

DEVOTION

FACILITATOR GUIDE

THE MOTIVE OF DEVOTION

This sermon series has been called “STIRRED.”

What kind of things do you have to stir? [Kool-aid, paint, recipes/food, anything that says “shake well before use.”]

Why do you stir these things? [To make them better/easier to use. It combines more than one ingredient and makes it one. It also makes them ready for their intended purpose.]

The word “stir” is defined as To **MOVE**; to incite to **ACTION**; to **INSTIGATE**; to **PROMPT**. We read that the disciples and the members of the early church in Acts were devoted.

Acts 2: 42—They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.

What four things were the people devoted to?

1. **TEACHING**
2. **FELLOWSHIP**
3. **BREAKING BREAD** = This is a reference to the gathering together of believers for the purpose of worshiping God!
4. **PRAYER**

What clubs, organizations, or groups are you a part of? [PTA, veterans organizations, elected positions, jobs, family, church, small group, etc.]

You become a member of a group when they have stirred you into action that you believe in.

In what ways do you display an allegiance with them? [Bumper sticker, keyring, certificate, attending meetings, wearing t-shirts with their logo, serving on their behalf, speaking good things about their cause, etc.]

What stirs you about being a part of the group? [You like the peopel. You believe in their cause. You hope to receive something from being associated with them. Etc.]

In what ways do you show your allegiance to your small group? Or to the church?

In what ways does your life reflect devotion to God? **[Time with Him. Obedience to His command. Studying His Word (Bible). Giving worship. Attending church with His people.]**

THE RESULT OF DEVOTION

Acts 2:43— Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles

According to this scripture, what was the result of their devotion? **[They were in awe of the miraculous signs and wonders they were seeing.]**

Have you experienced a wondrous sign that you know was the hand of God at work in your life or someone else's? What happened?

In verse 43, who was God using to perform these miracles? **[The apostles. These followers of Christ.]**

How did the people react to what they saw? **[They were in awe.]**

The Greek word for “awe” means **FEAR** or **REVERENCE**.

This isn't a fear that causes us to shrink back from something, but it is a fear that is healthy to our spirit. It is a fear that instills reverence for God's miraculous works.

Do you think this verse alludes to a correlation between reverent worship and miracles?

If so, when you require a miracle in your life, what should you do? **[Begin praising God, recognizing Him for the strength God that He is that He can defeat the work of the devil. Thank God for His blessings. Recognize His greatness and His glory. Just let yourself go in holy worship.]**

During a trial, it is most important that our hearts are focused on God. Satan will use our fears and worry to derail our relationship with Christ, but praise and worship bring Him near to us. Scripture tells us that Paul and Silas underwent this test as they sat in jail, chained, and rejected.

Acts 16:25-26—About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.

When you no longer give Satan your joy and peace, you will rest within Christ. Worship can and will produce miracles, but that's not **why** we worship. We can't worship to attain for ourselves, but we worship that God might attain all the glory and praise. That's why it's important to worship and praise God, even when prayers aren't answered or we remain in our suffering.

Miracles are preceded by **WORSHIP**, but worship must be **GENUINE** and **GLORIFYING** to God.

Colossians 4:2— Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving.

When a person is **DEVOTED** to God, miracles can be **EXPECTED. THANK** God **BEFORE** the miracle even comes!

THE EVIDENCE OF DEVOTION

Who is someone that you go all out to celebrate in your life? **[Friend, family or spouse]**

What day do you usually try to make the most special? **[Anniversary, a holiday, their birthday, etc.]**

What do you do, and why do you go to so much trouble? **[Out of love, respect, appreciation]**

Is your emotion for that person a secret to the rest of the world or does everyone who knows you understand how much you love that person?

In what ways do you make it known? **[Social media posts. They are at your house all the time (friend or family). You spend time with them. You talk about them. You are interested in the things they are interested in. Etc.]**

Do people around you know that you love God?

How do they know?

Many people say “I love God” to express good feelings about the Lord, but Jesus taught that only those who obey God’s commands truly love Him.

John 13:35— By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

According to this verse, what is the evidence of our devotion to God? [Love for others]

Pastor Chris quoted Andy Stanley when he said, “Your devotion to God is illustrated, demonstrated, and authenticated by your love for others.”

Let’s look at how the early church demonstrated love for each other.

Acts 2:44-45— Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. 45 They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need.

What did the believers do?

Why would they have done this? [They were stirred. They were convinced of God’s provision. They were moved to share with others. They saw others not as strangers, but as family.]

Do you feel the church does well by doing this today or should be do better?

How can you show others your devotion to Christ today?

[This summer Connection Point Church is planning to mobilize our congregation to impact our community through a project we are calling SUMMER SERVE.

There will be some special projects where volunteers will be needed to serve. Also, individuals will be encouraged to do “little” things that will mean a lot to others. And, small groups will be asked to think about projects and outreaches they can do to show the love of God to others.

More information will be coming soon, but you may want to brainstorm now about what your group can do to show your compassion for the community, families, service workers, and the world!]

FACILITATOR: When your group comes up with an idea for a special project, please let us know what you are planning to do. You still have a few weeks to get ideas. You can email us at kproffer@yourcpc.church or send a text to 573-986-3552.

PRAYER TIME

- Prayer was one of the four things the early church was sure to practice together. As you pray, thank God for the privilege of speaking to Him with the assurance that He will answer in the way that He knows best.
- Spend some time in just worship and praise to God, knowing that it is in times of worship that God draws nearer and makes us more battle-ready.
- Ask God to show you how to demonstrate your love for Him in a greater way.
- Pray for ideas to help your small group to impact the lives of people going through difficult situations.
- Ask for prayer requests and pray for one another—not just as acquaintances, but as FAMILY.