

The Way of the Early Church, Part 2: Devoted

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- Make sure everyone knows each other's names. Have everyone share a little about themselves and how life is going right now.
- **The Way of the Early Church**
 - In this series we unlock several powerful eternal principles in order to see God do mighty things!
 - We can't go back. But we can take some of the great things from back then and apply them to now.
- **Part 2: Devoted**
- We are going to focus on one verse this week: **Acts 2:42**. Also read **Acts 2:43-47**.
 - Miracles were happening! They took care of each other! They were having big group and small group meetings! People were getting saved and joining!
 - Doesn't that sound good! How do we get there? That's v42.
- Four things they devoted themselves to from **Acts 2:42**.
 - As we go, let's ask how the church is doing in these four important areas.
- 1: The Apostles Teaching.
 - Back then it was the spoken word. Now it is the written word. The Bible.
 - Read the Word with an honest believing heart and your life will change!
 - How are you doing on that? (Can you ever really read enough? Answer: yes! But are you?)
 - Read to discover the ways of God. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand.
 - Avoid simply reading because you are supposed to. Read in faith.
 - Never, ever, not ever, try to get the Word to say what you want.
 - **2 Peter 3:13-17** (emphasis v16)
- 2: The Fellowship.
 - They devoted themselves to each other. To the group. They were "us."
 - A few examples: **John 13:34-35, 1 Peter 4:8, Romans 12:10**.
 - Understand, this is a massive part of being a follower of Jesus.
 - Don't misinterpret "personal relationship with Jesus" to think you don't need to devote yourself to the fellowship.
 - We are called to take care of each other. **Acts 2:44-45**.
 - How are we doing on that one?
- 3: The Breaking of Bread.
 - This is Communion, small groups, and pot lucks all wrapped up together!
 - **Acts 2:46** talks about eating together in their homes. So they did that.
 - They also had "agape feasts" much like our potlucks, but with greater reverence for Christ.
 - Though, they weren't perfect either. **1 Corinthians 11:20-22**. What went wrong?
 - What would it mean for us to be "devoted to the breaking of bread?"
- 4: Prayer.
 - Back to something we know we should be doing!!
 - What would it look like to be "devoted" to prayer?
 - Is this a "treasures in heaven" thing or are there tangible real life benefits to prayer?
 - Prayer is the key to **Acts 2:43**!
 - Obviously prayer is huge. **Matthew 21:22, Luke 5:16, Colossians 4:2**.
 - Pray in faith, expecting God to respond. Learn and grow in prayer over time.
- What if the early church hadn't devoted themselves to those four things?
- What if we devoted ourselves to all four?
 - Can you do that? I believe you can.
- Read **Ephesians 3:16-21** as a prayer over you.
 - Pray for each other before you finish up!