

Acts 2:41-47 Core Values Part 1

⁴¹ Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all that believed were together, and had all things common; ⁴⁵ And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. ⁴⁶ And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷ Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

In our study last week we saw the birth of the early Church!

A)Went from 120 gathering together in an upper room to over 3,000 people in one day – **after one sermon.** –

B)Interesting side note: If you look back in your Bibles – Exodus 32 – the day Moses came down from MT Sinai with the 2 tablets

C)**3,000 Israelites died that day** – their sin of worshipping the golden calf.

1)3,000 died the day the law was given –

D)3,000 saved – Spirit given

“He made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” 2 Corinthians 3:6

So here in Acts 2 we see the Birth of the early Church – 3,000 saved

A)What do you do with 3,000 new born babies ?
IMAGINE triplets - 3,000

B)Overwhelming situation for the apostles! – Talk about being thrown into the job?

1) 120 in the upper room – 3,000 by 120 – 25 pp

C)They were called to be shepherds of God's people

D)One of the last things Jesus said personally to Peter – John 21 **Do you love me ? Feed my sheep and tend to my lambs**

We see the apostles carrying out that mandate here in the passage before us tonight!

A)Acts 2:42 are commonly seen as **four Core Values** that should be a part of a healthy church.

B)I actually see **6 Core Values** in this text – that gives us insight into what the early church was about –

1)What we should be all about!

And they continued steadfastly

A)The Phrase **continued steadfastly** speaks of three main things. {Devotion, commitment, consistency

B)One translation puts it this way “They were continually devoting themselves to....”

1)These were their Core Values

So they were continually devoting themselves to #1 Teaching: V.42 the apostles' doctrine

A)Being in the word of God – was a priority!

B)The word doctrine speaks of teaching and instruction.

C)Notice: V.46 **They gathered daily in the temple as well as in Houses**

1)There was a formal (temple) and an informal (Houses)aspect to it

D)But when they gathered they were gathering together around the word of God! –

There are those today – who don't like the formal side of Church

A)Buildings and gatherings – Pastor is teaching – they often argue that is not what the early church did. – HOUSES

B)It was all about discussions!

C)Those who say that ignore scripture: They met daily in the temple – and also in houses – **Both places the Apostle were teaching**

The meeting in a House movement was born out of necessity!

A)3,000 new converts from all over the region and many of them didn't want to go home.

(Learn and experience more)

B)The believers in Jerusalem opened their homes

1)Jesus was all they wanted to talk about

C)So they met daily to talk about Jesus!

1)And to study God's word!

The study of God's word was a major priority in the early Church.

A)Unfortunately in many places today it is not –

B)Much of the church today is filled with 15-20 sermons

1)Sermonettes for Christianettes

C)Churches give place to so many other things besides God's word – Social /

1)Church in NZ – 15-20 minute pep talk

D)Problem Christians don't grow – they don't know the word

E)Jesus would say to many Christians today what he said to the Pharisees – you are ignorant not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God.

On another occasion, he said, have you not read?

A)See, he's talking to leaders going, you should be Bible teachers by now.

B)Haven't you read that text? Don't you know what the scriptures say? You are in error.

C)Many Christians today – Biblically illiterate they don't know the word. – **get in trouble – swayed..**

1)Influenced by culture – they don't know what God's word says - Shouldn't be the case –

D)Why we give a huge place to studying the scriptures – every facet of ministry

1)Kids – Youth – Adult

Example of the early Church – they were given to studying God's word

A)We see a definite connection between the Word and the Spirit

B)Being filled with the Spirit and being filled with God's Word go together. Ephesians 5:18–20 says:

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C)Colossians 3:16–17 says about the same thing except it begins with a charge to let the Word of God dwell in us RICHLY – abundantly

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:16–17

Where the Spirit reigns, a love for God's Word reigns.

A)Those early believers studied the Scriptures

B)The backbone of a healthy Christian life is God's Word!

Peter says, "Like newborn babies, *crave* pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation"

(1 Peter 2:2).

C)Every 2-3 hrs a nursing baby wants to eat

1)They crave the milk

D)Peter admonishes us to be that way- Crave the milk

E)Love to see Believers – studying – taking notes
AWESOME!!!

#1 CORE VALUE – they were continually devoting themselves to the Word!

The 2nd Core Value of the early church is that they were continually devoting themselves to Fellowship

A)Fellowship is koinonia in the Greek – means to share in common

B)Padre fans – Around their love for the Padres

C)Christians around our love for God!

1 John 1:3 says:

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

We come together around a common love for God and Jesus –

A)There is this bound – People from different background educations – ages – races – incomes

**B)Brought together by Jesus – Love – appreciation
This commonality**

Now it is interesting that almost every time this word fellowship is used in the NT, it denotes some kind of sharing—

A)Either sharing something with someone (for instance, in 2 Corinthians 8:4; 9:13 where it was an offering, collection, or contribution)

B)Or sharing in something someone else is experiencing.

C)Here in Acts the emphasis of the word is on contributing or giving.

1)The foundation of the early Christians' fellowship was giving. Verses 44 and 45 make this clear:

⁴⁴ And all that believed were together, and had all things common; ⁴⁵ And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need.

There were all these displaced pp – so they shared readily with one another

A)This is what we learn from this - Fellowship cost something in the early church,

B)I think the most beautiful illustration of this in the Bible is found in 2 Corinthians 8:4

C)There we see the Macedonian church begging Paul for the privilege of participation (the word is koinonia) in an offering, a contribution.

D)Paul makes note of the fact that these believers weren't rich

1)yet they determined to practice koinonia by giving to others. Why?

E)I think the answer is given in verse 5:

they gave themselves first to the Lord [fellowship with him] and then to us in keeping with God's will.

Fellowship is not just a sentimental feeling of oneness.

A)It is not just chips and guacamole -

B)Fellowship comes through giving. True fellowship costs!

C)So many people never know the joys of Christian fellowship because they have never learned to give themselves away.

So when I gather with other believers or when I come into a setting like this – I come to give – rather than just take.

A)It is the consumer mentality that permeates our culture– that has really hurt and weakened the church today

B)People come – what is in it for me. What am I going to get out of this, who is going to reach out to me

1)They end up disappointed because – Church is seen now as an Experience – you can leave reviews on Yelp – google

C)The experience wasn't good for me – or the experience was great for me

1)Problem with that mentality is – it is all about me!

Something changes when you come into a community of believers realizing – I am here not just to get something- but to give something.

A)I am playing my part in the body of Christ – I want to see how I can contribute

B)That is when we are most like Jesus is when we are giving of ourselves in order to bless and build up others

C)So true koinonia always has an aspect of giving connected to it

D)When the Spirit reigns, God's people not only relate to the Word—

1)they relate to one another in *koinonia* and sharing.

#3 The Core Value of the early Church is they were in constant remembrance of the Cross!

A)⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, **and in breaking of bread,**

B)Now I believe like many other Bible teachers – that the reference to breaking of bread is not a reference to merely eating meals

1)2 reasons

C)First, the reference comes between two spiritually loaded terms in verse 42—“fellowship/“prayers.”

1)And second, in verse 46 the phrases “**broke bread**” and “ate together” are purposely separated.

D)Speaking of two things – not one!

1)So After their principal meal they would take the remaining bread and wine and engage in the elevating remembrance of Christ's death.

E)They “[continually] devoted themselves” to this.

This makes sense because – Jesus taught his disciples that two roles of the Holy Spirit was to Testify of Him – John 15:26

A)And to glorify Him – 16:14 –

B)So in a setting where the Holy Spirit is reigning – the centrality of Jesus is going to be in Focus

C)One of the best ways to do that is to gather around the **Lord's table and remember his death and resurrection**

D)Unity at the Cross – we are all sinners in need of a Savior

1)All broken in need of being fixed

E)We gather to celebrate the Cross!

The 4th Core Value of the early Church was prayer: they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

A)I believe the single greatest mark of our dependency upon **God is going to be seen in our prayer life!**

B)Where the Spirit reigns – Prayer is going to be a priority

1)But that being said – In my experience this is where most believers and churches – struggle the most.

C)As individual believers we struggle because we tend to be too self reliant – so instead of including the Lord every part of our lives

1)In all our decisions and plans – we tend to only run to Him when we are in trouble or need.

D)He is there for that – FOR SURE – **a very present help in time of trouble.**

That mentality – completely misses out on the reality – that – Our walk with Jesus is a relationship

A)Relationships are built on communication –

B)This was a **game changer for me as a Christian** as it relates to my prayer life

1)Compared it to talking to Denise

C)

Our relationship is not a talk talk talk – etc – now it is your turn - No it is a back and forth –

D)Pray without ceasing - throughout the day – conversation

1)Praying and listening – sensitivity to the HS voice

E)When you start to do that your prayer life comes alive – **your relationship grows – deepens**

Now when we talk about Prayer as a church body – why is that a struggle.

A)People show up to eat – show up to study – show up to serve – they show up to Worship gatherings

B)But in most churches including this one the hardest thing to get people to show up for is a prayer meeting

1)We have several – Every Wednesday – ever other Tuesday - Every Sunday @ 7:30

C)Why is it so hard to get people to come and pray?

1)**Awkward** – people worry about how they are going to sound

2) **Personal and intimate** – not sure I want to bear my soul to strangers

3) **Bad experiences** - Rambling – Dominating – Weird – Burger King

4) **Hard to hear** – people mumble

D) I get it – I have wrestled with all of those things

But let me just say this: When I really understand the Core Value of fellowship – that it is about Giving of myself

A) My attitude about congregational prayer changes

B) I realize one of the easiest and best ways to give in the body is through prayer

C) Some of the most special moments in my life came out of times of corporate Prayer – the camp! – 1) Volleyball Court like v.43

And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles

D) We need to grow as a body in prayer – looking at some ways to help that happen – keep you posted

1) I want to encourage you to participate – be a giver

So these first 4 Core Values are the ones that we tend to focus on the most – because of V.42

⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Result: - The Holy Spirit was moving – miracles were happening ⁴³ And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

A) The gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today!

B) The Holy Spirit still speaks through words of Prophecy – message – conversation – last night – leaders meeting

1) Let the spirit breathe on our circumstances

C) **Healings – miracles** – we probably need to do a better job or acknowledging those things when they happen

D) God is moving – **Our hearts cry – MOVE MORE**

DO IT AGAIN - MORE OF YOU AND LESS OF US!

TWO MORE Core Values –

#5 Worship - ⁴⁶ And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷ **Praising God**

A) Because the early church was so focused on the centrality of Christ – because they gathered daily around the Cross

B) Worship was the natural byproduct of that – Worship – Proskenuo – turn and to kiss – affection

C) Heart that are appreciative will be hearts that worship

D) Giving of ourselves to Christ

Worship brings everything into perspective

A) Can come here: My problems in my mind seem so HUGE - I am overwhelmed

B) We start to worship – songs that Magnify – Who God is – how great he is –

1) **Suddenly I see everything in perspective** – My problems get small when seen in light of my big God

C) So the early Church was a worshipping Church – expressive

1) **Jesus is alive – we are free – worship is contagious**

6th Core Value – Evangelism ⁴⁶ And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷ **Praising God** and having favour with all the people. And the **Lord added** to the church daily such as **should be saved**.

A) When you are excited about something – You talk about it

B) They were **sharing with friends and family** –

C) New people coming – and everyday – people were getting saved!

D) Heart for the lost – burden for the lost