

Theme: Because the Father delights to commune with His children, the Spirit draws believers into prayer — first in the gathered worship of the Church, and then overflowing into a daily personal life of prayer — so that their hearts flourish in ever-deepening delight in Christ.

## I. Encouraging Delight in God - Not Guilt!

- A. The subtitle of this series - “deepen our delight in God”
- B. This is especially important when we think about prayer!
- C. We often feel utterly inadequate when it comes to prayer - and guilty about how little we pray!
- D. Today - devoted to prayer!

## II. Devoted - To the Prayers

- A. The believers were devoted to prayer  
And they **devoted** themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:42
  - 1. The word devoted is used 10 times in the NT
  - 2. 50% of the time is for devotion to prayer!  
All these with one accord were **devoting themselves to prayer**, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. Acts 1:14
    - a. The apostles and women were devoted to prayer!
    - b. This was while they were waiting for the Spirit to be given in fulfillment of the New Covenant  
But we will **devote ourselves to prayer** and to the ministry of the word.” Acts 6:4
  - c. The apostles describe their whole ministry as devotion to prayer and the teaching of the Word!
  - d. This is why they are the bookends of Acts 2:42 - everything is built on the foundation of the Word and prayer!

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be **constant in prayer**. Romans 12:12

- e. “Constant” is the same word as Acts 2:42 “devoted”
  - f. Paul calls us to be devoted to prayer - even during hard times, for this will sustain our joy and patience!  
**Continue steadfastly in prayer**, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. Colossians 4:2
  - g. “Continue steadfastly” is the word “devoted”
  - h. Once again, Paul calls believers to a consistent pattern and life of prayer rather than occasional prayers during emergencies!
3. If there is anything that the New Testament calls for believers to be devoted to in building their walk with Jesus, it is prayer!

## B. Devoted - To “the Prayers”

And they **devoted themselves to** the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and **the prayers**. Acts 2:42

- 1. They were devoted to “the prayers”
  - a. Some translations have “to prayer” (NIV; NASB, CSB), and others “in prayer” (KJV; NKJV)
  - b. The Greek is clear “THE PRAYERS”
  - c. Once again, this shows that the primary reference is not to private, personal, spontaneous prayer but rather to the prayers that are part of corporate worship.
    - 1. Acts 2:42 is a description of the worship pattern of early church gatherings.
    - 2. It is not just “prayer” but “prayers” because it first refers to the prayers that are sung and spoken in corporate worship.

3. It is not just “Prayers” but “THE prayers” because this included regular prayers that people knew by heart, including Psalms, the Lord’s Prayer, and songs that were regularly sung in worship.

## 2. Corporate prayer is highlighted several times in Acts

- a. The early Church was baptized in the New covenant gift of the Spirit in corporate prayer

All these **with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together** with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers... <sup>1</sup> When the day of Pentecost arrived, **they were all together in one place...** <sup>4</sup> **And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.** Acts 1:14; 2:1, 4

1. The believers were together and regularly devoting themselves to corporate prayer as they waited for the gift of the Spirit to be given as the initiation of the New Covenant Church.
2. They were together again on the day of Pentecost - almost certainly in prayer!
3. The Spirit comes upon them in power and they are given the gift of tongues - a prayer language!

- b. The Church prayed together when persecuted

And when they heard it, **they lifted their voices together to God** and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, <sup>25</sup> who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, **“Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? <sup>26</sup> The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed’**— Acts 4:24-26

1. They lifted their voices together - corporate prayer!
2. vv25-26 - they prayed Psalm 2 together!
3. This is “devoted to the prayers” in action!
4. You can see something similar in Acts 12:12 too.

- c. Corporate prayer began the mission to Gentiles!

While they were **worshiping the Lord and fasting**, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

<sup>3</sup>Then **after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.** Acts 13:2-3

1. In a worship gathering (that certainly included prayer!) the Spirit speaks to the Church.
2. The response of the Church was fasting and prayer to do what the Spirit had commanded,
3. This is the beginning of the full effort to reach the Gentiles with the Gospel.

- d. Every aspect of the life of the Church in Acts is bathed in and built upon corporate prayer!

3. Once again, our devotion begins in corporate worship and then spills over into our private practice. We are certainly called to growing in our private prayer lives, but this will grow out of our participation in the corporate prayer of the Church.

## III. Devoted To Prayer

### A. The Spirit and prayer (Handout)

1. The Holy Spirit draws us into prayer (Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:6-7)
2. The Spirit prays in and through us (Romans 8:26-27)
3. The Spirit freshly fills us as we pray (Acts 4:31)
4. The Spirit strengthens us in the faith as we pray (Jude 1:20-21)
5. The Spirit guides us in spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:18-19)

## B. Tips for growing in devotion to God through prayer

1. Remember that God DELIGHTS to commune with you in prayer!
2. Learn by joining in the prayers in our corporate worship
3. Begin private prayer with worship music
4. Pray Scripture
5. Use the ACTS model to guide your prayer
6. Include both structure and spontaneity

## IV. Applying the Word

### A. Learning to delight in prayer with my Father

1. I have given a lot of practical tips and things you can study.
2. These can be helpful in you growing in devotion to Jesus through prayer. Use them!
3. But the heart of prayer is not tips or techniques, nor is it learning the “right words” - it is conversation and communing with my Father Who loves me!
4. I want to encourage you - God loves you, He wants to talk with you, like a parent or grandparent with their child.
  - a. I love talking with my grown children, enjoying their ability to really communicate with me.
  - b. But I love talking with my grandchildren even though they can not always get the right words - their love for me and delight in being with me is what matters!
  - c. How much more true of our gracious Father!

What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; <sup>12</sup> or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”  
Luke 11:11-13

1. God is so much kinder, loving, gracious, and giving than we are!
2. If a parent delights to give to their child, how much more does God!
3. The greatest gift God gives us as we pray is Himself! This is the real joy and gift of prayer!

5. This week, grow in prayer! Start where you are, and just talk with God - and grow close to Him!

### B. Our Communion Table

1. This Table is a place of prayer and communion with our gracious God!
2. Here we experience the fact that our access to God is not based on our works, but on what Jesus has done for us - just as in all prayer and life!
3. Psalm 34:8 corporate prayer reading

### Devoted - Prayer

Acts 2:42  
May 17, 2026  
Communion  
Numbers 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: Means of Grace; Word of God; Christian Life; Baptism and Filling with the Spirit

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer- for God is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us  
Romans 12:12/Ephesians 3:20