

Podcast- 20250817

Speaker 2

Last week we started into this conversation and we talked about the idea of reset in the idea of salvation and making sure above everything else that we knew for sure that we were in that right relationship with Jesus, that we knew when we walked out of this room that we could say, I am saved beyond a shadow of a doubt. And we looked at several different passages, but I want us to kind of refer back to the passage from Acts chapter 2 and verse 38, because it really leads us into the rest of our passage and our study for today. But as Peter is preaching in verse 38 or verse 36 and 37, as he's kind of stopped and people ask, what shall we do? He says, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is for you and your children and for all of those who are far off, for all whom the Lord our God will call. And I love the end of that verse. I know we spent a lot of time talking about verse 38, but verse 39 reminds us that this wasn't just a promise for those people right there in that moment, that this was a promise that God was making for everyone that heard the message of Jesus, for everyone who wanted to be saved, that if they would listen to these words and act on these words, that they would find salvation in Jesus. But I think it's important for us to understand in this conversation of restarting, of resetting our life with God is to understand that that moment of salvation isn't the finish line. It's the starting point. And if we're not careful, we kind of have this idea that we study with people, we work with people, we get them to that point of salvation. We get them baptized. We get them into the body. And when sometimes we have this kind of hands-off approach at that point, well, we got them saved, you know, they can figure the rest of it out. But in the story of Jesus, in the story of the New Testament, that's just the beginning of it. It's not the end. It's the starting line. And after salvation, there's a whole lot of other things that take place that keep you where you need to be. And the word that we're really going to kind of focus on for the next few weeks, as we kind of walk through this passage of Acts chapter two, verse 42 through 47 is this word devotion. That baptism is the word that we can kind of tie together with the idea of salvation of it starts in this moment, but that journey continues in the idea or in the word of devotion. They just didn't get saved. They were rooted in what they were trying to do. So let's look at this text together, starting in verse 42 and read through verse 48 to 47 together. It says, they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor

of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. I've got a book in my office, and it's by, you know, now that I try to tell you who it's by, I'm not going to be able to. He's the preacher at North Boulevard in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. But as he's writing this book, it's called A New Day, and it's all based off of Acts chapter 2, verse 42 through 47. And he said, in one of his first or in his first job he's in a little town in southern missouri and he's he's baptized this guy and this guy's studying and he's excited about things he's in this small rural little country church he said this guy comes into his office after he baptized him and they're having this conversation and studying he had been studying that text and he looks at him and he goes he goes david david was david's his name goes david goes i've got a question he goes yeah what is it he goes when do we get to that part he goes well what do you mean he goes like i know we're coming to church and we're doing this and we're doing that. He goes, but I read this section, okay? I read verses 42 through 47, and I look at it and I think, man, this is the good stuff. This is the good stuff. He goes, I'm just wondering in my walk with God and as a church, when do I get to the good stuff? And he goes, man, that really just got my attention. He said, because we were in this rhythm of going to church, and I was in this rhythm of trying to learn to preach every Sunday. He said, but in the rhythm of trying to go to church, he said, we had forgotten all about the good stuff, all about being together, all about being devoted, all about the way we love one another, all about the way we truly give back to God. And he said, we realized that our church was really dying. Even though we had just baptized this guy, our church was dying. We weren't seeing a lot of people being saved, the Lord was not adding to our number because we quit focusing on the good stuff. And as I've been thinking about this idea of reset and refocusing, I want us to think about what is it that we need to refocus on to get back to the good stuff. And it starts back at this idea of this very first phrase. And I think it starts with really just the first kind of few words here. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. That was the very first thing. And it starts with this idea, first and foremost, of they devoted. And I love that word. I'm glad that it starts with that because you have this moment of salvation. You have this moment, Acts 2, verse 38. Hey, if you believe and you're baptized, you'll be saved and you'll receive the Holy Spirit. You have this teaching. You see all of these people taking part of that. And you know, in our world today, you kind of have this idea in our world today. As a matter of fact, you do see this in Jesus kind of following as well, that Jesus kind of had this moment where he stands up and he starts teaching some hard things and people kind of quit following it. There were some people that weren't devoted to what Jesus was doing. And Jesus was really kind of about trimming the fat ministry. He didn't want lukewarm Christians. He didn't want lukewarm followers. He wanted people to be devoted to what he was teaching, devoted to the cause, devoted to the kingdom. People that said, I am here and I am here for the long haul. In our society today, the idea of devoted is not really there anymore, is it? It's I'm here until this no longer benefits me. Isn't that kind of how a lot of people feel about a lot of things? I mean, other than your college football team, you understand that when it comes to devotion. But other than that, in a lot of ways, the idea of truly being devoted to something in this time and age, in

this world, in this society that we live in, I will be devoted to something until it no longer benefits me. I will be committed to this cause until it no longer benefits me. And it's not really about what I'm giving to this cause or what I'm giving to this moment. But when it comes to our relationship with God, when it comes to getting to the good stuff, when it comes to really building that intimate relationship with Jesus and with God and with the Holy Spirit, it starts with this word. I have to be what? Devoted. I have to show up and make up my mind and say, I am committed to being here. I'm not just going to church. I am devoted to a relationship with God. Now, look, it says they devoted themselves to all these things, but it said that they were gathering together daily in the temple courts to experience all these things, and that's always been a great thing, and when I have conversation with people, you know, there's always a lot of people that want to talk about, talk about church attendance, and this and that and the other, and how often should you be here, and I'm like, well, the first example of church attendance is how often? Vicki, how often? Every If you want to start talking about church attendance, the first standard is every day. When I started talking about that, well, you know, we don't. The first level of devotion was it was a daily devotion. I want you to think about that for a second. A daily devotion. Now, for some of you, Tanner, let's just mean you be real for a minute, okay? Getting here on Sunday morning is an effort, isn't it? It's an effort. It's not always fun. Could you imagine getting here every day for this? Tanner just laughed, for those of you who can't see him. Tanner just laughed. Okay, what does that mean? That means no, he couldn't imagine getting here every day, right? Why were they so devoted? At the beginning, they were so devoted because the only place for them to really get the Word of God was to go to the temple courts. Because you know what they didn't have? You know what they didn't have everybody in their house at the moment? They didn't have a what? A Bible. You know, definitely, you know what they didn't have in their pocket? A phone that had a Bible on it, right? So they made the effort every day. They were devoted to making sure that they could go somewhere, be somewhere so that they could be filled with the word of God. And I just can't help but think, and I've thought about this all week, if they made hearing the word of God that much of a priority, if they made it that, if they were that devoted, then with the conveniences we have today, shouldn't we even be more devoted? Shouldn't we have even more knowledge of the Word of God? Shouldn't we be even more engaged with Scripture than these Christians were at the very beginning? How many excuses have we made throughout our life about learning more of Scripture? How many excuses have we made when it comes to my time of study within the Word of God? I think about what Jesus said in Matthew chapter 4. Jesus said in Matthew chapter 4, and verse 4, is he's being tempted by Satan. His first temptation, turn this rock to bread so you can eat. And he says, man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. And I like that phrase because he Man shall not live by bread alone. He does emphasize that we need physical nourishment, but also by every word that comes from the mouth of God, we also need spiritual nourishment. Now, let me ask you a question. How many of you last week, how many of you got to the end of a day, at the end of the day, and you got in bed? How many of you got in bed at the end of the day

and went, man, I totally forgot to eat today. How many of you? How many of you? Okay. One of you, one out of 160 people. Okay. How many of you, two days last week, got in bed and said, whew, I completely forgot to eat today. How many of you have spent a week and have gone, man, I completely forgot to eat this week. Any of you? How many of us have gotten in the bed at the end of the day and been like, completely forgot to read the Word of God today. Better yet, how many of us have gotten in the bed at the end of the day and haven't even thought about the fact that I've not even thought about picking up the Word of God and opening it and reading it and filling myself up spiritually? That's what Jesus is saying. You don't live by bread alone, but if we don't eat, what happens? We starve, and before we start we start realizing it, don't we? If I miss a meal, I'm going to notice. Jake, if you miss a meal, you're going to notice. Yeah. Me and Jake, we get hungry in between bites, guys. Like hungry in between bites. When we don't eat spiritually, we start to notice it. And eventually we will starve. And I would guess, I would guess that a lot of Christians are on a starvation diet when it comes to the word of God. And that we're just so used to not even picking up the word of that we don't even realize that we're starving anymore, but we're trying to fill it with other things. We're trying to fill it with motivational things on TikTok and social media and this and that. And we're trying to fill it with things that seem like they're scripture, but they're not the word of God. You shall not live by bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of God. These people, these people scheduled their time with God. They scheduled, they didn't forget to eat spiritually. I was going to bring my big calendar with me this morning that I used to have, but I threw it away. I realized that this week. And if this was bigger, you could see it. So I'll just use this for an illustration. If you look at my calendar on my phone, I live by my calendar. I am the calendar keeper of my family. My calendar syncs to my phone, to Blair's phone, to Colin's phone, to Vance's phone. I'm not sure if it syncs to the girls' iPads. There's even a part of my calendar that syncs to my mom's phone with all of the kids' events on it. And I tell them, if there is an event in the calendar and it says kids' event, you're invited. I'm not going to pick up the phone and say, hey, mom, we got an event on Thursday. You can come. If it's in the calendar, you're invited because I don't have time to make sure I've invited everybody. If it's in the calendar, you can come. Okay, that's how it goes. But if you look at my calendar, if you could see it, there's dots on just about every day. Anybody else's calendar look like that? Dots on just about every day. We schedule it. If you don't schedule it, if we don't schedule it, if I have something going on, somebody calls us, hey, can we do this? Or Blair calls and she'll call me, hey, do we have anything on the calendar? If it doesn't get on the calendar, guess what doesn't happen? It doesn't get done. If we don't schedule our time with God, that might be what it takes for some of us to sit down and write it down. Today at 830, I'm going to sit down and make sure that I make time with God. We have to be committed. We have to be devoted. We can't live on bread alone. the early church's devotion, their growth, their unity, their mission was fueled first and foremost because they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, which was the teachings of who? Let's try that again. They were the teachings of Jesus. All right. So why is this important? Because the God of word, the word of God rather

transforms. Something I wrote down as I first started working this week. Don't let the transformation get lost in the information. Let that sink in. Don't let the transformation get lost in the information. I want you to listen to this, something I wrote down this week that really kind of sums up what I really want this lesson to be about. I'm going to read it so I don't lose any of it in the talking. It's Word of God's a big book. Some of your Bibles are thin-lined. My big study Bible's in my office. It's a big book, right? It's filled with history, poetry, prophecy, letters of wisdom. There are commands to follow, warnings to heed. And if we approach it only as a study project, it can feel intimidating and overwhelming. How many of you have ever felt that way with the Word of God? It's intimidating and it's overwhelming. There's a lot to it. But we must never forget what it really is. It is not simply a rule book to keep us in line. It's not simply a storybook to entertain us before bed. It is the very words, thoughts, and heart of God. Let that sink in for just a moment. It is the very words, thoughts, and heart of God. When we open its pages, we are connecting with him, his character, his will, his love. The Bible is just not information. It is revelation. It is the foundation of our relationship with him. And as our relationship with him grows, something beautiful will happen. We will be transformed. The more time we spend hearing his voice and his word, the more we begin to think like him, live like him, and love like him. We become, as Scripture says, a new creation shaped day by day into the image of Christ. Now, Paul says it may be a little more effectively through the Holy Spirit. Romans 12 and verse 2, do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Now, let's look and see what Jesus says. Matthew chapter 12. Go to Matthew chapter 12, starting in verse 33. Matthew 12, 33, make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad. For a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brought a vipers. How can you who are evil say anything good? Now I want you to underline this in your Bible For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of Some of your Bibles say this And I like this translation better For the mouth speaks out of the overflow of the heart I like that better A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him And the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him But I tell you that everyone will have to give an account on the day of judgment For every empty word that they have spoken for by your words, you will be acquitted and by your words, you will be condemned. But verse 35, I'm sorry, verse 34, for out of the mouth speaks what the heart is full of or the overflow. To me, that's where we're trying to live, right? We're trying to live out of the overflow. We're trying to pull this stuff in. We're trying to fill our life with God. We're trying to fill our life with Jesus, with the Holy Spirit. We're trying to fill these things up in our life. and that overflow is what's going to come out, okay? But that's sometimes the most difficult part is to live in the overflow because Satan in the world is trying to cram so much in there and trying to just take up all the space. And in my years of ministry, I have had so many people ask me questions that I think can be answered in the overflow. They ask questions like, how do I share my faith more? How do I share my faith more? How do I make disciples? How do I overcome this temptation or this struggle that's in my life? And I think the answer is you live in the overflow. You live in the overflow of your life. You let that just come out of you. You share

the gospel through filling your life with the gospel. You become a better disciple maker by studying like a disciple should. Okay, so I got to doing some research. I actually had a conversation with a really good friend of mine this week, Randy Rayburn. He lives up in Tennessee, and he was sharing some stuff that he had been listening to here recently. And he shared a podcast that he had run across that referenced this study called The Power of Four. And he couldn't remember all the statistics. So I got to looking it up because it was stuff that lined up with what I was trying to get across in this lesson. But it comes from a Christian research center, and it's in the notes on my computer if you're interested in the actual name. I didn't put it in my preaching notes. But it was called The Power of Four. And they researched when the Word of God in someone's life really began to make a difference. In other words, how many days a week does someone need to study or read, read their Bible before it begins to really impact their life? And what they saw was at four days a week, when someone decides to start reading their Bible and they make a commitment or they're devoted to that process four days a week, which is a majority of the time, majority of the week, they say, I'm going to read my Bible at least four days a week. that over time, that number begins to impact their life in the most powerful of ways. And when I say the most powerful of ways, these are the things that they're talking about. It increases their ability to share their faith by 228%. People are 228% more likely to share their faith if they read their Bible four times or more a week. Why? Because it's the overflow. They are living it. They know it. It is becoming a part of their life. They're 400 more times to share or to memorize scripture. They're 230 times more likely to disciple other people. So how do I become more of a disciple? It starts by devoting myself to the word of God. It decreases sinful behavior. It decreases things like gossiping, lying, neglecting your family, overeating, mishandling money. It neglects all of those things. 20 to 30% in people's lives. There's a lot of other things I have listed, but for time, we're not gonna touch on those, but it decreases those sins in people's lives 20 to 30%. When we make up our mind that I'm going to be in the word of God, okay? I'm gonna be in the word of God. It's going to be something that I'm committed to, I'm devoted to. It's going to then transform your life. It's not just going to be information. It's not just about learning book, chapter, and verse so that I can go to Bible Bowl or so that I can answer a question and have the right place to go to. It's about the transformation in my life. If I hunger and thirst for the right things of God, then the things that are struggles in my life today will later become strengths in my life. And that's what living in the overflow will do. So let's wrap this idea up. How do I become devoted? Three things. Number one time make it a priority You've got to make it a priority If something is going to be a priority, you have to treat it like one Maybe start with your calendar find the places clear the calendar off and start with god First and foremost start with god and put him at the center of everything that's going on Number two start with where you are But get a plan you're not going to go from zero to hero. Okay I'm a zero at studying to tomorrow, I'm going to be a 10 in the Bible scholar. You're not going to, you're not going to make that jump between now and the next week. A lot of information, it's not going to happen, but I want you to think in your mind for just a moment. I want you to put yourself somewhere on a scale of one to

10. One being, I think about reading my Bible every day, but I don't, but every now and then I do. 10 being, I am an avid Bible study student. And I pick up my Bible every day. Okay, where are you? Think about that for a second. And I'm going to give you some challenges. If you're a one, start this week with one chapter, four times a week. Start with one chapter. Pick up your Bible and start with a chapter. Maybe if it's easier than nothing else, go to the book Proverbs. Start with whatever day of the week it is or day of the month. What's today? Today's the 20th, what, 16th? I'm a whole week ahead. That's the 16th. Tomorrow, start with the 17th. Whatever day of the month it is. Go to the book Proverbs, read that proverb. Okay, pray the proverb for every day of the month. If that's the easiest thing to do, start there. But start with one chapter four times a week. Maybe you're a three. Let's go three chapters a day. That's 10 to 15 minutes. 10 to 15 minutes a day. If you do that, you can read the whole New Testament in less than three months. You can read the whole New Testament in less than three months at three chapters a day. If you're in that four to six range, focus in. Maybe say, I'm going to read a gospel. At three chapters, four times a week, you can read the book of Mark three times in one month. Imagine reading the book of Mark three times in one month. You're going to learn something, aren't you? You're going to get to know Jesus a little bit more, a little bit better. You're going to have a deeper relationship with him at the end of that month because of those four days a week. If you're maybe in that seven to nine category, you may not need my help putting you on track, but maybe set a stretch goal. Maybe say, I'm going to read my Bible in three months. Maybe I'm going to read my Bible in the next six months. You can read your Bible in three months at about 13 chapters a day. Now, if you've not been reading your Bible at all, 13 chapters seem a lot, but if you've been reading your Bible every day, it may not seem so much. Whatever your level is, let's do something and start getting to the point to where four plus days a week or at least four days a week, I'm reading the word of God so that we can start having those spiritual breakthroughs and we can live in the overflow of the word of God so that we can be devoted to it and have transformation through the word of God. So let's not get hung up though. That's kind of the last thing here is understand Don't get hung up on difficult things at the beginning And I think that's one of the biggest struggles with people is they they get hung up that well I don't understand this. Sometimes you just start sometimes just start reading and just go And then as you go through it and start taking notes Write down questions and then start asking questions and then maybe here's my favorite As you start studying and reading, the more you study and read, you'll start answering your own questions. And when you answer your own question, call someone and let them know you've answered it. Okay? When you answer your own question, call me and tell me, hey, guess what? I was studying my Bible and I answered a question that I had. Because those are exciting moments. When you are studying the word of God enough that you answer your own questions. You know what you've done? You've transformed. You've had a spiritual breakthrough. you're living in the overflow. But that only happens when we're what? Devoted to the Word of

God. All right. You ready for it? You gonna do it? How many of you gonna do it? About seven of you. All right. Last week, we started in Acts chapter 2, verse 38. We're gonna do this again,

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see if we can get five more on board. No. Let's reset. Let's think about devoting ourself in a deeper way so that we can grow in our faith and get to the good stuff so that we can live in the Holy Spirit in a way that we never have before and bring people to Christ in a way we never have before and create disciples in a way we never have before so that this church can grow and be a lot on a hill in a way that it never has before. That's our goal. That's what we're wanting to do

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is to transform this community for Jesus.