

After They Prayed

Acts 4:23-31

Summary

This sermon, drawn from Acts 4:23-31, explores how the early church responded to persecution and threats with bold, anchored prayer rather than fear or retreat. After Peter and John were arrested, threatened, and released, they returned to their community of believers — their "own people" — and together lifted up a prayer that began not with requests, but with deep acknowledgment of God's sovereignty. The sermon emphasizes that grounding prayer in the character and Word of God transforms what we ask for: rather than praying defensively for safety, the early believers prayed offensively for courage and boldness. The pastor calls the congregation toward becoming a genuinely praying church, one that raises its sails to catch the wind of the Holy Spirit — trusting that "after they prayed," God can shake the very room.

Discussion Questions

The sermon describes Peter and John returning to "their own people" — the church. What does it mean to you to belong to a community defined by Christ rather than race, politics, or background?

The early believers began their prayer with worship and acknowledgment of God's sovereignty before making any requests. How does the order of your prayers shape what you end up asking for?

Instead of praying for protection, they prayed for boldness. Is there an area of your life where you've been praying defensively when you might be called to pray offensively?

The sermon suggests we may see fewer miracles partly because we aren't asking. Does that challenge or encourage you? What would it look like to pray more expectantly?

The pastor says prayer "exposes what we really believe or fail to believe about God." What do your current prayers reveal about your actual trust in God?

What would it look like practically for your small group, family, or church to take prayer as seriously as preaching or worship?