

**Let Us Pray - Acts 4:23-31**  
**Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

**Notes from the Sermon**

As our annual May Month of Prayer comes to a close, our focus has been on prayer, in the context of the "Prayer Meeting"...commonly referred to as "corporate prayer" or "congregational prayer". Our Genesis prayer team has been leading us through a section of a sermon delivered by Charles Spurgeon, the great 19th century pastor, entitled...Prayer Meetings. The focus was on the Apostles and the early church gathering, often, for prayer meetings for specific purpose and reasons, as recorded in the Book of Acts. Spurgeon's full sermon is worth the read, as it really does provide a good structure, and reason for why finding Holy Spirit power in our prayer meetings at Genesis are so important.

Our story today gives us a glimpse of the early church in Jerusalem, as recorded by Luke in the book of Acts. The church, of about 120 people, has just experienced a baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, some 50 days after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The Apostles Peter and John, facilitate the healing of a man, lame from birth...in Jesus Name, and this draws the attention of a crowd, in awe and wonder of the healing, to which Peter explains the reason for the man's healing...(the man's) faith in the risen Jesus. This draws the attention and anger, too, of the Jewish religious leaders, who had a hand in the unjust trial and crucifixion of Jesus...as they saw Him as a threat to their power. Peter & John are held overnight in prison, and are warned the next morning to never speak in Jesus Name again...to which the apostles respond..."we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard". The Jewish council, realizing that they could not punish them any further because of the crowds, and the miracle of the man's healing, witnessed in public...released them.

And it's worth noting that from the time of Pentecost, to this moment in the story...we see the church growing from about 120 to 5,000 believers...as the gospel of Jesus Christ begins to spread in Jerusalem!

Our passage today takes us to a Prayer Meeting, and a prayer of the early church, upon hearing Peter and John's report of their persecution and release. In a prayer meeting...as one voice...they pray...acknowledging God in His Sovereign authority. Maker of the heavens and the earth...and in full control over his creation. They continue by praying Old Testament scripture from Psalm 2:1-2...a song written by King David, prophesying of a time when kings and rulers, Jews and gentiles, would gather against the Lord's "Anointed". These believers see Jesus as the "Lord's Anointed" in the Psalm...and see, too, in the Psalm that those who would "rage" against the Lord's Anointed...Jesus...would do so in vain. They understood that God was in control of even the persecution of Jesus...and their own persecution in proclaiming Christ publicly. They also understood that this was all part of God's plan of redemption...for them, and for all of creation!

So, with this understanding of who God is, and what he had predestined to take place from long ago...and that this redemptive plan would not fail...they ask God, not for protection from persecution...but for "boldness" to continue to speak the Word of God to the nations! God answers...and boy does he answer! In a prayer meeting, the believers experience, yet again, another infilling of the Holy Spirit. It shook the room! And they received the power they needed to continue their witness of Christ!

The same Sovereign God...the same Holy Spirit power...and the same command from Jesus to go and make disciples of all nations, remains with us today! This power, falling on the early church, has and will continue to fall on us today...and even more so when we come together,

in one united voice, asking for the power and boldness we need for effective ministries, mission, and witness here at Genesis!

**Bible Reading for the Week**

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 Kings 9	1 Kings 10	1 Kings 11	1 Kings 12	1 Kings 13	1 Kings 14	1 Kings 15

Reading from this past week's sermon: Acts 4:23-31

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Genesis 3

**Family Worship**

Song - *Glorious Day*

<https://youtu.be/gkIJ2XZwDHc?si=b4e7DoMCv-sOkuyH>

Gospel Project

Unit: Jesus the Healer

Story: Jesus' Second Miracle

Big Picture Question: Why Did Jesus perform miracles?

Answer: Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.

Scripture: John 4

New City Catechism

Question 21: What sort of Redeemer is needed to bring us back to God?

Answer: One who is truly human and also truly God.

Verse: Isaiah 9:6

Acts 4:23-31

- When praying...how can acknowledging God's Sovereign authority over his creation impact our expectations of the things we ask for in prayer? How can we better pray "in faith"...actually believing that God will answer?
- Have you ever tried praying scripture back to God? Discuss possible reasons why it might be good to fasten our praise, confessions, thanksgiving...and requests, to the promises of God in the scriptures...and pray it back to Him? (Can you see this image in Isaiah 55:10-11)?
- We see in the scriptures...and in modern day, that when the church is persecuted...it grows! What are the different ways we see persecution, for sharing the gospel, in our city today? Are we experiencing persecution? If not...why? What might be some of our "internal enemies" that hold us back from sharing the love of Christ with the lost people around us?
- What has been your experience with Prayer Meetings at Genesis...or at other churches? Are prayer meetings important...do we even need them? Could they have any impact on our ministries and missions...How? What are some things that we (the church) could do to encourage more of our people to come to a prayer meeting? (And if you come to a consensus...please share your ideas with an Elder)!

Prayer

\*Pray for Genesis to become a church with a passion for prayer and the power of God.

\*Pray for the Genesis Family Mission Trip to Sikeston and the Cottinga trip to Guatemala.

\*NOTE - Check Koinonia each day this week in order to download the devotions and prayer points from the Family Mission Trip.