

## DEVOTION

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2 Corinthians 11:1-6

1. It took awhile to settle on a topic for this morning's message.
2. On Wednesday I texted Paul Vitella, the man who handles on online presence, and told him my sermon title would be, "He Touched Me."
3. Friday the title became, "A Joyful Journey," and yesterday I settled on, "Devotion."
4. My vision and the stated vision of this church is, "To promote the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ."
5. In writing to the Corinthians on the subject of marriage and singleness Paul stated that the things he wrote were written, "to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord."

1 Corinthians 7:35

6. The key words in 2 Corinthians 11:3 define what our ongoing commitment to Jesus Christ is to be based on.

- a. Simplicity: speaks of singleness of mind, heart, and purpose, sincerity, generosity.
- b. Purity: speaks of chastity and uprightness of life.
- c. Devotion: speaks of a settled, ongoing commitment to someone or something.

7. Paul implied in this passage that as followers of Jesus Christ we have been betrothed to Jesus Christ-promised to Him for all eternity.

NOTE: In using the word "betrothed," Paul would have been using the term in the Jewish sense which referred to a legally binding agreement that could not be broken apart from divorce.

8. It is not always easy for people to understand the analogies used in Scripture because the realities upon which those analogies are based are no longer embraced by our culture.

NOTE: In our culture engagements and marriages are entered into and walked away from with disturbing frequency.

9. However, whenever you find a man and a woman who are single-mindedly devoted to Christ and to each other you will find a marriage that works.

10. The same will be true of every genuine follower of Jesus Christ who understands what Paul meant when he wrote about the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

NOTE: Life becomes complex when our relationship to Jesus Christ is based on something other than love and devotion.

11. If you are married you are always married, and if you are a follower of Jesus Christ you are always a follower of Jesus Christ, and if both are true you cannot escape either one and ought to live accordingly.

12. This is why Jesus could say things like:

**I. Go therefore and make disciples. Matthew 28:19**

A. The tense of the word “go” speaks of an ongoing action.

B. As you go about your everyday life make disciples.

NOTE: How you and I live our lives moment by moment matters.

C. The early church understood this and that is why we read verses like the following.

1. “And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.” Acts 2:47

2. Acts 8:3-4

But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison. **4 Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.**

D. Witnessing is not just something we do from time to time based on our church’s calendar, rather it is connected to every aspect of who we are and how we live.

**II. If anyone serves (is serving) Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also.” John 12:26**

A. This verse is preceded by, “He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.”

B. As followers of Jesus Christ we must understand that we are involved in His ongoing and continuous work.

C. This fact must be uppermost in our minds and thoughts.

**III. Follow Me and I will make you become fishers of men. Mark 1:17**

A. Follow Me and I will use you to catch men for Myself.

B. Follow Me and the life you live and the words you speak will draw others to me.

1 Peter 3:13-17

Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. **AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, 15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;** 16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

**IV. Jesus was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not lose heart. Luke 18:1**

A. Any meaningful relationship requires communication and ongoing commitment.

B. God is not going to give up on you and me, and we should not give up on Him either.

C. On Friday I wrote the following in my journal.

“To get along in this world we must accept the fact that God is always right. The evidence at hand may deny that reality, but the reality is true nonetheless.”

D. Jesus concluded His parable with this question, “However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find (this kind of) faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8

## **APPLICATION**

1. Peter was speaking of every true follower of Christ when he wrote the following found in I Peter 2:9-12.

9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, **so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;** 10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. 11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. 12 **Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles,** so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

2. You may not be called to some full-time Christian vocation, but you are called to be a full-time Christian whose life and words proclaim a consistent message.