

# The Local Church 2 - Part 3

by William MacDonald

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faithfulness to the Word of God while loving and learning from other believers.*

**Duration:** 8:15

**Scripture:** John 14:6, Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Timothy 3:16

**Topics:** "Church Unity", "Salvation By Faith"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of the inspiration of the scriptures, the Trinity, the deity of Jesus Christ, His substitutionary work on the cross, burial, resurrection, ascension, salvation by grace through faith, eternal life through Christ, and the need to pray for all believers. It also highlights the unity among believers despite differences in doctrinal matters, the importance of recognizing and utilizing spiritual gifts, and the balance between faithfulness to the Word of God and love for fellow Christians.

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## Transcript

Well, the inspiration of the scriptures. You know, if this book is not the Word of God, and we have nothing, we might as well just eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die. That would be the proper philosophy of life if this book isn't the inspired Word of God.

All believers agree in the inspiration of the scriptures. All believers, true believers, believe in the Trinity, and that, of course, includes the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's absolutely fundamental.

Jesus Christ is God, the second person of the Godhead. All believers accept the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, that he died for our sins, that he died as a sacrifice for us, that he died as a substitute for us. He died the death that we should have died because of our sins.

All believers believe he was buried. He rose again. The resurrection is fundamental.

He ascended back to heaven. All true believers accept the gospel, salvation by grace through faith and apart from works. Fundamental.

You start toying with that, and you don't have the Christian gospel. You start adding to that, you don't have the Christian gospel. True believers accept the gospel, salvation by grace through faith apart from the works of the law.

All believers believe in eternal life through faith in Christ and the eternal condemnation of those who reject Christ. These things are basic. There are many other things that Christians might not agree on, prophetic matters.

We believe Christ is coming again, but sometimes the details we don't always agree on. We can have very strong feelings on it, but the fact remains that others don't agree with us. I can love all Christians, I need all Christians, even if I don't agree with them on some of these other things.

They might not have a leg to stand on in some of these doctrinal matters, but I can learn from their warmth. I can learn from their zeal for the Lord. I can learn from their wonderful music.

I can find good things. I can see Christ in them, and I try to do that. I don't think I've ever met a believer that I couldn't learn something from, and it has to be that way if we're all members of the same body.

And we should pray for all believers. In fact, as Paul says in 1 Timothy 2, we should pray for all men, all people, but we should certainly pray for all believers. That speaks very loudly to me today when I think of how believers in various parts of the world are suffering unto death for their faith.

Sudan, Muslim countries in general, China, and so forth. The persecuted church today, I hope in your fellowship, you're faithfully remembering them. I hope you remember those three New Tribes missionaries who were held captive in Colombia and have been held for over five years now.

Imagine being away from their wives and family for five years, and really their present status is unknown. We should pray for all believers. We should rejoice when Christ is preached by other believers, even if we might not agree with everything they do.

Philippians 1, verses 15 through 18. Paul says here, and this is written from prison, although there isn't the smell of a prison about this letter, it's victory and rejoicing.

He says in verse 15, some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill. The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds, but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached, and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

And we can rejoice when Christ is preached, even if we can't do everything that those people do. I think of a great gospel crusade in which converts are sent back to apostate churches, to Jewish synagogues. Well, I can rejoice that Christ is preached, but I couldn't become a part of that.

It just would conflict with the principles of the Word of God as far as I'm concerned. We have to draw a line. We speak about loving one another, needing one another, that's true, but we have to be true to our own principles as well.

Moody said, I wouldn't put live chicks under a dead hen. When people are saved, he wouldn't put them someplace where they weren't going to be fed the Word of God and grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Savior. I think C.H. Macintosh said it quite well.

He said, the idea is to draw a tight circle around ourselves as far as our faithfulness to the Word of God is concerned, but draw a wide circle as far as love for the Christians are concerned. That's good. Draw a tight circle around yourself as far as faithfulness to the Word of God is concerned.

Don't compromise. Compromise is defeat, but then draw a wide circle of affection and love as far as other believers are concerned. All members of the body of Christ, there are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Not alone that, but all believers are gifted. All believers are gifted. That's why I read that passage in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, especially verses 7 and 14.

If you're here today and you know Christ, he's your Lord and your Savior, you have a gift or gifts. I will not embarrass you by asking you, if you know what your gift is, raise your hand. But I know that not all hands would go up in the meeting.

We should know what our gift is. How can you carry it out if you don't know what it is? It's very important. You say, well, how would I know what my gift is? Well, I think Bill Gothard said, it's that service for the Lord in which you have maximum effectiveness with minimum fatigue.

That's not bad. Maximum effectiveness with minimum fatigue. You engage in various forms of Christian service, and some of them, it's just not your cup of tea.

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