

Devotion: Day by Day in 2016

- A. **Day by day.** That's our congregational focus for 2016. To be "of Christ." Every day. Everywhere. To follow in the footsteps of the earliest Christians—men and women whose lives were powerfully transformed (*Acts 2:42-47*).
- B. We spent time last week studying where real transformation began and continues to unfold:
1. The Helper, the Holy Spirit, empowered the apostles of Jesus to be witnesses.
 2. The aim of the Spirit's coming and the apostles' work was to convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment.
 3. Men and women in need of salvation must come in contact with the good news of God's grace.
 4. The "dots" of God's revelation to mankind are connected.
 5. Jesus is proclaimed as the risen Lord and Christ.
 6. In the hearts of those who are willing to meekly receive the implanted word, alienation from God leads to amazement leads to questions leads to realization leads to conviction.
- C. Our ongoing mission—pointing hearts to this possibility with "*the word of the cross*" (*1 Cor 1:18*).
- D. Taking the same blueprint to its next logical step, where does conviction lead?

Conviction through "the word of the cross" produces _____ to "the way of the cross."

- A. "*And they devoted themselves to...*" (*Acts 2:42a*)
1. To *devote* oneself means to concentrate on and commit to a particular pursuit, purpose, or cause.
 2. The real meaning becomes clear when we see how it is used throughout the New Testament:
 - a. "*He told his disciples to _____ a boat ready for him because of the crowd*" (*Mark 3:9*).
 - b. "*And day by day, **attending** the temple together...*" (*Acts 2:46*).
 - c. "*But we will _____ ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word*" (*Acts 6:4*).
 - d. "*Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he **continued** with Philip*" (*Acts 8:13*).
 - e. "*...a devout soldier from among those who _____ him*" (*Acts 10:7*).
 - f. "*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be **constant** in prayer*" (*Rom 12:12*).
 - g. "*_____ steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving*" (*Col 4:2*).
 3. If I am devoted, it's because I devoted myself; no one can do it for me or on my behalf.
 4. Perhaps *Luke 9:18-27* captures the principle more profoundly than any other instance.
- B. How did these Spirit-guided apostles help ordinary men and women understand and engage themselves in "the way of the cross"? "*They devoted themselves to...*" (*Acts 2:42*)
1. The apostles' _____ (*Rom 6:15-18; 16:17-20; 2 John 9*)
 2. The _____ (*1 John 1:3-7*)
 3. The breaking of _____ (*1 Cor 10:16; 11:26*)
 4. The _____ (*Rom 12:12; Col 4:2*)
- C. ...proclaiming and building their lives on this overarching promise: the way of the cross leads home.