

Acts 2:41-47 - Devoted to the Word True North Core Values Series 2018

Intro: Read the passage – Pray

In January 1914, in thick fog off the Virginia coast, the steamship Monroe was rammed by the merchant vessel **Nantucket and eventually sank**. Forty-one sailors lost their lives in the frigid winter waters of the Atlantic.

While it was **Osmyn Berry**, captain of the Nantucket who was arraigned on charges, In the course of the trial Captain **Edward Johnson who captained the Monroe** was grilled on the stand for over five hours.

During cross-examination it was learned, as the New York Times reported, **that Captain Johnson "navigated the Monroe with a steering compass that deviated as much as two degrees from the standard magnetic compass.**

He said the instrument was sufficiently true to run the ship,

But His steering compass had never been adjusted in the one year he was captain of the Monroe."

True north, is a GPS bearing linked to the geographical location of the North Pole

A)North is the point on the compass – truly heading north –

B)When you know what direction North is – then you know what direction is East West and south

C)When your True North is right – everything else falls into place

For the early church they had a set of Core Values that served as their True North.

A)Six core values V.42 that they continued steadfastly

B)Noted – Steadfastly devoted themselves to that helped them stay on track!

C)Six Core Values that revolved around their relationship to Jesus –

They Continually devoted themselves to:

- 1. Apostles doctrine:** Teaching that centered around Jesus
- 2. Fellowship:** Sharing in common their life in Jesus
- 3. Prayer:** A dependency in following Jesus
- 4. Communion:** Remembering the death and Resurrection of Jesus
- 5. Worship:** Being thankful for Jesus
- 6. Evangelism:** telling others about Jesus

When the early church kept devoting themselves to these six core values – they flourished –

A)They turned their world upside down

B)When they lost sight of that focus and devotion they floundered

1)Lost their impact

C)**Lesson for us?** – These six core values can serve and should serve as the true North of this church

1)And our lives

D)When they do Our lives will make sense

1)Lives going in the right direction

E)Our Church – Stay on Point – make the impact in our world and community that God desires.

For that reason we are pausing to take a look at each one of these Core Values individually

A)Application for our lives and Church

B)So the question I want to answer today is why the early church was Devoted to the Word?

C) 4-5 Reasons: -

#1 God's word is essential to their foundation

A)They heard Jesus preach - The Parable of the builders: Matthew 7:24-27

B)Story of two Builders- Wise and Foolish

1)Sand and Solid? When Storms.....

C)Difference: The wise builder hears the word and puts it into practice

D)The Foolish hears it but doesn't do it!

The House that stands – the church that stands – the life that stands – hears God's word applies it

A) James writing later in his epistle would echo that teaching – Doers of the Word ... hearers only

B) So they were devoted to the word because Jesus had told them it was essential to their foundation

C) Why were they so Devoted to the Word?
#2 God's Word revives and strengthens

In John Chapter – they heard Jesus say – The words that I speak to you are Spirit and life! John 6:63

A) His word brings life to the soul –

B) Peter – reiterate: Where go in you are the words of eternal life

C) David – Psalm 119 – Psalm that highlights the effect of God's word upon a life

My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word. Psalms 119:25

I am afflicted very much; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your word. Psalm 119:107

Have you ever been so down – so distraught – Nothing helps – comfort food – nope

A) Binge on Netflix favorite show – nope – laugh

B) Call a friend – Nope –

1) Scroll Instagram – looking at everyone's perfect lives – best selves right? - DEFINITELY NOT

C) You Finally pick up the Bible – God's word revives your soul – brings back to life

1) Brings everything into proper perspective

My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word. Psalm 119:28

A) Had times where the trial or pressure – soul Melts

Sucked the life out of me.

B) God's word – strengthened me – Vitality back –

This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life. Psalm 119:50

C) The Disciples had experienced that same thing in sitting at the feet of Jesus –

1) His word – brought life to their souls

Why were they so Devoted to the Word?

#3 God's word brings transformation:

I was reminded of a story this week of a missionary who was crossing into a communist country back in the 70's.

A) At the border, the guards asked, "Do you have any guns, drugs, or Bibles?"

B) Think about that question – Guns kill people

1) Ok I get that

C) Drugs destroy people - addictions

D) Bibles: Why Bibles? The Bible challenges the false ideologies of a government and culture

1) It has the power to transform a culture and re-shape a whole generation.

That is why it is so important for us to get our cues and direction from God's word and not culture

A) Lot's of Christians today are getting their direction from culture – problem

B) Both sides: Some who are looking at what the culture has to say about Homosexuality

1) The whole transgender question – Culture says we need to be more loving accepting – everyone everything

C) We need to accept everyone and offend no one

D) That is one side – and everything gets convoluted and misses the Holiness of God

But on the other side of the coins you have other Christians that get their cues from Culture

A) Another side of the spectrum – and they come across judgmental and hateful

B) Completely miss the HEART OF GOD!

C) We have to look at those things through the entire lenses of What Jesus taught and modeled

As the disciples listened to Jesus teach – His word transformed their whole lives – perspective

A) The God who had always been seen as being distance –

B) Jesus said – You could talk to directly – and call him Father – Abba - **Incredible revelation to them.**

C) Jesus taught them that all the commandments were summed up into 2 main ones

1) Love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and Love neighbor as your self

D) Jesus taught them that what was going on in the heart was as important as the outward actions

1) A lustful look- adultery

2) Anger without cause – Murder

The teaching of Jesus challenged the outward works of their religion – falling rules & regs

A) Focus was on looking right and doing right

B) Jesus challenged all of that – to say – What matters most and what God sees: **that is the heart**

C) The most defining mark of their relationship to him was not going to be religious performance

1) Their love for one another

They were continually devoted to the Word because it transformed their whole thinking – beings

For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give account*. Hebrews 4:12-13

GOD'S WORD is living AND Powerful or ACTIVE.

A) **"Living and active"** shows that there is a dynamic quality about God's revelation. It does things.

B) **Beauty Beast – Bell loves to read Library Book shelf – so happy**

C) Imagine Bell in the Library of Congress – 164 million volumes – largest library

D) Take the Largest library 164 million books

1) One Bible – the Bible is the only book say it is living – Powerful

E) Not just words on a page meant to inform or inspire –

1) **The VERY WORD OF GOD!**

GOD'S WORD IS ACTIVE:

Isaiah 55:11 beautifully says: “ my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”

GOD'S WORD IS PENETRATING

A) Sharper than a two edged sword!

B) God's word is not a sword that is meant to destroy people –

C) It is more like a surgeon's scalpel – Do surgery on us

1) Cuts out the stuff that doesn't belong – Sin and attitudes – attacks those things precision

D) Repairs what needs fixed

1) It gets down deep to the core issues of our hearts

GOD'S WORD IS DISCERNING

A) It is a Discerner = a critic / dissector of the thoughts and the **intents or motives** of the heart!

B) Have you ever just had God's word wreck you ?

C) Thought you were doing good – doing all the right things –

1) Other people's view of you great

D) Suddenly – God's word – reading study – shines the light on your motives – intent

1) HORRIBLE – wrecked – I am such an idiot

E) Maybe judging someone else – Suddenly the Word of God – goes that is you

1) Looking at yourself in a mirror

God allows His word to do that to transform us

A) The Disciples had their lives – unraveled by the word of God!

B) This is one of the reasons church – why we are so committed to study the Scriptures

1) Teach Expositionally through books of the Bible

C) We believe in the transforming power of the word of God!

A few yrs I met a sweet sister in the Lord – this Wed nite after the evening Bible study.

A) It was her first time here – she brought her grand daughter to the Children’s ministry.

B) She was absolutely amazed that we had a midweek service and that so many people were here to study the Bible.

C) She came up to introduce herself and said – *I just want to commend you for being brave enough to have a midweek service*

1) She continued – *There are not many Churches – around here that Have a midweek Bible study. I commend you for your Bravery*

D) I didn’t know that at the time – but found out later she was right

1) US and MC – only Churches

I thought about her words the next day: An act of Bravery!

A) It is just what we do – Here at CC we study the Bible Chapter by Chapter / verse by verse –

B) Not an act of Bravery: But then I was reminded of the words of the Prophet Amos – said – days were coming – Famine for the Word of God. Amos 8:11

C) Clarified: **Not a famine in it’s availability.** The famine is not that People will be without Bibles –

1) No the Famine would be in **the hearing** of the word

D) The early church was powerful – they continually devoted themselves to study – US TOO!

Lets be a family of believers who say: God we invite you to do surgery on us? - That is good soil.

A) Lord gives us something in daily reading – to run with – studies here put it into practice. Watch what he does!

B) That sounds good Pastor Rob – but what about when I fail ?

C) Lack faith or I don’t follow through? Spirit is willing but my flesh is weak

1) Then I feel guilty and it makes me what to give up!

D) It is almost as if the Holy Spirit anticipated that reaction by what He says next here in our passage.

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:14-15

E) Come boldly – Not leave you alone – Holy Spirit to empower you

Why were they so Devoted to the Word?
#4 God’s word is the key to glorifying God!

⁵“I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁷If you abide in Me, **and My words abide** in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. John 15:5-8

The Disciples grabbed a hold of this reality – their lives were meant to bring Glory to God

A) That happens through the Word

B) The Word was the way they stayed connected to Jesus

1) The word was the way they received nutrients from Jesus

C) His very heart was implanted into them through the Word!

D) They Devoured it – committed themselves to studying and teaching – Jesus taught them

They discovered that wonderful truth that God’s commandments Enablements

A) That what Jesus called them to do – he was going to enable them to do – through His Spirit

C) As they were led by the Spirit and directed through the word – Fruit was the result

Why were they so Devoted to the Word?

#5 God's word connects us to Jesus

²⁸ Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and **learn from Me**, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light." Matthew 11:28-29

A) Yoke yourself to me – Two oxen – stronger

B) Learn from me – His heart –

C) Jesus sees people differently than I do

D) First impressions are deceiving – Ever meet someone or see someone –

1) First impression is one way – Jerk – or stuck on themselves – Something negative

E) Then you spend sometime with that person and find out – so different than you thought

1) So BUSTED

I would love and hopefully I am growing to see people the way Jesus does

A) Jesus doesn't see Race HEART - Jesus doesn't see Gender - Jesus doesn't see – income

B) Jesus doesn't see Lesbian/straight – heart – hurts

1) Jesus doesn't see Good or bad – see's hearts that he loves

It is through the word of God that we Yoke ourselves to Jesus and learn from Him

A) But we have to read it not as a chore or a duty but to commune with Him – hear from Him

B) Here today – struggling – purpose – lost your way

1) Put off by Christianity – that seems nothing like Jesus

C) Consider the words of Jesus again – Come to me

1) Not do – Come to me weary and heavy laden
REST FOR YOUR SOULS

³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
John 17:3