

Acts 2:42-47 Devoted to Worship

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. - **PRAY**

Here at CV every few months we have what we call a **MAGNIFY night**.

A) A night solely devoted to worshipping God and responding to God in worship!

B) How many of you have been to a magnify night? - Special - THX Eve

C) David declared in Psalm 34:3 **Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together.**

There are two kinds of magnifying: **microscope magnifying and telescope magnifying.**

A) A Microscope makes a small thing look bigger than it is.

B) Where as **a telescope makes a big thing** begin to look as big as it really is.

C) When David invites us to magnify the Lord with him - he does not mean,

1) "I will make a small God look bigger than he is."

D) He means, **"I will make a big God look as big as he really is."**

The Mission and life of the Christian can be summed up in this:

A) Live, act, and respond in such a way, that will make Jesus look as great as he really is.

B) Be a telescope for the world of the infinite wealth and glory of Jesus!

C) Nate Holdridge - **Make Jesus Famous** - That is what the early church was doing in the book of Acts

D) Magnifying to themselves and the world the greatness of Jesus -

1) It was being played out in what they were devoting themselves to!

We have been camped out here in Acts 2:42-47 looking at what the early church was devoted to.

A) **42 And they continued steadfastly** is literally and **they Devoted themselves** to

B) We have noted 6 things that we see in this text - that they devoted themselves to.

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

C) Their devotion to these 6 things is what shaped the early church.

D) Their Devotion to these six things was at the cusp of their Spiritual formation

1) But it is also what made them attractive to those who were around them

You had all these Jewish people in Jerusalem who had grown tired of the religious ritual of Judaism

A) Who had become disillusioned by the hypocrisy that they saw in the religious leaders in Israel

B) Who are suddenly coming in contact with these people who have found life in Jesus

1) Immediately there was a sense - THEY HAVE SOMETHING I don't have and I WANT IT.

C) So the church was growing daily those who were being saved! -

1) Evangelism in one sense was easy/what do you have ?

D) Today we are going to focus on the 5th thing that the early church was devoted to

1) **that was Worshipping Jesus - Praising God**

I want to read v. 46 again - this time in the NLT - on the screen

They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people.

A)They Worshipped each day giving praise to God!

What is Worship?

A)Put simply, worship is declaring the greatness of someone or something.

B)Been said: **Worship is not a religious thing – it is a human thing!**

C)Everyone is a worshipper – **It is not like a person becomes a follower of Jesus and starts to worship**

D)People worship all sorts of things

People worship Athletes, rock stars, - Actors

A)Every yell of devotion, every round of applause - every cry for an on core is a type of worship -

B)Showing appreciation for the greatness of someone or something.

C)But when we talk about the worship of God it is worship in the highest form

1)and the greatest expression

The word used the most in the OT for worship is the word - Shacchah = to bow down -

A)To bow down in order to lift up

B)When I am bowing down before God - I am declaring - **YOU ARE greater than I am!** -

1)I submit to you - I yield to you - **JESUS IS KING**

C)So Worship in its purest form - Declaring the greatness and majesty of King Jesus!

Jewish worship of God was very expressive. Full body experience.

A)They did that through singing, clapping, playing instruments shouting - even dancing -

B)Their worship was loud and exuberant

C)No doubt that carried over into the worship of the early church - **it was a part of who they were.**

So in the rest of our time today- I want us to see what we can learn from the early church from how they worshipped - 4 takeaways.

A)**#1 Their worship was responsive!**

B)Jesus was doing this incredible thing in their midst - and the natural reaction was to praise him for it.

C)C.S. Lewis declared in his Reflections on the Psalms - Enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise.... I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.”

C.S. Lewis *Reflections on the Psalms* (pp. 94-95),

We just celebrated Veterans day: Showing honor to those who have fought for our countries freedom.

A)We give Praise for Heroic action –

B)If a group of **fire fighters** – rush into a burning building and pull out someone

1)If We are there on the scene – they come out we applaud and cheer – not just the outcome but the heroes!

C)So We naturally give praise for worthy acts.

D)It is not predicated upon our mood or what is going on in my our lives good or bad.

1)The Heroic act demands a response – to not respond is to say – it is not worthy of a response –

E)Worship = Worth-ship!

Is there a more Heroic act worthy of Praise than God sending His son – to rescue doomed man

A)Last week we considered how the early church devoted themselves to remembering the cross

B)The response to that is Worship- giving worth-ship to God for our salvation

C)He is worthy of our praise - our worship and our surrender

Their worship was responsive:

A) Responding to their salvation and what God was doing in their midst.

B) Responsive Worship is the language of Heaven:

C) Sometimes here on earth we can question what God is doing - how things are turning out -

1) When elections don't go the way we hoped.

Here is the perspective of those in heaven

The twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

11 "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." Revelation 4:10-11

A) The 24 Elders - top dogs in heaven - fall before Jesus - cast their crowns - here is our importance

B) You are worthy of all Praise - We exist for you - you don't exist for us!

C) That is the heart of worship - Keeping the Big picture in perspective - **JESUS IS KING**

D) JESUS is on the throne: We exist for him - not the other way around!

E) Heaven is constantly responding to the greatness of Jesus!

1) Same group of Elders in Revelation 5

9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood, Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. Revelation 5:9

True worship is Responsive

True worship is contagious - **High School group**

#2 Worship took precedence in their lives and gatherings. Acts 13

Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

² As they ministered **to the Lord** and fasted, the Holy Spirit said.....

A) Note that phrase - they ministered **to the Lord!**

B) There is ministry we do **for the Lord** - they were active in that - church planting preaching - serving

1) Taking care of the poor and needy among them

C) But what took precedence was their ministry **TO the Lord** - that is worship and prayer - drawing near

D) And Note as they were ministering to the Lord - the Holy Spirit spoke

1) Launched a whole new missionary movement - **Send out Barnabas and Paul**

Sometimes in our lives we get so focused and preoccupied with our ministry for the Lord -

A) That we forget about ministering TO him.

B) Mary and Martha - Luke 10 Mary is ministering to the Lord - sitting at his feet - taking in

C) Martha is neglecting her ministry to the Lord in her ministry for the Lord and here is the result.

1) **1st she is agitated at her sister - why am I the only one serving**

D) Her perception of the Lord is all messed up - **"don't you care... alone**

E) You don't really care about me do you?

F) AND Jesus said she was filled with worry and stressed out

Her priorities were out of whack

A) That is what happens when we are not giving a precedence to worship - **to ministering to the Lord**

B) Our leader meetings - follow this pattern of Acts 2, AND Acts 13 - begin with a meal

C) Before we talk about any issues - **We worship - we bring our hearts in surrender to Jesus**

D) Sets up our hearts for the Holy Spirit to speak!

**We align our churchy gatherings the same way:
Why do we start with worship?**

A)Is worship the warm up? -

B)Is the worship time merely the filler - waiting for everyone to get here - to hear the sermon ?

C)We begin with worship because JESUS is worthy of our worship - worthy of it all.

D)Worship gets our heart in the right place to hear from the Holy Spirit

Sometimes we come into this space - our focus is so Horizontal - everything going on in our world

A)Everything going on in our lives personally - LIFE IS HARD

B)We have to get our focus off of the horizontal and on to the vertical perspective in order to see things clearly.

C)To be reminded that God is bigger and God is greater than all the nonsense going on in our world

D)Jesus is on the throne - he is working - he has a plan!

1)Worship helps us do that -

So I want to encourage you church- don't take lightly worship-

A)It needs to take precedence in our lives and church. - Essential

B)Those of you watching online - I want to encourage you if you can be here be here -
1)This - corporate time of worship is essential

C)Most of us can't really do that at home -

D)during the pandemic - tried to worship - sitting in my bed or couch - NOT THE SAME

#1 Their worship was responsive

#2 Worship was a priority - took precedence for years

The 3rd thing I want to make note of about the worship of the early church is that they worshipped even in tough times! Acts 16

A)Paul and Silas are in Philippi and God is working - but there is opposition

B)Then are beaten and thrown into prison -
1)This was Real Persecution - not just name calling.

C)What are they doing? ²⁵ But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.

D)Jailhouse Rock - literally!

Church we need to sing in the hard times!

A)The difficult times - when the darkness around us seems like it is gaining momentum - Sing

B)Remember the children of Israel at the Red Sea?

C)Miraculously delivered from 400 yrs of bondage in Egypt.

D)Head out on their journey - come to the Red Sea - boxed in MTs

E)**Lifted their eyes:** Looked off in the distance - cloud of smoke - the chariots of Egypt -

1)the armies of Pharaoh - barreling down on them

**Remembering what they started doing?
Complaining**

A)Moses you have brought is here to die!!!!

B)They lifted their eyes but not High enough - not lifted to God!

**C)God does the whole Red Sea parting thing:
They crossed over on dry ground -**

1)The army of the Egyptians was consumed!!!!

D)On the other side: The people of Israel broke into praise and worship

E)Wouldn't it have been amazing if they worshipped on the other side of the red sea?
Before it parted!

You are God - you are in control - you are on the throne! We trust you!

A)May that be us!!!! Even now -

B)Does it do any good to get angry - start back biting others - pointing the finger - this is your fault

C)Or we can say: God you are on the throne - you are Sovereign -

1)Our hope is not in a political process it is in you.

D)You are worthy of all praise - You have a plan!

It is easy to worship and rejoice when everything is going our way!

A)No faith in that - takes real faith to worship even in the tough times the hard times

B)That is why- listen - this our 4th and final point today -

Worship has to be a lifestyle - not just an activity. Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. Romans 12:1 CSB

True worship is when we present ourselves to God as a living sacrifice.

A)Here is what that means: We put our dreams, agendas, desires, attitudes on the Altar!

B)We die to all of that in saying to God - I exist for you! You don't exist for me!

C)I want my life to bring you glory!

D)Love that chorus - **You are worthy of it all - you are worthy of it all - from for from you are all things and to you are all things - you deserve...glory**

Laying down my life as a living sacrifice to God - everyday.

A)Lord you be glorified today in and through me -

B)today is about you - **your kingdom come - your will be done heaven**

C)When we start to live that way: Here is one thing that happens naturally -

1)when we come into a space like this - worship pours out of us

D)Because the heart of worship has already been birthed in us - it is who we are

1)We exist for him- We are living a lifestyle of worship

E)So when Come into settings like this: We are Not preoccupied with sound and bands or anything else

1)just excited to worship King Jesus with family

The worship of the early church was flowing out of a lifestyle of worship

A)So they could respond in worship in good times and bad times

B)Worship was a priority - it took precedence in their lives

C)They responded to who God is - and what he was doing in their lives

D)My prayer for us here at CV - our lives would be marked by a lifestyle of worship -

E)When we come into our gatherings - what God is already doing in us - would flow out of us!

AMEN!!!!