

INTRODUCTION: A NEW SEASON (Gen.8:22; Eph.5:16; Ps.90)

I. THE MEANING OF DEVOTION

A. COMMITMENT

1. *faith: cognizance, conviction, commitment* (Rom.10:17; 8:38; 2Tm.1:12; see Jms.2:17,19)
2. *given over to something* (Ex.13:12; Rom.12:1; Mt.22:37f)
3. *zealously seeking something* (Mt.6:33; Ezra 7:10; Lk.9:51)
4. *illustrations: athlete* (1Cor.9:26), *professional* (Rom.13:6; Acts 6:4; *contra* Jn.10:12)
5. *examples: oaths* (marriage, membership); *resolutions* (J.Edwards) (Ps.76:11; Mt.5:33f)

B. FULFILLMENT (Dt.5:20; 23:21; Lk.5:27f; Mt.5:37)

C. PERSEVERANCE (Acts 2:42,46; 1:14; see Is.17:10; 2Pt.1:12; Rev.2:4)

II. THE OBJECTS OF DEVOTION (Acts 2:42,46; see 1:14; 6:4)

A. APOSTOLIC TEACHING (Acts 2:42; see 2Tm.3:14-17; Acts 6:4)

B. FELLOWSHIP (Acts 2:42,46; see Rom.12:10,3f; Mt.25:34; Gal.6:10)

C. SACRAMENT (Acts 2:42; see 1Cor.10:16f; 11:17f; Jn.6:54f)

D. PRAYER (Acts 2:42; 1:14; 6:4; see Rom.12:12; Col.4:2 / 1Cor.7:5)

E. SUMMARY: GOD IN CHRIST BY SPIRIT THROUGH CHURCH (Acts 2:22f, 33f, 38f)

III. DEVOTE YOURSELF! (Acts 2:42)

A. SET YOUR HEART: MAKE UP YOUR MIND! (Ezra 7:10; Lk.9:51; see *Membership Covenant*, #4,5)

B. MAKE YOUR CHOICES: FILL OUT YOUR PLANNERS! (see Dt.4:37; what, when, where, how)

Introduction: objects of devotion in public & in private (see Acts 2:42,46a & 46b)

1. word: hear in public & read in private (Acts 2:42; 6:4 & Acts 17:11; 2Tm.3:14-16; Ps.78:1f)
2. sacrament: participate in public & prepare in private (1Cor.11:18f & 1Cor.11:27f; Eph.6:4)
3. prayer: with in public & for in private (1Kngs.8:22 & Luke 9:18)
4. fellowship: in public worship & in private life (Acts 2:42 & Acts 2:46; Phil.4:15; Rom.13:10,3f)
5. summary: get equipped & go serve (see Eph.4:12f)

C. REDEEM THE TIME: SEIZE YOUR OPPORTUNITIES! (Eph.5:15f; Ps.90:12)

1. public worship every Lord's Day
2. private word, prayer, fellowship every week (see church calendars)
3. personal & family devotion every day (i.e., word & prayer; many resources in our church library)

D. FULFILL YOUR PLANS & PERSEVERE IN THEM! (Acts 2:42,46; 1:14; see 1Tm.4:16)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR PRIVATE, FAMILY AND SMALL GROUP FELLOWSHIP

*Suggestions: Don't feel obliged to use every question or every part of every question. Go through and discuss those that are of greatest **interest** to you. Then consider going back and discussing those that may also be **useful**, including those that may have seemed a bit difficult. In all questions, keep the outline before to identify entries relevant to the question and to look up appropriate verses listed.*

1. How will you devote yourself to Christ in His **word** in the coming year? What will you do? When will you do it? Where will you do it? How in public? How in private, both personal and family?
2. How will you devote yourself to Christ in His **sacraments** in the coming year? What will you do? When will you do it? Where will you do it? How in public? How in private, both personal and family?
3. How will you devote yourself to Christ in **prayer** in the coming year? What will you do? When will you do it? Where will you do it? How in public? How in private, both personal and family?
4. How will you devote yourself to Christ in **fellowship** in the coming year? What will you do? When will you do it? Where will you do it? How in public? How in private, both personal and family?
5. Who are the people in the congregation who are most helpful to you? To members of your family? How so? Whose help should you seek; who has gifts from God that you need to benefit from?
6. Who are the people in the congregation whom you are most helpful to? How so? Whom should you seek to help; who needs the benefits of God's gifts to you?
7. What are the three most important ways that you are served in the congregation?
8. What are the three most important ways that you serve in the congregation?
9. How are you equipped in the congregation to serve? What equipping do you need to seek?
10. Has God called you, or is God calling you, to serve in an office (Elder or Deacon)? If so, how are you equipping yourself for this service?
11. What do you plan to do on Sunday nights? Is that the best use of your time and opportunities? Is it the most faithful use of the Lord's Day?
12. What do you plan to do on Wednesday nights? Is that the best use of your time and opportunities?