

Developing True Thankfulness

ACTS 3:44-47

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

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For many this is Thanksgiving. But is it Thanksgiving?
What is the true meaning of Thanksgiving?

To me, it can be found in **Acts 3**. The disciples were active in their faith and many miracles were happening.

In **verse 42** it says that the church **“devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, (and) to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”**

In **verse 42** we see that there were four things that were necessary to bring about this time of thanksgiving in the first century church.



- 1. They devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching. (The Word of God)**
- 2. They devoted themselves to the fellowship. (Church)**
- 3. They devoted themselves to the breaking of bread. (Sharing what they had)**
- 4. They devoted themselves to prayer. (Time with God)**

Webster says the word devoted means: **“To vow, to set apart, to dedicate, to be loyal, and faithful.”**

Let’s look this morning into God’s Word and see if we are doing the things necessary in this church so that we might see God bring in a harvest of souls like He did in the young church 2000 years ago.

I. THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE APOSTLES TEACHING

A. The Word of God requires us to make a decision

James 1:22-25, Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror 24and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and

continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

B. The Word of God requires us to open up our hearts

Hebrews 4:12-13, For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

C. The Word of God requires we grow in the Word

Hebrews 5: 12-14, In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

II. THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE FELLOWSHIP

A. To the church

Hebrews 10:25, Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

B. To each other

2 Corinthians 6:14-17, Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord.

C. To God

Psalms 42:4-6, These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the multitude, leading the procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng. 5 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

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III. THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE BREAKING OF BREAD (Sharing)

A. Holy Communion

1 Corinthians 10:16-17, is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?
17Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the One loaf.

B. Sharing what they had to give

2 Corinthians 9:11-15, You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.¹²This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

IV. THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO TIME OF PRAYER

A. For intercession

1 Timothy 2:1, I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—**2**for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. **3**This is good, and pleases God our Savior, **4**who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

B. For healing physically and spiritually

James 5:15-16, And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. **16**Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

C. For Evangelism

Colossians 4:2-6, **2**Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. **3**And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. **4**Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. **5**Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. **6**Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

CONCLUSION:

Teaching, fellowship, sharing, and prayer were vital to the growth of Christianity in the first century church. And it is necessary today.