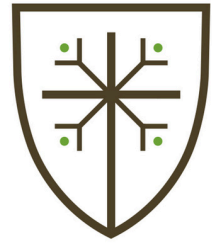


# SERMON NOTES



April 26, 2026



## SERMON INFO

### TITLE

"A People Devoted"

### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

### TEXTS

Ezekiel 36:22-27

Acts 2:41-47

John 10:1-10

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What or who do you most often find yourself devoted to other than Christ? To whom or what do you primarily belong?
2. What things can keep us from moving from those who just come to church to those who belong to the Church and are rooted in God's people?

## SERMON IN SUMMARY

In this week's sermon, Tim asked the question, "What does it mean to belong as a Christian?" If we look at the early Church in the book of Acts, we get a pretty good idea.

### The Devoted

In the text from Acts 2, it is evident that these Christians possess a power to be strong for something they hold in common, both internal and communal power. This deep internal spiritual power is true of every believer and overflows from them and meets the same power from others in the community as it is directed towards the same thing. Tim compared this type of community to a motte of trees, a cluster of trees that, for good or for ill, exist together, sharing resources back and forth along the same root system. This idea runs counter to how we often imagine ourselves, as completely free and independent individuals. We are nowhere near as independent as we think. We have root systems that tell us what to love, to care about, and to feel. We are not just devoted to a community but our primary community devotes us to something. We are all devoted to something, the question is, to what?

### The Difference

The difference we see in the early church is that they did not devote themselves to just any teaching or authority. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, their words and the message about Jesus. Everything begins with a word and everyone is devoted to some authoritative interpretation of the world. For Christians, it is the Bible. The Church in Acts 2 is living out this devotion. What we read is a result of what happened on the day of Pentecost. The promise and the prophecy of Ezekiel 36, which all God's people would have known, was fulfilled. Ezekiel tells us that our fundamental problem is our heart, the thing that lies at the very core of being. Hearts of stone can't believe or love or do anything that makes us human. You're not truly living until God has replaced the heart with a new one. Without this, we can know intellectually what the word of God says, but we can't live as that word directs. But now, we can believe in Christ. We can want and love and believe differently. The Church is the proof of that. We are different in the way we use our time and our money, and different in our attitudes. The Church is the environment in which the Gospel of Jesus becomes believable and liveable.

### The Impact

Finally, we see the impact of this different type of devotion in the breaking of bread. The Church in Acts is said to both break THE bread as Jesus instructed at the Last Supper, and to break bread together in homes with any and all. The word that is used of them is "xenophilia" or love of strangers. The world doesn't do that. The world may give to family and friends and those they can get something out of, but not to strangers. But Scripture says that God loved us even while we were yet strangers to him. Jesus died on the cross for strangers in order that they might become family and friends. And he rose to give us new heart filled with the Holy Spirit and with his love of strangers. The marks of people who do this are how we use our time and how we use our money. In Acts we see Christians whose time is governed by something besides busyness. They made time for being at prayer and being in each others homes. They don't just come to church, they belong to the Church. Jesus has rooted them into his people.