

I. Know the Plan - 2 Peter 3:16-18, Priorities of Worship

Acts 2:42 - And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.

Acts 2:42 brings us full circle in our study of 2 Peter 3:18. Here we see Peter, after having evangelized fellow Jews on the first day of the Church Age, move them immediately into the utilization of their divine operating assets.

Please note that these new believers are immediately self-motivated to pursue truth: *“they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching.”*

The word found here is the present active participle from the compound verb: *proskartereo*

Pros - is a preposition meaning “toward.” *Kartereo* is a verb meaning “to be strong, to endure, to persevere, to be steadfast.”

Proskartereo

Liddell, Henry G. and Robert Scott. Greek-English Lexicon, s.v. “proskartereo”:

to persist obstinately, to adhere firmly to, to be faithful, to remain in one's service, to remain in attendance at a law court, to devote oneself to.

Arndt, William F. and F. Wilber Gingrich. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, s.v. “proskartereo”:

to busy oneself with, be busily engaged in, to continuously persevere.

Vine, W. E. Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, s.v. “proskartereo”:

to intensively endure or persevere, to be continually steadfast.

Kittel, Gerhard. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “proskartereo”:

The verb proskartereo is common in Greek. Its basic meaning is "to stay by," "to persist at," "to remain with." In connection with objects it means a. "to occupy oneself diligently with something," "to pay persistent attention to"; b. "to hold fast to something"; c. "continually to be in."

We are going to translate this passage, *“And they began to be continuously dedicated.”*

The English word “*dedicated*” carries with it all the aspects of the various definitions we’ve noted:

Websters Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. “dedicated”:

Solemn and exclusive devotion to a sacred purpose; to become committed to as a goal or as a way of life.

Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “dedicated”:

The giving up or devoting (of oneself, one's time, labour) to the service of a person or to the pursuit of a purpose.

Now please note to what these people have dedicated their time, attention and energy: *“And they began to be continuously dedicated to the apostles.”*

didache - “*doctrine*.” This is a noun in the locative of sphere and indicates the content of that which is taught, i.e., *doctrine*.

The sphere of influence is the apostles' authority functioning within the environment of the local church.

The gift of the Holy Spirit which they have just received includes the divine operating assets which enable them to pursue truth.

The word *didache* is the Greek word from which we get the English word “*didactics*” which is defined by:

Websters Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. “didactics”:

Systematic instruction.

Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “didactics”:

The science or art of teaching.

In fact, here is what has happened following the salvation of these first-century believers:

They have enrolled in the Divine Academy of Grace Didactics under the instruction of the eleven original apostles.

They continually dedicate themselves to their teachings by concentrating on the content of the message and thereby growing in grace.

One of the assets which accompanies the “*gift of the Holy Spirit*” mentioned in Acts 2:38 is the Grace Apparatus for Perception.

They are self-motivated to utilize this system of epistemological habilitation in the environment of the original New Testament local church in Jerusalem.

Their top priority is devotion to the “*teachings of the apostles.*”

They continue to participate in other acts of worship which are mentioned next: *koinonia* - “*fellowship.*”

This is the locative of sphere and refers to the influence of the local church as the classroom for Christianity. We are commanded in Hebrews 10:25 not to “forsake the assembling of ourselves together.” The growth process is most efficient inside the local church, with dedicated concentration paid to the message of the pastor. When the members of the local church assemble together under the filling of the Holy Spirit and under His teaching ministries, all are having fellowship with God. Believers can also have fellowship with other Christians when they are all filled with the Holy Spirit. This could include conversation, having a cup of tea, attending a ball game, enjoying a party, doing lunch.

klasis tou artos - “*breaking of bread*”

In the context of the passage which is the establishment of the *modus operandi* for worship in the New Testament church, this is a reference to observing the Eucharist. It is sometimes associated with what was known as the Agape Love Feast, a weekly gathering at which all members of the church would come together for meal, symbolic of the family-like relationship established among believers. In context however, the emphasis is on the Eucharist as part of authentic worship.

proseuche - “*prayers*”

The concept of public prayer in the local church is a part of the worship service.

Please note the emphasis placed by Luke on the *modus operandi* of these new believers:

Bible study under the authority of the apostles and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit utilizing the Grace Apparatus for Perception.

Fellowship with God in all phases of worship and with each other as fellow participants.

1. Participation in the observation of the Eucharist.
2. Public prayer for each other.

This establishes the areas of worship to be observed by those who attend the local church and indicates the order of their priorities.

Dedication to the teaching of the Scripture is to be top priority.

Acts 2:42 - And they began to be continuously dedicated to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to observing the Eucharist, and to prayer.

This completes our analysis of the word *Cristos* – “*Christ*.” Our corrected translation of 2 Peter 3:18 sounds like this:

2 Peter 3:18 (Corrected Translation Version) - But keep on growing in the sphere of grace [grace apparatus for perception] and in the sphere of gnosis [positive volition toward doctrine academically understood] about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The mandate indicates that the subject matter is to emphasize the doctrines surrounding the Person of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

His name and titles are filled with doctrinal information which is to be learned by the believer during his growth process.

We will now note a few of the doctrines which are implied by the definition of each title as well as the name, Jesus.

1. Lord: *Kurios* - “*Adonai*”

Deity of Jesus Christ

Divine Essence related to Jesus Doctrine of Creation

Doctrine of Theophanies

Doctrine of the Divine Summit Conference

Doctrine of the scientific laws of the universe having divine origin in Christ Doctrine of the Shekinah Glory

2. Savior: *Soter* - “*Yasha*”

Doctrine of Redemption Doctrine of Reconciliation Doctrine of Propitiation Doctrine of Impeccability

Doctrine of Substitutionary Spiritual Death Doctrine of Divine Judgment of Sin in Christ

Doctrine of Retroactive and Current Positional Truth Doctrine of Resurrection

Doctrine of Mediatorship

3. Jesus: *Iesous* - “*Joshua*”

Doctrine of the True Humanity of Jesus Doctrine of the Virgin Birth

Doctrine of the Incarnation Doctrine of the Hypostatic Union Doctrine of Kenosis

Doctrine of the Sustaining Ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Incarnate Christ Doctrine of the Temptability of Jesus

Doctrine of the Prototype Divine Power System Doctrine of Biblical Problem-Solving Devices

4. Christ: *Christos* - “*Messiah*”

Doctrine of Anointing Doctrine of the Line of Christ

Doctrine of the Davidic Covenant Doctrine of the First Advent Doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven Doctrine of the Church

Doctrine of Messiah as Prophet, Priest, and King Doctrine of Miracles and Healing as Signs to Israel Doctrine of Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus Doctrine of the Judgment Seat of Christ

Doctrine of the Second Advent

Doctrine of the Millennial Reign of Christ Doctrine of the Great White Throne

As a footnote to this study let's note a passage of Scripture cited by Dr. Chafer in my recitation from his Systematic Theology a few days ago. Turn to John 16:7, John 16:8, John 16:9, John 16:10, John 16:11.