

## Acts 2:42-47 Devoted to the Word

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

### Question: what comes to your mind? Devoted

A) Priority - committed - Devotion to something - or someone -

B) ALL IN!! -

C) Being intentional about the way that you approach life or approach something

Video: Alex Honnold

### Alex Honnold is Devoted to his love of climbing Huge Rock Mountains

A) You might say - CRAZY!

B) But he is All in and very intentional about living his life in a way that affords him the opportunity to climb rocks

### C) I am 100% devoted to my wife Denise - my relationship with her is aside from my relationship with Jesus -

1) The most important relationship in my life - DENISE DAY!

D) Building our relationship growing in our relationship is a priority

### Today we are going to begin a discussion that will last over the next several weeks - looking at what the early church was DEVOTED TO!

A) Look at that phrase - And they continued steadfastly:

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

B) The NLT, ESV, CSB, - all translate it this way: they Devoted themselves.

C) We see in these verses there were 6 things that they devoted themselves to

- Apostles teaching the Word of God
- Fellowship and community
- Communion - remembering the cross
- Prayer
- Worship
- Telling others about Jesus

### D) Six things that the early church was very intentional about - 6 things that became a priority

1) These six things had a radical impact on them.

E) Note: V.43 43 Then fear came upon every soul - once again NLT, ESV, CSB - they were filled with Awe - They were all awestruck!

43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. **CSB**

### This is what I find to be very interesting:

A) It says everyone was filled awe and THEN it says and **many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.**

B) I think we would expect that to read this way - and **many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.** - Then and everyone was filled with awe

1) But that is not what it says.

C) But the fact that the Holy Spirit inspired LUKE to write it the other way - the sense of awe was mentioned first - signs and wonders is 2<sup>nd</sup>

1) Means - something else was filling them with a sense of Awe

### What was filling them with this sense of Awe?

A) It was connected to what they were devoting themselves to!

**B) Understand the context here: Reminder - these were people that had traveled from all over the middle east to come to Pentecost**

**C) Hear the sound of the wind -**

1) Hear this group of 120 Galileans - hillbillies speaking fluently all of these different languages

**D) Blown away - what does this mean - how can this be ?**

**E) They hear Peter preach the gospel - their hearts were pierced -**

1) 3,000 people respond to the invitation - first Harvest crusade. - They turn to JESUS

**They don't want to go home - Pentecost is over - but Jesus is doing something in their lives -**

**A) They are living communally - sharing meals from house to house - people in Jerusalem opening homes**

**B) But this was radical - in turning to Jesus they were turning their backs on so much:**

1) Turning their backs on their Religion -

**C) In doing so they would lose friends, they would be cut off from family**

1) Many of you know what that is like - lost friends and had family cut you off when you decided to follow Jesus

**D) Many of them would lose their jobs - and be completely ostracized for this decision -**

1) NOT POPULAR to be a Jesus follower

**E) But God was doing something in them and to them - V.44 All things in common. Interesting statement**

**The early church was made up of the following groups of people. Several countries**

**A) Greeks, Romans, Judeans, Galileans**

**B) Mtn. People, Valley people, Hardworking farmers**

**Rich land owners and wine makers**

**C) People who had the most prestigious pedigrees and reputations**

**D) Cretans who had the reputation for being the worst type human beings.**

**That is quite a gathering - All things in common - Really?**

**A) This group of people couldn't have been more different**

**B) Economically different - Some rich Some poor -**

**C) Politically - different - Most of them probably were not fond of Rome**

1) But their ideas on how to solve the problem was different

**They looked different - All of Jewish decent that is why they are in Jerusalem -**

**A) But they have been born in different places - dressed differently - talk differently**

**B) Spoke different languages - they were from different parts of the middle east**

**C) Some were single - some married - men and women of all different ages**

**My point is there was a lot more that they didn't have in common.**

**A) But there was ONE THING that they had in common - that trumped everything that they didn't have in common - JESUS**

**B) THEY WERE DEVOTING THEMSELVES TO HIM - getting to know Him - sharing in their new found affection for him**

1) JESUS brought them together!

**C) We are not sure how long this lasted - but it lasted a long time!**

**Started with this first phrase: They devoted themselves to the Apostles doctrine= teaching.**

**A) They were meeting daily to be taught by the apostles.**

**B) What was the doctrine of the apostles? What were they teaching?**

1) No NT part of the Bible

**C) OT Scriptures and what they said about Jesus - Isa 53 / Psa 22**

1) Hebrews 10:7 **In the Volume of the book it is written of me**

D) All about me - pointing to me - The Word is about Jesus -

1) The Apostles learned this from Jesus

**Jesus was Devoted to the Word.**

A) His temptation: Turn stones into bread - **It is written: Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God**  
Matthew 4:4

B) For 3 1/2 years they followed Jesus - everyday he was teaching them about the Kingdom of God

C) The Gospels contain seventy-six different kingdom sayings of Jesus

1) He taught how kingdom citizens should conduct themselves.

**The apostles were sharing with these brand new followers of Jesus the things they were taught by Jesus**

A) And these new followers of Jesus couldn't get enough - MORE - MORE

**B) Do you remember when you felt that way: Came to Jesus - this was brand new**

1) Couldn't get enough of the Word.

C) I remember in the 1970's and 80's midweek services all over SoCal were packed - **100,000's of people in churches to study the word of God**

**Get this: When I was in Highschool -**

A) There were never games or practices that were scheduled on Wednesdays - church night - Sacred set apart

B) It was inbred into our culture - everyone knew it - Imagine that ?

C) Today nothing is Sacred - Youth sports - control the landscape of our lives

1) Every night - every Sunday - some sport to occupy your time and attention

**Remember: The Parable of the Sower Jesus told - A farmer sowing seed - the seed is the word of God**

A) Falls on different soil - **Hard Path - hard heart - no penetration**

B) Then there is the **stony ground - Shallow heart -**  
1) describes the person who has an emotional reaction to the Word - the gospel

**C) Respond to it immediately - but as soon as there is difficulty or opposition -**

1) they decide this is too hard - not for me

**Then Jesus described the thorny ground -**

A) The word gets in and takes root - but it doesn't bear any fruit - **The seed gets choked out by the thorns**

B) Jesus described the thorny heart as the distracted heart - there is never any fruit -

1) because God's word gets choked out by - cares of this world

C) Distracted by the responsibilities of this life - pursuit of other things

**That is a great description of our generation:**

A) People who know Jesus - not growing in Jesus - distracted by other things

B) Normal things - sports for our kids - our jobs - the responsibilities of this life

1) There are so many things pulling for our devotion.

C) That should surprise us - because the prophet Amos - described the last days in this way: **There would be a famine for the hearing of the Word of God!**

**D) People too distracted to Devote themselves to the Word of God**

**Something interesting about Alex Honnold - that allows him to be devoted to rock climbing - he lives in his Van**

A) Keeps it simple - traveling around from MT to MT to climb

B) Not suggesting we sell everything and all buy travel vans - that is not the point

C)But I wonder if we did a little bit of soul searching 1)what is in our lives that distracting us from seeking Jesus with all of our hearts

D)What is keeping us from Being more devoted to the Word of God?

**So the first thing we want to note about the early church is that they were devoted to the word of God –**

**A)Taking in the Apostles teaching**

B)And Listen A church today that is devoted to the Word is going to make the teaching of God's Word a priority in their gatherings.

C)We want to be that kind of church here at CV - which is why we place a priority on teaching in our gatherings - Adults on down.

**D)Part of our devotion to the Word of God is it is going to have a place of preeminence in our gatherings**

**Which is why 90% of the time we are teaching expositionally - through the world**

A)Chapter by Chapter verse by verse.

B)On Sunday we take books of the Bible - go straight through them -

C)On Wednesday - we have been working our way through the whole Bible

1)Nothing is skipped - nothing is avoided - nothing is left out

**Why do we do that? Why is that so important to us at CV - that we have made it a part of our DNA?**

A)Connected to something Paul said in Acts 20 - **I have been faithful to give you the whole counsel of the word of God. -**

B)You could say that Paul was faithful in presenting doctrine - he didn't have a hobby horse of subjects -

C)See we believe that a church that is committed to give people the whole counsel of the word of God is going to teach **the Bible - Not just from the BIBLE**

**In many churches today - the teachings are more focused on topical sermon series**

A)**Note: I am not saying that is wrong - Quite affective in growing a church numerically –**

**B)You spend the year focusing on hot button topics - peak peoples interest**

C)In many churches that follow a topical teaching formula -

1)there is a series of topics they are going to hit on every year.

**Always be a series on - Improving yourself - better person - better follower of Jesus**

A)There will always be a series on Stewardship -

B)how to manage your finances and give - beginning or end of the year

1)Always be a series on Marriage - or relationships that might include dating to not leave out the single people

C)There will usually be a series on stress and anxiety - people in America are stressed and anxious

1)Popular in the last couple of years to do a series on Politics

D)This one I don't really understand - **Series on Movies** - using movie clips to present Biblical principles - free popcorn

1)Probably a great tool for bringing unchurched people into the church

**E)Most churches that follow the topical series model will circulate through those series in a year - year ½**

**Aside from the movie example: Those are all great series/**

A)we might do one of those in a year - few weeks

B)But we are going to spend 90% of our time working our way through the Bible -

1)best way to help people grow

C)Might not be the best way to grow a big church - but we believe it is the best way **to grow big people in the church.**

**So we are unashamedly committed to teaching verse by verse through the Bible**

A) (I hope you appreciate that.)

B) I Regularly have people tell me - they have learned more about Jesus and the Bible in a year here -

1) than they did in the previous 10 yrs - other church

C) That blesses me - we want to be Devoted the Word as a church

**But listen- hear my heart - it is not just enough that we as a church are devoted to the Word.**

A) Each **ONE OF US** as individuals needs to be DEVOTED TO THE WORD- PSALM 1

**Blessed** is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; {not tied into ungodly influences

2 But **his delight** is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he **meditates** day and night.

B) What does it mean to meditate on the word? - What does that look like?

1) Every seen a cow eat?

**A cow has four compartments in its stomach -**

A) They chew and swallow and the food will pass through these different compartments

B) But some of the food called the cud is coughed up later in the day and rechewed -

C) Slow and methodical - unlike my dog - as quick as possible - scarfs it down

1) Ok what is next - lets play

**A Cow spends 8 hrs a day chewing the cud - slow and methodical**

A) Swallow and bring it up again and again and again

B) That is what meditation looks like - bringing the word up in your heart and mind over and over again.

1) Read it and contemplate it over and over throughout the day.

C) One of the reasons we are always talking about **Journaling** -

1) Writing down our thoughts - to bring it up over and over again

**In my devotions right now reading through LUKE and Proverbs**

A) I use these CSB Scripture Journals - Amazon Read, Reflect, Respond

B) In our youth ministry: SOAP method -

C) SOAP **Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer**

D) Others in our church use Inductive Bible study method

1) Observation, Interpretation, application

E) Audio learning: Bible on audio - listen, reflect, respond

1) Make a recording on your phone - listen to later - way of meditating

**POINT - FIND A METHOD THAT WORDS FOR YOU**

A) Devote yourself to meditating on the word

B) Here is the result according to Psalm 1 IS THAT people who devote themselves to meditating on the word.

They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do. Psalm 1:3 NLT

C) The Lord gave a similar promise to Joshua in Joshua 1:8

**Joshua 1:8** <sup>8</sup> Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. NLT

A) This verse gives us another insight into Meditation - obedience aspect - the responding aspect

B) James said: **Don't just be hearers of the word - but doers** - Put it into practice in our lives

C)Just read and meditate - spiritually constipated  
- Have to exercise the word - by putting it into practice

**Close with this: Parable of the Builders**

A)Two men building by the beach - one man Sand  
- no foundation -

**B)WHEN the storm came** - beat on his house - his life - crumbled

C)No foundation - Jesus said the man who builds his house, his life,

1)his marriage on the sand is the one who hears - doesn't apply - Never has a foundation

**D)Another kind of builder - Rock - strong foundation -**

1)WHEN the storm comes - beats on his house, his life - stands - strong foundation

**That man is the one who builds his house, his life, his marriage on the Rock -**

A)is the one who hears the word and does it - follows it

B)Puts it into practice - Strong- vibrant - fruitful and steady in all seasons

C)Sunshine or storms - the result is the same!

1)Lets be those kind of people - Amen? Pray

**As we remain in this attitude of prayer:**

A)What would happen if all of us said we are going to be people devoted to the word.

B)Form our opinions on the word - **Not a some ideology - not some a political persuasion - not our own opinions of right and wrong**

C)What would happen in our marriages if we stopped responding to our feelings - and said What does the word of God say?

1)Talk and pray through it as couples - **live it**

**What would happen if we tied everything to the Word**

A)What does Jesus think and say about that ? -

B)What would happen if - the Words and heart of Jesus was the basis of our conversations -

**C)Here is what might happen: We would suddenly realize - we have all things in common -**

1)Barriers would collapse -

Walls that divide would come down.

D)I think that would be contagious - others would say - something different about those people

1)And maybe that would be the start of our hearts being filled with AWE!

E)Beginning of a Revival

Distracted - what do you need to lay down?