

Full Devotion
Acts #23 | 20:1-37
March 7, 2021

Pre-Sermon Remarks

PRAYER

Introduction

What does it look like when somebody is completely devoted to something?

- Marijuana legalization petition guy

Big idea: What does full devotion to God look like?

Francis de Sales Genuine, living devotion presupposes love of God, and hence it is simply true love of God...Just as it is the function of charity to enable us to observe all God's commandments in general and without exception, so it is the part of devotion to enable us to observe them more quickly and diligently.

Devotion is where faithfulness meets passion | Wholeheartedness

I. Missional Work

¹ After the uproar was over, Paul sent for the disciples, encouraged them,

- Good! He caused quite a ruckus

and after saying farewell, departed to go to Macedonia. ² And when he had passed through those areas and offered them many words of encouragement, he came to Greece ³ and stayed three months. The Jews plotted against him when he was about to set sail for Syria, and so he decided to go back through Macedonia. ⁴ He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. ⁵ These men went on ahead and waited for us in Troas, ⁶ but we sailed away from Philippi after the Festival of Unleavened Bread. In five days we reached them at Troas, where we spent seven days.

.....

¹³ We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos, where we were going to take Paul on board, because these were his instructions, since he himself was going by land. ¹⁴ When he met us at Assos, we took him on board and went on to Mitylene. ¹⁵ Sailing from there, the next day we arrived off Chios. The following day we crossed over to Samos, and the day after, we came to Miletus. ¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia, because he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, for the day of Pentecost.

- Does anybody else feel exhausted about this travelogue?
 - People say they like to travel, but they don't. Travelling is hard. They like places.

Living on Mission

1. Not every Christian is called to travel the world, but all are called to proclaim Jesus
2. Let's face it: that's always hard. The good news of the gospel starts with some bad news
 - a. Throughout Acts, Jews and Gentiles are confronted by the truth of Messiah
3. ***The only thing that will truly motivate you to live a life on mission to the world is a joyful, loving, burning devotion to God.***

Wholehearted devotion to God fuels mission

II. Truth-Seeking

⁷On the first day of the week, we assembled to break bread.

- Reference to a Sunday gathering

Paul spoke to them, and since he was about to depart the next day, he kept on talking until midnight. ⁸There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were assembled, ⁹and a young man named Eutychus [**name means "lucky"**] was sitting on a window sill and sank into a deep sleep as Paul kept on talking. When he was overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. ¹⁰But Paul went down, bent over him, embraced him, and said, "Don't be alarmed, because he's alive." ¹¹After going upstairs, breaking the bread, and eating, Paul talked a long time until dawn.

- Adrenaline rush + encouragement of their faith = Let's go for five more hours

Then he left. ¹²They brought the boy home alive and were greatly comforted.

Two Words

- Δ ι α λ έ γ ο μ α ι (dialegomai) | dialogue (v9)
- Ὅ μ ι λ έ ω (homileo) | sermon (v11)
- Both are essential in the life of Christian discipleship

Devotion to Truth

1. We live in a soundbite culture | BuzzFeed list, Ted Talks, memes
2. We also live in a culture of non-listening/hearing | social media, political polarization
3. Devotion to God includes a devotion to seeking truth
4. ALSO, this devotion to truth is fueled by devotion to God
 - a. It is possible to know all the right doctrine, memorize chapter and verse, and yet not have true devotion to God
5. ***We don't study the bible to know the bible, but to know God more closely!***

Wholehearted devotion to God fuels truth-seeking

III. Bold Humility

¹⁷Now from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and summoned the elders of the church. ¹⁸When they came to him, he said to them, "You know, from the first day I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, ¹⁹servicing the Lord with all humility, with tears, and during the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. ²⁰You know that I did not avoid proclaiming to you anything that

was profitable or from teaching you publicly and from house to house.²¹ I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus.²² “And now I am on my way to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what I will encounter there,²³ except that in every town the Holy Spirit warns me that chains and afflictions are waiting for me.²⁴ But I consider my life of no value to myself; my purpose is to finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God’s grace.²⁵ “And now I know that none of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will ever see me again.²⁶ Therefore I declare to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you,²⁷ because I did not avoid declaring to you the whole plan of God.²⁸ Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.²⁹ I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.³⁰ Men will rise up even from your own number and distort the truth to lure the disciples into following them.³¹ Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for three years I never stopped warning each one of you with tears.³² “And now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all who are sanctified.³³ I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing.³⁴ You yourselves know that I worked with my own hands to support myself and those who are with me.³⁵ In every way I’ve shown you that it is necessary to help the weak by laboring like this and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, because he said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”³⁶ After he said this, he knelt down and prayed with all of them.³⁷ There were many tears shed by everyone. They embraced Paul and kissed him,³⁸ grieving most of all over his statement that they would never see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Bold Humility

1. Emotional humility (vulnerability) | (v19, 31) two times he references his tears
2. Financial humility | (v33) coveted nothing, (v34) worked with his own hands, more blessed to give
3. Trusting humility | (v32) And now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all who are sanctified.
 - a. The humility to hand off

Humble Boldness

1. Boldness of truth | (v20) I did not avoid proclaiming to you anything that was profitable or from teaching you publicly and from house to house, (v27) I did not avoid declaring to you the whole plan of God, (v31) night and day for three years I never stopped warning each one of you with tears.
2. Boldness of confrontation | (v28-30)²⁸ Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.²⁹ I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.³⁰ Men will rise up even from your own number and distort the truth to lure the disciples into following them.
 - a. Overseers have a responsibility to guard true teaching and doctrine
 - b. It takes boldness to do the work of confrontation

3. Boldness of purpose | (v22-24) ²²“And now I am on my way to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what I will encounter there, ²³except that in every town the Holy Spirit warns me that chains and afflictions are waiting for me. ²⁴But I consider my life of no value to myself; my purpose is to finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God’s grace.

Wholehearted devotion *leads to both humility and boldness*

- We can’t pit them against one another
- Beware of false humility (wishy-washy) and false boldness (swagger)

The Devotion of Christ

1. Jesus’ devotion to Scripture
2. Jesus’ devotion to bold humility
3. Jesus’ devotion to his mission | **GOSPEL**
4. Jesus’ devotion to his Father
 - a. **John 14** ³¹ I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.

Growing in Devotion

1. Commit your whole heart to Jesus | Psalm 86:11
 - a. Non-Christians, give your heart to him!
 - b. Christians, don’t be half-hearted
2. Eliminate distractions | 1 Corinthians 7:35 ...so that you may be devoted to the Lord without distraction.
3. Commit to thinking deeply | 1 Timothy 4:13 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.
4. Face hard things with bold humility

Benediction

Psalm 86 ¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. ¹² I will praise you, O Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever.