1 - **Now that I’m a Christian, Then What? Continually Devoted to Prayer**…

Acts 2:38-42

2 – “***Continually devoted to… ”***

Devotion is to the Lord and His Church.

Devotion to:

1. **Apostles teaching** - continual biblical teaching
2. **Fellowship** - continual participation in the gospel
3. **Breaking of bread** - continual devotion to worship
4. **Prayer** - continual devotion to spiritual communication.

3 - ***“Continually devoted to… Prayer”***

Why would new Christians need to focus on their devotion to prayer? Why the 3000 in Acts 2?

4 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

* Prayer is a spiritual blessing extended **by the grace of God**.
* **More than a command** (Romans 12:12), **an invitation** to bring our cares, concerns and needs (Philippians 4:4-6) before the Creator of the world. (Heb. 4:16; Esther 4:9ff)
* Something they/we **need teaching** in. (Luke 11:1)
* **Foundational to our spiritual health**.

5 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

What is prayer? Defined by four terms in **1 Timothy 2:1** –

* **Entreaties** – or supplications – **requests for particular benefits**. Our “hearts desire”. (Romans 10:1)
* **Prayers** – generally of **communication (only) with God** and often of **worship and adoration**. (Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6)
* **Petitions** – **intercessions** – prayers to God for self or others. To interrupt another in speaking with freedom of access & with familiarity to a superior.
* **Thanksgivings** – gratitude or “grateful language”.

6 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**It is our:**

* Recognition of a higher being
* Dependence and submission to our Creator
* Faith in His ability to hear and respond.

**It is not:**

* Wishful thinking
* A forum for our selfish wants
* A way to avoid responsibility

7 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

To whom, and through whom, do we pray?

Jesus taught His disciples:

* To pray to ***“Our Father who is in heaven…”*** (Matthew 6:9)
* To ***“ask in My name”*** unto the Father. (John 14:13-14)
* Paul taught we are to be ***“giving thanks through Him (Jesus) to God the Father”***. (Colossians 3:17)

8 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

Jesus ***“always lives to make intercession”*** for us. (Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1)

* “To fall in with” (Thayer); “to entreat in favor” (Strong); “a picturesque word of rescue by one who ‘happens on’ one who is in trouble’ and in his behalf pleads with groanings.”
* As our intercessor, Jesus understands. (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15-16)

9 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**Whose prayers are heard?**

* Everyone regardless of their heart, faith and obedience?
* Rather God hears the prayers of:
* The “upright” (Proverbs 15:8)
* The “righteous” (Proverbs 15:29; James 5:16; 1 Peter 3:12)
* Those who strive to “keep His commandments”. (1 John 3:21-22)
* The “God-fearing” and the one who “does His will”. (John 9:31)
* The one who listens to Him. (Proverbs 28:9)
* What about Cornelius? (Acts 10:2-4; cf., Matthew 7:7-8)

10 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**For what do we pray?**

* Whatever is according to the Lord’s will in our pursuit of “eternal life”. (1 John 5:13-15; Luke 22:42)
* Learning from Jesus’ teaching: ***“Pray then in this way…”*** (Matthew 6:9-15)

11 – ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**“Pray then in this way…”**

**The glory of God!**

* “*Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name*.” (vs. 9)
* “*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen*.” (vs. 13)

**The prosperity of the Lord’s kingdom!**

* ***“Your kingdom come”*** (vs. 10; note: it came, Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Ephesians 4:16)

12 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**“Pray then in this way…” The will of God!**

* **“*Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*.”** (vs. 10; Luke 22:42; Acts 21:14; 1 Peter 4:2)

**Faith and Contentment with our daily necessities!**

* ***“Give us this day our daily bread”*** (Philippians 4:11-13;   
  1 Timothy 6:6-8; Proverbs 30:7-9; 2 Thessalonians 3:10)

13 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**“Pray then in this way…”**

**Awareness of sin and temptation**

* **“*Forgive us our debts as we have also forgiven our debtors… do not lead us into temptation*.”** (vs. 12-13; 1 Corinthians 10:12; 1 Peter 5:8; Romans 13:14)

14 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**Other matters the scriptures teach us to pray for.**

* **The lost (Romans 10:1)**
* **Our brethren – Congregations** (1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3-5; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2) and **individual brethren** (Acts 12:5; 2 Tim. 1:3; Philemon 4)
* **Our civil rulers** – (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
* **That which tempts us to be anxious** – (Phil. 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7)
* **The sick and those in sin** – (James 5:14-16; Acts 8:22-24)
* **More love** – (Phil. 1:9)

15 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

* **What we’re not to pray for.**
* **Our selfish wants!** (James 4:3)

16 - ***“Continually devoted to… prayer”***

**Attitudes needed in prayer:**

* **Humility** (Luke 18:9-14; James 4:6-10)
* **Faith and confidence** (James 1:5-6; 1 John 5:14-15)
* **Persistence** (“***Continual coming***…”; Luke 18:1-8; 11:5-10, “***because of his persistence***”)
* **Devotion & commitment** - (Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2)
* **Spiritual focus** (Colossians 3:1-2)
* **Alertness and soberness** - (1 Peter 4:7)