephesians 3:18). Cf. Romans 8:38-39.

-Mark N. Posey

SERMON: Amazing Blasts of Praise!

TEXT: 2 Peter 3:18, "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever."

1. From Heaven to Earth: *"but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* God's commands are good, strong and true!
2. From Earth to Heaven: *"To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."* Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

SERMON: Do You Listen to The Lord?

TEXT: John 10:27

1. Take heed how you hear – Luke 8:18. We must actively prepare the soil of our heart to receive God's Word!
2. Take heed what you hear – Mark 4:24. We must receive the whole counsel of God in order to mold and shape our heart.
3. Take heed whom you hear – Matthew 17:5. We must listen to true and good teachers of God's Word to have the right kind of influence, example and focus.

Conclusion: Read Hebrews 2:1-3

SERMON: God's Gift is Eternal Life!

TEXT: Romans 6:23

1. Eternal Life—Promise (Tit 1:4): Past.
2. Eternal Life—Possession (1 Jn 5:9): Present.
3. Eternal Life—Prospect (Rom. 6:22): Future.

SERMON: God's Promises! **TEXT:** 2 Peter 1:4

1. Exceedingly (adverb) from megistos. God's promises exceed our imagination, understanding and comprehension.
2. Great (adjective) from megistos. God's promises are great because they come from a Great God.
3. Precious (adjective) from timia. God's promises are precious because they are so valuable.

SERMON: How Bold are you? **TEXT:** Heb 10:19-25

Because of the Blood of Jesus...

1. Let Us draw near (10:22): In faith!
2. Let Us hold fast (10:23): In Hope!
3. Let Us consider 1 another (10:24): In Love!

Conclusion: How is this done? By not forsaking the assembling! So were doing such and they were forfeiting the exhortation to be gained in the assemblies. Thus, let us be BOLD!

SERMON: How to Handle Temptation!

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 10:13

1. Watch & pray (Matt. 26:41).
2. Bear the burdens of others (Gal. 6:1-2).
3. Avoid materialism (1 Tim. 6:9-10).
4. Utilize five perfect attitudes (1 Peter 5:8-9): sobriety, vigilance, resistance, steadfastness & knowledge.
5. Stand strong with scripture (Matt. 4:1-11).
6. Apply the severing principle (Matt. 5:29).
7. Renew your mind (Rom. 12:1-2).

SERMON: Temptation! **TEXT:** James 1:12-17

1. SOURCE of temptation (v.14): It's not God, it's me! We are drawn away of our "own" lust.
2. FORCE of temptation (v.15, 16): Lust conceives, sin is born and death occurs. That's forceful.
3. COURSE of temptation (v.15): drawn away, enticed, lusts, conception, birth, death. That's a process!
4. REMORSE of temptation (v.15b): "brings forth death!" Nothing sadder than spiritual death!
5. RECOURSE of temptation (v.17): The only help in this difficult time is GOD!

SERMON: Overcoming Anger! **TEXT:** Luke 15:29

1. Listen to the pleas of the Father (v.28).
2. Don't feel sorry for yourself! (vs.29-30).
3. Don't allow bitterness to grow (vs.29-30).
4. Remember that God loves you (vs.31).
5. Think of others! (v.32).

SERMON: How to Overcome Materialism!

TEXT: 1 Timothy 6:17-19

Intro: Are you rich? Cf. context – vs. 6-16.

1. Look inward at yourself (v. 17).
2. Look outward at others (v.18).
3. Look forward at the future (v.19).

Conclusion: Read Matthew 19:16-26

SERMON: Sins that Cripple the Church!

TEXT: Matthew 16:18

1. **Absenteeism** (Hebrews 10:25).
2. **Indifference** (Revelation 3:15).
3. **Worldliness** (1 John 2:15).
4. **Unfaithfulness** (Revelation 2:4).
5. **Selfishness** (Philippians 2:4).
6. **Neglect** (Hebrews 2:3).
7. **Compromise** (2 Corinthians 6:17).
8. **Contention** (1 Corinthians 1:10).
9. **Ignorance** (Acts 17:30).
10. **Apathy** (Ephesians 4:19).

- 90% of the friction of daily life is caused by the wrong tone of voice.
- Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame. *Ben Franklin*
- Anger is never without a reason, but seldom with a good one. *Ben Franklin*

Illustration: A "Do it yourself" catalog firm received the following letter from one of its customers: *"I built a birdhouse according to your stupid plans, and not only is it much too big, it keeps blowing out of the tree. Signed, Unhappy."* The firm replied: *"Dear Unhappy, We're sorry about the mix-up. We accidentally sent you a sailboat blueprint. But if you think you are unhappy, you should read the letter from the guy who came in last place in the yacht club regatta."*

NOTE: Are you rich?

- If you have a home to live in, you're rich.
- If you have a car to drive, you're rich.
- If you have food to eat, you're rich.
- If you have extra clothes, you're rich.
- If you've got enough money to go out to eat occasionally, you're rich.

SERMON: Myths about Money!

TEXT: 1 Timothy 6:9-10

1. Myth #1: Having more things equals more happiness.
2. Myth #2: Having more things equals more importance.
3. Myth #3: Having more things equals more security.

Conclusion: The best remedy for greed is generosity.

SERMON: Stewardship! **TEXT:** 1 Cor. 4:2

1. Ownership Principle (Ps. 24:1). This is the fundamental principle of biblical stewardship. God owns everything; we are simply managers or administrators acting on his behalf.
2. Responsibility Principle (Eccl. 12:13). We are responsible to manage God's holdings well & according to his desires & purposes.
3. Accountability Principle (Matt. 25:19). We are all stewards of the resources, abilities & opportunities that God has entrusted to our care, and one day everyone will be called to give an account for how we have managed what the Master has given us.
4. Reward Principle (Matt. 25:21). This verse tells us that faithful stewards who do the master's will with the master's resources can expect to be rewarded incompletely in this life, but fully in the next.

Con: We must be faithful stewards of all God has given us within the opportunities presented to glorify him, serve the common good & further the Kingdom.

SERMON: Looking through the "I's" of Acts 2!
TEXT: Acts 2:1-47

1. Infilling (Acts 2:1-4).
2. Inspiration (Acts 2:5-21).
3. Indictment (Acts 2:22-23).
4. Interpretation (Acts 2:24-36).
5. Inquiry (Acts 2:37).
6. Invitation (Acts 2:38-41).
7. Increase (Acts 2:42-47).

*B.J. Clarke