



*Pastor David Koch*

## **PSALM 91:15 – Becoming Fully Devoted Followers**

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### **Introduction:**

Christian Life Fellowship for many years has had the mission statement “.... *becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ within the context of the family of God.*” So for the next several Sundays I want us to look at what that means, what we can do to become those followers that are fully devoted and how you can measure that in your own life.

Our own spiritual life and health is up to us. We determine what we do to keep our spiritual life growing and to see that it is enriched. Just like our human bodies, we have to do things that promote health like eating balanced meals, exercising and getting plenty of rest. If I only ate food once a week physically and rarely exercised, if I never bathed, I would grow weak, get sick and eventually I would die. I have a responsibility to take care of this physical body. Scripture refers to it as ‘the temple of the Holy Spirit’. Not only am I responsible for the care of my physical body but I am also responsible to take care of my spiritual being as well. There are things that you and I can do to promote the health of our spiritual being and relationship with Christ. I will get to those during the next few weeks.

If we are going to become mature and fully devoted to Christ, there are some things that we have to do. As a church we want to provide the environment in which a person can become a balanced, mature follower of Christ. So let’s look at the components that help us do that. **Acts 2:42 - They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer.**

## I. Connected to God.

How does one become a devoted follower of Christ? It starts with being connected to God. When God created us, He did so with a need to connect with Him. We connect with God in various ways. We connect with God through prayer, through reading His word, through singing praises to Him and from being in His presence. We connect with him when we worship Him in spirit and truth.

Connecting with God is not just on a spiritual level. It happens on an intellectual and emotional level as well. Worship is vital to our spiritual existence. We cannot survive spiritually without worshipping Almighty God. If we are going to be fully devoted followers, worship is necessary. There are times when circumstances beyond our control keep us away from corporate worship. These would include illness, jobs etc. If we have control of our schedules and there are opportunities for us to worship and we refuse or we put other priorities before worship, then we need to evaluate our devotedness to Christ.

In the Gospel of [John 4:20-24](#) there is a record of a conversation that Jesus had with a Samaritan woman. In the course of this conversation, the subject of worship surfaced. This woman began to talk about specific places where her fathers had worshipped in the mountain and in the temple at Jerusalem. Jesus addressed the misconception that it was a particular place where someone worshipped that was important, when in fact it is when and how worship takes place that people become connected with God.

## II. Transformed by His presence.

Saul, who had gone about persecuting Christians, had an encounter with Christ and was transformed. He became the Apostle Paul. Each of the disciples was transformed as he spent time with the Lord and followed Him after He called them to do so. When someone connects with God, that person is changed. As you read through the Bible, we see the results of lives that connected with God and were transformed as a result of being in His presence. His effect on people is undeniable.

The prophet Isaiah gave witness of the transformation in his life when he was in God's presence. [Isaiah 6:5](#) - **Then I said, "My destruction is sealed, for I am a sinful man and a member of a sinful race. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD Almighty!"**

God's word and His Holy Spirit are agents of transformation. Unless you harden your heart against God's spirit, you cannot help but be changed in His presence. Some of the greatest moments of change that have taken place in my life have been moments when I have been worshipping in the presence of God. When one gets a glimpse of God's majesty, His holiness, His power and His strength, one recognizes his own humanity, weakness, and flaws and realizes that transformation needs to take place. I'm not talking about some makeover that covers over what is not right but a transformation that starts at the core of a person and impacts everything about that person including attitudes, thinking, passions, motivation, and desires.

[Romans 12:2](#) - **Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.** The way we think about ourselves, the way we think about others, the way we think about our purpose, the way we think about our resources, the way we think about our abilities, can all be transformed. God wants the way we think to support His purpose and His glory. God wants our thoughts to line up with His.

God's word teaches us that our purpose is to worship and glorify God. When we meet on Sunday morning, it is for the purpose of worship. The word "worship" means to crouch, to kiss, to bend low and revere. Jesus said true worship happens when the worshipper reveres God in spirit and truth. God seeks those who worship Him this way. This Samaritan woman had the concept that true worship could only happen in a limited place but Jesus made the statement that true worship involved the mind and spirit of a person regardless of place.

Our purpose for coming together on Sunday morning is to connect with God. Yes, we see people, we interact with them, there are serving

opportunities but our main reason for coming together in our large setting is to worship God. Worship involves any means that will connect me to the living God who loves me, created me, sent His only Son to die for me and longs to have intimate fellowship with me.

Eugene Peterson, who helped develop The Message, a modern version of the Bible, says this about spiritual growth and maturity: *“Spiritual growth results from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Relationships cannot be reduced to a simple, orderly process. Spiritual growth is dynamic and different for each person. We all will experience the journey differently.”* That doesn’t mean that we all don’t need to journey with the same goal in mind and use the same components to develop our spiritual life. We cannot hope to connect with God only in church on Sunday or Wednesday. We have to connect with God throughout the week and then our time of worship on Sunday and connection with God here will be so alive.

A battle has been waged since the original sin. The battle is whether we, who have been created in God’s image, will connect with God, coming close to Him in worship and find fulfillment and transformation in that connection. The enemy of our soul wants us to connect to the pleasures of sin, to the pleasures of self-centeredness, to the pleasures that he offers to humanity. God on the other hand desires that we connect with Him in worship, that we learn to know Him, that we still ourselves to hear His voice and that we learn to respond to His love. The first step in becoming fully devoted followers is that we connect with God. This connection starts to change our lives. We cannot interact with God and be the same. God is a holy God and He desires to

### **Conclusion:**

The process of becoming fully devoted followers includes the need to connect with God. Connecting with God involves establishing a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. That connection grows by worshipping Him in spirit and truth. Getting real and being close to God is what we do here each Sunday. This is only a part of becoming fully devoted. In connecting with God, there will be transformation. In this journey, you and I will be challenged to change. That will look a lot like embracing and clinging to the things that God is passionate about and also abandoning and letting go of things that are selfish and would get in the way of knowing Him. Next week we will look at connecting with God in our daily life.

transform us from the inside out. He wants us to be holy like He is Holy.

If you have connected with God and nothing has changed inside of your life, then go deeper, reach higher, seek Him more intentionally, because knowing Him is life changing. The end result of being a fully devoted follower is to serve God. We cannot serve God unless we first connect with God and know God.

Jesus left His followers with the directive that they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to everyone everywhere. Spiritual growth and transformation occurs in order for us to join with God in His passion to redeem and transform the whole world. **Ephes. 4:13- ... until we come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature and full grown in the Lord, measuring up to the full stature of Christ.** God desires to connect with us. There is a God space in man that can only be satisfied with God. Every person has been created to worship and know the Creator. All of us have sought to fill that God space with other things in our life, such as people, significance, jobs, drugs, sex, alcohol, family, money, things. Nothing fits there but God. **NOTHING!**

What we do here on Sunday morning is to connect with God through worship. By worshipping Him we surrender to Him. We seek to know Him, we yield to His will, we reaffirm our desire to be close to Him and to be like Him. We come apart from our daily activities to declare His majesty and to hear His voice. It is something that should be a high priority for those who are determined to become fully devoted. We should guard that corporate time with connecting with God.

