

Acts 2:41-47 Core Values Part 2

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 began looking at what we called the Core Values of the Early Church.

A) These were things that they were continually devoting themselves to.

B) We looked at 4 of them found in V.42

⁴² And they continued steadfastly { **Devotion, commitment, consistency in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

C) "They were continually devoting themselves to..."

D) If you visited the early Church – you knew that they were about these things.

- #1 The Word- The Apostles teaching:**
- #2 Fellowship – Sharing in common**
- #3 Communion – Breaking in Bread**
- #4 Prayer – their dependency upon God**

Another thing- I want to mention about this that I touched on a little last week – is this:

A) The Centrality of Jesus – or the idea that Jesus was the central focus of all these things.

B) Take for instance the phrase the apostles doctrine or teaching – what was that?

1) The NT didn't exist yet – so it wasn't that.

C) I don't think it pertains to the OT either – that wasn't their message.

What was their message? - The story of Jesus!

A) It was the gospel – it was the things that Jesus taught them – Sermon on the MT.

B) Now I do believe they started to see how the OT scriptures connected to Jesus.

1) Saw that already – Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost – He ties in the book of Joel

C) The focus of their teaching – Was Jesus

1) Simply Jesus – All about – All for – all to – and all through Jesus!

Also #2 Their Fellowship – their sharing in Common was focused around Jesus!

A) Their common - belief that He was indeed the Messiah –

B) Their common experience of being touched by Jesus!

C) And I noted last week that – Fellowship in the NT almost always had an aspect of giving attached to it

1) So it related to their willingness to give to others and help others in the Name of Jesus

D) To support the work of Jesus – through giving of themselves –

1) They were continually devoting themselves to that

#3 Breaking in Bread- Communion

A) They were continually devoted to remembering the Lord's death – THE CROSS!

B) It was central to their Life – their hope – their fellowship – Their unity

1) Sinners saved by grace!

C) Then #4 They were devoted to prayer!

1) Talking to Jesus – seeking Jesus in prayer was centric to their gatherings

D) It marked their dependency upon him –

1) Carry out their mission!

So we looked at those 4 things in our time together last week.

A) Tonight I want to look at two more things that I see in this passage CORE VALUES

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.

B) #5 Worship – they continued daily in houses and in the temple. – Praising God!
1) Worship was a part of their Core!

C) Notice the emphasis here on gladness and on praise to God.
1) They were a joyously worshipping church.

And They are gathering together for worship every day. But it wasn't drudgery.

A) They were coming together because they had experienced the joy of knowing Jesus Christ.

B) Here were Christians who were excited about their relationship with God.

1) Result: Their services and their lives were characterized by praise to God.

C) When people entered their midst, they knew these people were excited and alive.

1) No sour-faced Christianity here.

Here were people who had come to know the joy of Jesus

A) We have something to be excited about. We serve a Savior who loves us,

B) A God who has forgiven us, and rescued us from Hell- Hell before – now heaven!!!!!!

1) We serve a Lord who provides for our true needs, a Spirit who empowers us.

C) When you think of all He has done for you, how can you not be excited about Him?

Did you know that the etymology of the word enthusiasm traces it back to the Greek entheos,

A) Which is a compound of en (meaning in) and theos (meaning God).

B) So enthusiasm in a biblical sense or its purest form means that we are filled with God.

C) We could say that Enthusiasm is how someone filled with God acts.

1) To be filled with God is to be filled with life, to be filled with love, to be filled with joy,

D) To be filled with hope, to be filled with faith, to be filled with peace, to be filled with power

1) This was true of the early church when they came together.

Now I do believe that part of this was Cultural

A) Jewish worship was a celebration.

B) They would sing, lift their hands, clap their hands, and even dance!

C) This, of course has a great precedent in the Old Testament Scriptures. Here are a few examples

Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy. (Psalm 33:1-3)

Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy. (Psalm 47:1)

Shout with joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious! (Psalm 66:1-2)

My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you—I, whom you have redeemed. (Psalm 71:23)

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. Psalm 95:1-2

Psalm 150

1 Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heaven!

2 Praise him for his mighty works; praise his unequalled greatness!

3 Praise him with **a blast** of the ram's horn; praise him with the lyre and harp!

4 Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with strings and flutes!

5 Praise him with a clash of cymbals;
praise him with loud clanging cymbals.

6 Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord!

There is no way you can read the Psalms without being gripped by the celebratory aspect of worship.

A) God is a God who wants us to praise Him with our whole heart, mind, soul, and emotions.

B) It is strange to me sometimes how much pp change in a church service.

1) In Church they are mellow and serious

C) But you take these same people to a social gathering like an office party, birthday party, 1) or ball game, and they suddenly become excited and enthusiastic,

D) In church, we should be free to be enthusiastic in our praise to God.

1) We certainly should be joyful and happy. There is much to be excited about.

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

A) Hearts that are appreciative will be hearts that worship

B) Worship takes our focus off of the bigness of our problems – seen in light of the bigness of our God!

Now Our text also says that they not only were involved in a joyously celebratory worship,

A) But that they were enjoying the favor of all the people.

B) People were impressed with this early band of joyful, loving, giving, united disciples.

C) There was something contagious about their gatherings

D) Which leads us to our final Core Value –
#6 They were an Evangelistic Church

And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

A) When people are excited about Jesus – another natural byproduct is they are going to want to talk about Him!

B) Like anything else: New Car – a vacation – Your team – you talk about it.

C) I think – talking about Jesus should be the most natural thing that we do.

D) Sharing: I read something awesome in the Bible today – Can I share it with you!

The early Church was excited about Jesus – and the result was people – came to listen.

A) People wondered what was up – what was going on.

B) I think sometimes today – we over complicate evangelism – “Go Witnessing”

C) Jesus said: Holy Spirit be my witnesses!

1) A Witness testifies – bears witness

D) Witnesses – Declare something – Life is found in Jesus! –

1) Hope is found in Jesus – transformation happens through Jesus

E) Meet someone – Ask them – What is your story

1) Maybe they will ask you!!!! – Yours

Worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. ¹⁶ But do this in a gentle and respectful way. 1 Peter 3:15

If Jesus is the Center of our lives – people should be able to tell! –