

Acts 2:41-47 Devoted to God

41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

❖ Recap

- What has happened so far...
- The Spirit of the Lord Jesus had come...

❖ Intro

- **This is a picture of the way the early church functioned.**
 - Something to mimic... Some things not commanded
 - But serve as an example of unity and effectiveness
 - The results are magnificent
- **These verses are capped front and back with two very similar verses**
 - 41 and 47
 - 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.
 - 47 And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
 - Daily- wow.... What a model for growth.
 - Oh that we could see the church here in Waldheim growing daily...
- **And I believe we could see that if we tried to mimic the way the early church functioned...**
- **Look at the structure**
 - We have verses 41 and 47 surrounding verses 42-46
 - Verse 42 seems like a summary statement...
 - 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.
 - And then verses 43,44,45, and 46 give us some more detail as to how they lived
- **Today:**
 - These verses are verses of encouragement...
 - Not verses that should make us feel guilty that we are not doing enough...
 - We all want to see God's church in the world grow.
 - And I think we all want to be a part of that growth...
 - What we see here in the book of Acts today is a model for that growth.
 - **So, these verses are words of encouragement**
 - to keep on doing the things that you are doing right
 - And here are some other things to grow in
 - And if you add some of these things, or strengthen what you are already doing
 - You are going to start seeing more growth in God's church
 - And you will get to be a part of that kingdom growth

❖ A Model for Faithfulness

- 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

- **They devoted themselves to 4 things...**
 - Apostles' teachings... Fellowship... Breaking of bread... Prayer
- **And we will look a little more at those in a minute**

❖ Devoted

- **They were devoted...**
 - Let's not forget the role of the Holy Spirit in all of this...
 - Without the helper... the Holy Spirit we would be doing this on our own...
 - And that is never a good idea...
 - **When we walk the Christian walk on our own...**
 - We burn out... we fall... we have no strength outside of ourselves...
 - So we want to give up...
 - **The Spirit helps us with our weaknesses...**
 - **The things they were devoted to**
 - Could have worn them down...
 - Being with these other people all the time...
 - **But they were learning about this Jesus...**
 - ◆ And it was filling them up with life
 - **They were praying to Jesus**
 - ◆ And He was filling them
 - **And I believe the early church understood the importance of encouragement**
 - ◆ And building each other up
 - ◆ Not tearing each other down...
 - ◆ Not to say they didn't call each other out and rebuke...
 - ◆ Because they did this as well
 - **But they were devoted to God...**
 - ◆ And he was feeding them...
- **They were devoted...**
 - Devoted: The word in its original form meant
 - To persist in, to spend much time in, to be loyal to, to continue in, to attach oneself to
 - They were devoted
 - Devoted to Jesus...
 - **Examples:**
 - Ill give an example for the guys and an example for the girls
 - Guys:
 - ◆ Great qb's and head coaches
 - ◆ Brees, Manning, Brady
 - ◆ The eat, breath, sleep and dream football and film study...
 - ◆ They are there early and they leave late... preparing themselves for what is coming...
 - Ladies
 - ◆ Designers...
 - ◆ Clothes or purses or interior designers
 - ◆ These people spend countless hours looking at fabric, and design ideas,
 - ◆ And then they try them out, over and over again...
 - ◆ Until it is just like what they want
 - Other examples:
 - ◆ Great Musicians

◆ Or singers

- **If you want to be great at something... you must devoted yourself to that thing**
 - Is there a greater thing to be devoted to, than God?
 - Being devoted to being a Godly person?

❖ **Devoted to the Apostles Teachings**

- So... in verse 42 first we see they were devoted to the **apostles teachings...**
 - And I think verse expounds even more on this
 - **43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.**
- **The Apostles Teachings**
 - Given to them by Jesus himself... through the Holy Spirit
 - For us today... we simply say the Bible...
- **They had the word of God...**
 - But also look at what happened...
 - The apostles were teaching... and amazing things were happening...
 - And it filled them with awe
 - Awe means fear... a holy reverent fear...
- **The signs and wonders performed by the apostles brought about**
 - A holy fear...
- **We should read the Word of God with reverence and awe...**
- **Be devoted to the Word of God**
 - **2 Tim 2:15 “¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.**
 - **Expound**
 - The apostles teachings
 - About the life, death, resurrection, reigning, and coming of Jesus

❖ **Devoted to Fellowship**

- **44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.**
- So.. here... you may be thinking one thing... but lets look closer...
- Inverse 42 Luke tells us they were devoted to fellowship...
- In verse 44 we see them together with everything in common
 - So lets look closely at the meaning of the word...
- **The word "fellowship" (koinonia)**
 - is built on the root meaning: common, having in common, sharing.
 - I believe this is why Luke writes what he writes in verses 44-45 to explain what he means by their fellowship...
 - Verse 44 speaks of having possessions “in common” and that word “common” (koina) is the same root word as fellowship (koinonia)
- **So this fellowship we see is certainly a “togetherness” but we also see giving and generosity**
- **What did they do:**
 - **1) They had everything in common**
 - they shared their stuff...
 - didn't mean other people were entitled to what other people had...
 - but these people kindly shared all they had with each other
 - because they knew it had been given to them by the same God they served...
 - **Here are Hope Church... I can say without a doubt I have noticed this played out**

- ◆ To great lengths...
- ◆ People here are so generous in sharing what they have...

▪ **2) They sold property and possessions... Gave to anyone who had need...**

- Here we begin looking at money...
- We see them later bringing their gifts to the church, for the church to take care of those in need...
- **Can I be blunt?**
 - ◆ We need to do a better job at our giving of money
 - ◆ We are so inconsistent here...
- **God has given me the responsibility to make sure our church knows His word...**
 - ◆ If I were to ask you... Is lying a sin?
 - ◆ Is being with another person not your spouse a sin?
 - ◆ Is stealing a sin?
 - ◆ Is it ok to shoot or stab someone and kill them?
 - ◆ They answer would be no... right?
 - ◆ If I were to ask you is it ok not to tithe... which means give a full 10% of what you earn to the church... what would you say?
- **I am not worried about myself people...**
 - ◆ You set my salary as a church as you see fit and as you can...
 - ◆ This has nothing to do with me...
- **This has to do with the ability of the church... to meet the needs of our people...**
 - ◆ To meet the growing needs of this community...
 - ◆ Hard to do that when half of the people of the church do not give as they should...

▪ **You must learn to tithe... and then to give offerings...**

- When we do not tithe... we show we do not trust God with His own money...
- We do not trust him to meet our needs...
- Or we do not trust Him when He says we do not need certain things...
- Not tithing is greediness at its core
- And it is stealing from God...
- And that is the bottom line...
- Offerings are another story...
 - ◆ That is going above and beyond the tithe... and we see the early church did this a lot...
 - ◆ **2 Cor 9:6 “⁶The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.**

➤ **What a picture?**

- It really throws a monkey wrench into our American idealism of building our own wealth...
 - What we see here is that people did not see the money they had as theirs...
 - They realized God had gifted them...
 - And if they had more than they needed... they just gave the extra to those around them
- **Interesting to note:**
 - The person He was writing to was a very well to do person
 - And Luke held nothing back in regards to how Christians should be handling their finances

❖ **Devoted to Breaking Bread**

- **They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,**
- This would include the Lord’s Supper, but not only the Lord’s Supper

- This is just good ol fashion meeting and eating...
- It was important to spend time together...
 - They just hung out together as believers...
 - And look at their attitudes...
 - Glad and sincere hearts
- So, they would have the Lord's Supper together
- And they would just eat together

❖ Devoted to Prayer

- **46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.**
- In Homes... and at the temple
- **Prayer:**
 - They prayed together...
 - Prayer moves the hand of God...
 - We are commanded to pray... and to pray consistently and earnestly
 - And let us Pray for the Spirit to fill us daily more and more
 - And to give us the power to walk in His Spirit and not in our own flesh...
 - The scriptures have quite a few things to say about prayer... I will list only a few
- **Matt 6:7 ⁴⁷“And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.**
- **Matt 9:38 ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”**
- **Mark 14:38 ³⁸ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”**
- **Luke 18:1 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.**
- **Eph 6:18-19 ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, ¹⁹ and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,**
- **I Thess 5:17 ... pray without ceasing**
- **1 Tim 2:8 ⁸ I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;**

❖ How often did they do this?

- **46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.**
- **Met Together Every Day**
 - Now... this might could be taken and all kinds of harm done with it...
 - It does not say that every person met every day with other believers for church related things...
 - It is true that daily, the church was gathering in those days...
 - But I want you to know that no where in the Bible have I noticed that we are commanded to
 - Meet daily for church
 - BUT
- **We do see a pattern...**
 - We see consistency
 - We see people that wanted to be together... and grow together...
 - **Hebrews 10:24-25 ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.**

❖ What was their Attitude?

- ... with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God...
- **Glad and Sincere hearts**
 - Glad - Extreme joy
 - Sincere hearts - Humbleness
- **Praising God**
- **How often are we like this?**
 - Or are we grumblers?

❖ Results:

- ... enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
- Enjoyed the Favor of all the people
- The Lord added the their number daily those who were being saved

❖ Why? Or how?

- **Why were they able to have such glad and sincere hearts?**
- **After all the talk about growth...**
 - And how they lived...
 - And how we should live...
 - And the importance of prayer, and fellowship and the word of God, etc...
- **Let's not miss the most important thing...**
 - They did these things because Jesus was their Precious Lord and Savior
- **The one whom they served was worth it...**
 - There was no coercion here
 - No need for guilt trips...
- **Jesus is real and He is Alive and He is God**
- **Jesus is worth it**
 - Creator
 - Sustainer
 - Perfect Spotless lamb
 - Merciful teacher
 - Substitute
 - Sacrifice
 - Life Giver
 - Free Chooser
 - Scape Goat
 - Risen
 - Reigning
 - The list goes on and on...
- Jesus is worth it

❖ Invitation

- Is Jesus worth it to you?