

DEVOTION

THE MOTIVE OF DEVOTION

This sermon series has been called “STIRRED.”

What kind of things do you have to stir?

Why do you stir these things?

The word “stir” is defined as To _____; to incite to _____; to _____; to _____. 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. _____

2. _____

3. _____ = This is a reference to the gathering together of believers for the purpose of worshiping God!

4. _____

What clubs, organizations, or groups are you a part of?

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?

What stirs you about being a part of the group?

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?

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?

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?

How did the people react to what they saw?

The Greek word for "awe" means _____ or _____.

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?

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 _____, but worship must be _____ and _____ to God.

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

When a person is _____ to God, miracles can be _____.
_____ God _____ the miracle even comes!

THE EVIDENCE OF DEVOTION

Who is someone that you go all out to celebrate in your life?

What day do you usually try to make the most special?

What do you do, and why do you go to so much trouble?

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?

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?

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?

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?

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.