Uncommon

***And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship and to the breaking of bread and to prayer.***

Acts 2:42

**What Does it Say?**

They were continually devoting themselves to apostles teaching, fellowship, breaking bread and prayer.

**What Does it Mean?**

I love the quote by George Washington Carver, **“When you do common things in life, in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world.”**

I read that quote and I think it describes those who decided to be talmidin (disciples) of Jesus, the Messiah on Pentecost. The fire of the Holy Spirit is in their bones and all they want is more of the presence of Jesus.

The word ***devoted*** stands out to me. Devoted is a great translation of the word for sure, but like every word in the Greek, there is more meaning behind it than we really grasp. The word devoted means to ***persevere, to keep showing up***. They kept showing up because it mattered. It mattered more than the bad day they had, or the craziness at work, or the traffic. It didn’t matter when they got there, so long as they did. Can you say that describes each of our attitudes about church?

To persevere… that word rolled around in my head for weeks. I persevered when I decided to run marathons. I had to get up each day at 4:30 a.m. and start running. I had run about 10-15 miles some mornings before my two kids (ages 2 and 1) were awake. It took me over a year of doing this each and every day before the race day finally came. I can’t say I was super pumped to run each and every day, but I did because I had to. I had to because I am not a runner and it would take more for just a regular person like me. Did I want to quit? YES! Almost every single day, but I persevered. I ran that race and at mile 23 I wanted to quit. I could not do it. My brother joined me for the last few miles and kept telling me, “You can’t quit now. You have gone through so much to make it here to get to this point. Do not quit- keep going.” So I kept going and there is nothing like crossing that finish line. After so many days, weeks, and months of training, to then cross that finish line, that is what perseverance looks like. Perseverance does not become perseverance until you want to quit. How about that? Can anyone relate to that?

There are so many of you with hard stories (hard doesn’t scratch the surface, I know). You have been church hurt. I want to tell you that there is no hurt like church hurt. It takes the literal breath out of you, it takes the wind from your sails, it devastates, and I am so sorry. You have had so many reasons to leave and walk away from church (the noun). I am not asking you to return to the noun, but I am going to plead with you now- return to the verb. There ***are*** talmid out there! There are disciples of Jesus called out to follow Him with everything they have.

Here in Acts 2:41, 3,000 people bent their knee to Jesus, and dedicated themselves to the apostles teaching. But then they decentralized and went to their homes, their neighborhoods, their places of business, and opened them up for the study of God’s Word, prayer and fellowship. God is passionate about community and I believe if community matters to God, then there is community around you. Get in the Word with them. Pray to seek to hear God’s voice and then follow together.

When you read these verses at the end of Acts 2, don’t you want to be part of a community like that? Those small communities changed the world because they allowed the Holy Spirit to teach them and move them. There were awesome things done while lifting up the name of Jesus.

If I were the enemy, I would do all I could to keep the Holy Spirit out of these communities. If I were the enemy, I would fill churches with wolves among sheep. If I were the enemy, I would do whatever it takes to be sure the talmid were taken out one by one, divided and separated from the pack, and then destroyed. You have every reason to embrace the bitter, the hurt, and embrace all those reasons to quit. Jesus did not quit on us when EVERY ONE of His “church” friends left Him to fend for Himself. Jesus did not quit at the point of being scourged beyond recognition. Jesus did not quit at the sound of the nails, the jeering or the gambling for His clothes. Jesus persevered for us.

The only way we can persevere, is through the power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot do it on our own.***“Count it pure joy by brothers and sisters when you face trials of many kinds,” (James 1:2)*.** Easier said than done, I know. It is time we decide **together** to be disciples, talmidin, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

God loves to take the hurt, the broken, the forgotten, and the common, and redeem their lives (as only He can do). Then He puts them in the middle of the room and lets them speak of their love for Jesus. That is the picture of devotion. We are devoted to Jesus, devoted to being filled with the Holy Spirit, and devoted to telling the community of the “called out ones” of His beauty. That my friend, is **UNCOMMON**. That kind of testimony of who Jesus is will change the world.

My word for you today is to persevere in the power of the Holy Spirit. As you go out today, as a living testimony of who Jesus is, make disciples of the watching world. Let’s do this #together. A community of common people with an UNCOMMON love for Jesus will command the attention of the world.

#Persevere #don’tquitnow #pressin

**What Does it Mean to ME?**

Why has the enemy been so intent on sidelining you? What has taken you out or what has threatened to take you out of being a disciple? How will you determine to persevere? Who will persevere with you so when quit is on the horizon, they will remind you that you are chosen and called?

The book I spoke about in the study on line the first night was Spiritual Profiling by Tom Hovestal. There is a link here to purchase on eBay if you would like <https://rover.ebay.com/rover/0/0/0?mpre=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ebay.com%2Fulk%2Fitm%2F362872772871>

Here is the link the the spiritual profiling assessment I spoke about: www.spiritualprofiling,com

The Bible I spoke about is The Complete Jewish Study Bible

The Complete Jewish Study Bible: Illuminating the Jewishness of God's Word; Blue Flexisoft Edition <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1619708698/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_api_i_iOjfEbNR2V066>

Seeking Allah Finding Jesus link

<https://www.amazon.com/Seeking-Allah-Finding-Jesus-Christianity/dp/0310092647/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3NM7OJZMMEM3S&keywords=seeking+allah+finding+jesus&qid=1579607888&sprefix=seeking+allah+f%2Caps%2C163&sr=8-1>

DON FINTO’s BOOK: Your People shall be My People

<https://www.amazon.com/Your-People-Shall-Be-Christian/dp/0800797892>

Mudhouse Sabbath:

https://www.amazon.com/Mudhouse-Sabbath-Invitation-Spiritual-Discipline/dp/1557255326/ref=sr\_1\_2?keywords=book+mudhouse+sabbath&qid=1580813987&sr=8-2

If you are interested in joining the live stream for this study visit my professional FB page:

Join me in praying and fasting this winter season as we live out the book of Acts, together.