



Overview

In the Christian walk, what do you value most? What defines you? Really stop and think about it ... what in your life matters most to you? In the New Testament Church the most valuable commodity they possessed was Jesus Himself. The strength they found in the power of Christ's redemptive work and the influence that power had on their lives caused them to do some amazing and even radical things. Today many of our life values are skewed by the world and have turned our focus from God and His unending abilities to the false teachings of glorified and selfish ideals. For example, consumerism has clouded our vision and disguised our "wants" as "needs." Technology, schooling, and innate ability have modified our thinking and given us the false impression and security that we can *do it all, do it ourselves, do it better, and do it faster.*

With eyes still gazing toward the cross, the first church didn't rely on their own strength, money or possessions. Instead, they looked to the One who had conquered the grave, ushered in grace, and paid the ultimate price for freedom for all who would truly believe. The object of their desire was the one and only Son of God, Jesus. And their desire for Jesus so fueled the fire in their hearts that they couldn't help but *Be the Church ... Everyone. Everywhere. Everyday.* Let's take a closer look.

Going Deeper

Luke 24:45 says, "Then he (Jesus) opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." Begin your discussion with a time of personal prayer, asking God to give you the ability to understand what the Lord wants to teach you this week. Specifically meditate on Colossians 1:9-10, written out below as a personal prayer.

God, I (your name) am asking that You fill me with the knowledge of Your will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so I may walk in a manner worthy of You, Lord, fully pleasing You, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of You, God. Amen.

What is of most value to you? Would others who know you agree?

Making It Stick

Read Acts 2:41-47.

Verse 43 in this passage speaks of awe, miracles, wonders, and signs. What was the force or **Reliant Strength** behind these wonders and signs? Read the verses below as you discuss this.

- Acts 1:8
- Luke 24:44-49
- John 14:15-16
- 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6

How does a believer walk with "reliant strength" day by day? Read Galatians 5:16.

- Galatians 5:16-25 – We learn to walk by the Spirit (with reliant strength) day by day as we crucify our fleshly desires.
- Psalm 1 – We learn to walk by the Spirit (with reliant strength) as we study God's Word.

- 1 John 5:15 & James 1:5 – We learn to walk by the Spirit (with reliant strength) as we spend time in prayer.

What are you doing daily to tap into the power of the Holy Spirit who is living in you?

Read Acts 2:44-45.

Some would call selling your belongings, sharing with others, and caring for the needy **Radical Stewardship**. **What do you think about giving?**

What determines what you do with your possessions, your faith, or your financial position?

Read the following verses and talk about the condition of your heart with regard to stewardship.

- Matthew 6:19-21, 24
- 2 Corinthians 9:7-8

Consider these ABCs of giving that Pastor McKinley mentioned in his sermon, and talk about how this principle applies to your life.

- **Acknowledge** God's Ownership – Colossians 1:16-17
- **Believe** God's Promise – Malachi 3:8,10, Luke 6:38
- **Concentrate** on Total Life Stewardship – Romans 12:1

Talk about the correlation between **Reliant Strength** and **Radical Stewardship**. How have you seen your stewardship increase as your faith and reliance on the Holy Spirit have grown? **Read Ephesians 2:8-10.**

Worship is giving God the best that He has given you. Be careful what you do with the best you have. Whenever you get a blessing from God give it back to Him as a love gift. Take time to meditate before God and offer the blessing back to Him as a deliberate act of worship. – Oswald Chambers

Living It Out

Continue to pray and prepare for 40 Day/\$1 a Day Challenge.

Ask God to help you step out in faith and ***courageously and sacrificially*** honor God!

He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

– 1 Thessalonians 5:24