

# SEQUOIA NOTES

## Today's Sequoia Message...

### The Centrality of Prayer

With Jeremy Vasic  
February 4, 2024



### What was prayer to the first followers of Jesus?

Acts 2:42-46 All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

<sup>43</sup> A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. <sup>44</sup> And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. <sup>45</sup> They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. <sup>46</sup> They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity.

What was prayer to the first followers of Jesus?

Acts 4:23-31 As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said. <sup>24</sup> When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God: "O Sovereign Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— <sup>25</sup> you spoke long ago by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant, saying,

'Why were the nations so angry?  
Why did they waste their time with futile plans?

<sup>26</sup> The kings of the earth prepared for battle;  
the rulers gathered together  
against the Lord  
and against his Messiah.'

<sup>27</sup> "In fact, this has happened here in this very city! For Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate the governor, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were all united against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed. <sup>28</sup> But everything they did was determined beforehand according to your will. <sup>29</sup> And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. <sup>30</sup> Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

<sup>31</sup> After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.

**Prayer reminds us of who God is and who we are.**

**Prayer helps us when we are overwhelmed.**

**Prayer leads to faith.**

**Prayer invites the Holy Spirit.**

**So why don't we pray?**

"Scripture teaches, 'Don't be anxious about anything. Just pray about everything.' [Phil. 4:6] Maybe we don't because prayer comes with plenty of reasons to be anxious. Prayer itself makes us anxious because it uncovers fears we can ignore as long as we don't engage deeply, thoughtfully, vulnerably with God." -Tyler Staton, *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools*

**We are afraid of the silence of prayer.**

**We are afraid of the wrong motives.**

**We are afraid of doing it wrong.**

**Big Idea: Pray as you are.**

**Pray as you are because God hears every kind of prayer.**

**Pray as you are because there is no wrong prayer.**

**Pray as you are because prayer is a journey of discovery.**

**Show up in prayer.**



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**The Centrality of Prayer**  
**February 4, 2024**

- 1) How has the Lord been speaking to you this week?
  
- 2) Read Acts 4:23-31. What is the **Context** for this passage? Where is this taking place in the book as a whole (what comes before or after)? Who is the writer and who are the recipients? Where does it fit in the Bible?
  
- 3) **Observation:** What “jumps out” in this passages? What interesting details do you observe? What questions come up about the passage? What is the major theme in the passage?
  
- 4) **Meaning:** What was the meaning for the original recipients? What meaning is inferred in this passage for us?
  
- 5) What is your biggest fear surrounding prayer?
  
- 6) What does it look like for you to “Pray as you are”?
  
- 7) **Application:** How is God speaking to you through this passage? How can you show up in prayer this week?



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