

Acts 2:42c

Breaking Bread

Devoted: Week 3

Introduction

Grab your bibles and turn to Acts 2...

We're in a series called **Devoted** where we're looking at what it looks like to be devoted to Jesus...

That being devoted to Jesus means that you're devoted to the things of Jesus... And to do that, we've been in a deep dive into **Acts 2:42-47** looking at the start of the church and the things they were devoted to...

Here's what I want you to think about- what was the last really good meal that you had... what did you eat?? Now I want to think who you ate it with...

What's the last celebration you went to where you ate, who was it for, do you remember some of the people you sat with??

When's the last time that you had someone over to your house to eat, who was it?

Eating together is a powerful thing that brings people together around a need that each of us has- to eat... It has a way of breaking down barriers, slows down time and creates conversation...

Ex. Super bowl parties- opposite teams eating together!

This morning I want to show you the significance of eating together as we look to the devotion of the early church...

Let's jump in...

Acts 2:41-47

41 So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them.

So, 3000 people get saved here- these are people that were dead in their sin that have been made alive in Christ... So, Jesus has saved them from something, but Jesus also saves them to something- His family and His Kingdom...

And the way this is lived out on earth is through the local church... And what we're seeing here in Acts 2 is the beginning of the church through this **new community** that begins to emerge...

And what's so important to see is that it's the **person and work of Jesus that brings together this new community and reorients them and how they live and what they are devoted to...**

The gospel is a powerful thing that brings transformation and reorientation... It brings new life, a new objective, new family...

*If the gospel isn't at the center of our lives, then we will not be **devoted** to the implications of the gospel that we see here...

- The starting line is that you were dead but through the finished work of Jesus you've been made alive, and this changes everything...

It is the gospel that compels our devotion...

So, **when you see a disconnect in your devotion-** you need to understand that it's a **gospel problem...**

- We're missing the impact and implications of the gospel- we lack motivation and action we've drift away from gospel centrality in our lives!

We're not seeing a list of things to do here, we're seeing the natural overflow of people that have been changed by Jesus- who are coming together around the persona and work of Jesus...

And keep in mind these areas of devotion- they are not burdens; they're blessings because they help us stay oriented around Jesus!

Let's keep reading **verse 42**:

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. **43** Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. **44** 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. **46** Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

So, they were devoted to **the breaking of bread...** And notice I want you to notice *how* they did this...

- **Verse 46, from house to house...** So, this is more than a church-wide potluck... This was people around the dinner table together often...

It's important for you to understand that there is a biblical pattern when it comes to eating together...

Meals served a significant purpose all throughout the Bible...

- Passover...
- Along with that there were **6 other important feasts and festivals** that God gave His people, that served as reminders of the faithfulness of God, that celebrated the goodness of God, and that *ultimately* foreshadowed the hope that would come through Christ...

God could have given other ways for them to celebrate and commemorate but He chose meals as the means for this...

- These meals created anticipation, they took time and intentionality, they brought people together around one theme- *the goodness of God*- pointing to hope... It also brought satisfaction in the eating and engaging...

Fast Forward to the NT...

Jesus is always around the table... **Luke 7:34** says that *the Son of Man came eating and drinking...*

The concept of table, meal and banquet is an important theme the Gospel of Luke... And eating together gets emphasized a lot...

In fact, a Scholar named Robert Karris wrote a book called ***Eating your way thorough Luke's Gospel...***

- And in it he points out that for the most part throughout the entire Gospel of Luke, Jesus is either going to a meal, at a meal, or coming from a meal...

BTW: When I was contemplating following Jesus, this was the selling point for me... Can I get an Amen somebody!

Meals were a central part of Jesus ministry- they were the places where He built relationships, where He disciplined, showed grace, love and where He confronted people in regard to the Kingdom of God... ¹

Here's what I love about Jesus, he's always taking **daily activities and turning them into discipleship moments...**

Steve Timmis says it like this: *Jesus didn't start a program, a school, or have a crusade. He ate meals. Effective outreach involves ordinary people doing ordinary things with gospel intentionality.*²

Jesus tabled with His disciples often...

I think for many of us we miss the opportunity to experience God in the ordinary everyday things of life, **specifically eating together...**

¹ Some insight gained from Tony Merida, *Sent to Invite*.

² Ibid.

- We want to jump into the complexities of the Christian life and so often we neglect the simplicities of the Christian life...
- There is nothing wrong with the complexities, but it shouldn't starve us from the simplicities...

And here is the irony: It is often the simplicities that help us navigate the complexities...

- Eating together- relational equity, wisdom, answers to life/doctrine struggles, prayer, accountability...

There is more to eating than I think most of us realize... *Let's take a look...*

Here's the first thing that happens when we eat together:

1. When we eat together, we experience and are reminded of the new community Jesus came to establish

Verse 46 They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts,
47 praising God

- **Sincere**- simplicity, humbleness, genuine

They were united around the praise for What God had done through Jesus...

**Flesh out the new community Jesus established through and around His finished work...*

- *Creation*
- *cross*
- *new creation*
- *new community...*

Coming around the table often with people from this local church community is a way to remember this new community that's been established by the blood of Jesus...

Because if it were not for Jesus, you would not be eating together... You would not have these relationships inside the church...

Douglas Webster says this in his book *Table Grace*

Table fellowship reminds us that there is remarkable symmetry between our communion with God and our community with one another. Table grace underscores the connection between our ordinary, everyday world and the grace of God in Christ.

Ordinary we have to eat-

Extraordinary underscore- the people we are eating with is an act of God's grace...

God has saved us **from** something **to** something- His family... Being in a relationship with God means that you're in a relationship with His church- if you're not there's a disconnect...

Eating together reminds us of this reality...

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Pastor and theologian, goes further:

The table fellowship of Christians implies obligation. It is our daily bread that we eat, not my own. We share our bread. Thus, we are firmly bound to one another not only in the Spirit but in our whole physical being. The one bread that is given to our fellowship links us together in a firm covenant.³

He points out that eating together is a picture of the bond that we have... This is a bond that we see here in the text- one that would prevail through all kinds of opposition and persecution...

We experience unity- we come together on the grounds of something radically different than the rest of the world...

One scholar says this about eating together: *Sitting down at the same table meant becoming friends with them, creating a family. It*

³ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, (New York: Harper One, 1954), 68.

was a way of life absolutely opposed to the values of a competitive, hierarchical society in which the weak are pushed aside.⁴

Deepens our relationships...

Joy in laughter and comradery

Priority and Intentionality

We need to table often- and the good news everyone has to eat- this is intersection not addition...

- This is why we do this as a part of our CG rhythms...
 - But this should not be limited to that... you need to be in the rhythm of eating together with other believers from this local church like we see here in Acts...

2. When we eat together, we have the opportunity to serve one another in response to the way Christ has served us

Jesus laid down His life to invite you to His table- we respond by inviting others to our table.

- Preparation if you're serving the meal
- Help before and after
- Taking the plates and cups of others

3. When we eat together, we experience a foretaste of what's to come

Wedding Feast of the Lamb- Revelation 19:6-9

- *Bring this together in light of the Gospel...*
- *The Church and Jesus...*
 - *Why it matters that you're part of the church- not just attending but embracing what the church embraces...*

Our goal is to remember this... one of the ways that we do that through eating together...

Uncommon fellowship keeps our eyes fixed on Jesus...

Apply:

- Your presence matters on the weekend and weekday at CG
- Who are you inviting over? Who are you eating with?
- **Appeal to the Christian**
- **Appeal to the non-Christian**

One of the most significant ways that the church remembers the meal to come is through the Lord's Supper...

Jesus takes this monumental meal, Passover, and orients it around Himself and what He's about to do...

There are **3 primary elements to the Lord's Supper** that the Lord calls gathered believers to:

⁴ Jean Vanier, *The Heart of L'Arche Spirituality for Everyday*

Here they are, *together when we take the Lord's Supper, we:*

1. Remember

- Remember the finished work of Jesus as a real event in time where the Son of God was executed in your place, the innocent slain for the guilty. Sin that separates was dealt with.

2. Embrace

- By faith claiming the truths of the gospel for yourself, soaking in the implications of the finished work of Jesus and allowing that to nourish your soul...

3. Proclaim

- The Lord's Supper is a tangible declaration and expression of the finished work of Jesus to ourselves, to other believers, and to an onlooking world around us... We proclaim this until Jesus returns to finish what He started!

And as we do this- we don't just look back but we also look forward!

1 Corinthians 11:26 *For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

The Lord's Supper is a meal and part of the significance of this meal is the anticipation of another meal- the feast of the Lamb at the marriage banquet where Jesus returns for His bride the church!

Conclusion [VAMP]

This is how we want to close this morning by

Lords Supper:

- Fence the Table
 - Appeal here to non Christians
- To the Christians: reflect and repent once you get the elements...

Take the elements:

- Bread first
- Cup

Hand it over to Anna....