

The Devotion of the Committed

Ray Schwartz

Acts 2:37-47

May 29, 2011



SETTING THE SCENE

- » What's the first thing that comes to mind when someone asks you what you're truly passionate about or fully devoted to? Give an example and share why you're so devoted and/or passionate about that thing. What do you *wish* you were more devoted to? What keeps you from that devotion?
- » Compared to other religions, how devoted do you think Christians are? More devoted? Less devoted? About the same level of devotion? Explain your answer and discuss as a group what makes the difference. If you think we're less devoted, why do you think that is? If more devoted, how so? What level of devotion do you think Jesus calls His followers to and how do we measure up to that call?

THE STUDY

- » What single thing spoke to you this morning (either in the passage or in the sermon)? Why do you think God highlighted that specifically for you? What do you need to learn or do as a result? What do you still have questions about? Explain and discuss your answers as a group.
- » Read **ACTS 2:37-47** out loud as a group. What are your initial thoughts and reactions to what is going on in this story? What stands out to you in Peter's reply to the crowd (2:38-40)? What do you think about the crowd's reaction? In what ways does the church today differ from the picture of the early church we read about in Acts 2:42-47? In what ways are we the same? Do you think these differences and similarities matter today or are they simply a result of cultural differences? Explain your answer.
- » How did Peter respond to the heartfelt reaction of the crowd when they asked him what they should do as a result of the truth he was telling them (see verse 38)? How does Peter's response still apply today? What did the people specifically need to do? What does Peter say God will do in response?
- » In the sermon this morning Ray explained that **The Journey to Devotion to Jesus Begins When You...**
 1. Repent of Your Present & Your Past (2 Corinthians 7:10)
What does it mean for us to "repent" in the Biblical sense?
How is repentance different from asking forgiveness?
 2. Identify Yourself Publicly with Jesus (Romans 6:6, Colossians 2:12, Matthew 28:19)
Why is baptism so important in our spiritual journey? What does it symbolize?
How else can we publicly identify ourselves with Christ (in our everyday lives)?
- » Ray continued to exhort us that **The Journey Deepens as You Devote Yourself to...**
 1. The Study of God's Word (1 Peter 2:2-3)
Do you think "studying God's Word" means that we listen to a sermon once a week? Explain your answer.
How else do we apply God's Word in our lives? How do we both study and apply His Word?
 2. Consistent Community with Other Believers (Hebrews 10:24-25)
Do you feel that Pinecrest offers the kind of community represented in this passage? Why or why not?
Why is it hard to have consistent, authentic, and real community with other people? How can we do better?
 3. Authentic Worship (Romans 12:1)
How did these early believers worship God (hint: it had nothing to do with singing)? How can we follow this example?
What does our level of worship say about the level of our relationship with God? How do you measure up right now?
 4. Focused Prayer (Philippians 4:6-7)
How do we make prayer a daily habit in our spiritual lives (go deeper than "just do it")?
Why is prayer so critical in our spiritual lives? Why is it so hard to make a consistent practice in our lives?

APPLICATION

» Here are the four key disciplines from our passage this morning. Place an “S” by the one that’s your strength right now and place a “W” by the one that’s your weakness:

1. Study of God’s Word
2. Living in Community
3. Worship
4. Prayer

Share with each other how you will do better in your area of weakness—be specific. According to **ACTS 2:47**, what’s the impact when God’s people focus on these disciplines together?

- » Would you characterize *Pinecrest* as an “average” church or a “great” church (or somewhere in between)? Explain your answer and discuss as a group how we get to the next level. What will you commit to doing to make *Pinecrest* great? What role does God play in that process...and how?
- » Which of the above disciplines do you think *Pinecrest* excels at? Which do we need to work on most? As a group, discuss some strategies for making this happen (without expecting someone else to do the work).
- » What questions or thoughts do you still have that you haven’t shared yet?

PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- » Next week we take a look at the events in **ACTS 3:1-4:4**. We’ll specifically be focusing on five key events and statements made in this passage. As you read the passage, highlight the most important statements and actions. What things in the passage surprise you? What things do you think you need to focus on personally? What lessons can/should the church today learn from these verses?
- » Which character in this passage do you most associate with? Peter, the Blind Beggar, the crowd, the Sadducees? Explain why. What do you think motivated each of these characters?
- » Read through this passage a few times this week and journal your thoughts and questions. What is God saying to you through this passage? How will that change your thinking and/or actions?

CARING COMMUNITY

- » **SHARE** with the group how God has been speaking into your life or challenging you this past week (this may be as a result of the sermon or something in your personal journey). Is there anything from this week’s LifeGroup discussion you need to work on?
- » Are there any **NEEDS** you have coming up in your life that the group can help you with (this may include spiritual needs, life needs, pretty much anything...)
- » **PRAY** for one another. Share your requests and praises with one another. Write them down here. If you commit to praying, please be sure you do it...