

Prayer Saturated Church
Acts 4:23-31

Intro:

Brief Recap

So good to be together again / Church That Changed the World Series / Selected Scenes in Book of Acts
Part 1 = Priorities & Passionate Pursuits (1st 6 weeks) / Part 2 = Prayers & Pleadings (Next 5 weeks)

Image:

Q – What are the top 2-3 things you love about Dallas?
Some things I love: Chick-Fil-A / Terry Black's / Cowboys / Irish ☺ / Texas Lingo – Y'all! / Churches – amazing!

Need:

Something I don't love (635, the DMV, cost of medical or dental ☺)
Holy Discontent – lack of passionate & persistent corporate prayer in churches within the metroplex
(a) Dallas = Buckle of Bible Belt, but I'm not sure if it is the epicenter of prayer
(b) Visited 17 churches – packed with programs / I think in 3 there were corporate prayer gatherings
(c) E.g. Asked students how many have corporate prayer – 2/12 (ie. 1/6th) – why? “Too busy”
(d) E.g. Indian Couple @ DTS – are struck by the lack of passionate corporate prayer in DFW
(e) E.g. RT Kendell Quote – returned to that – “lack of prayer for a mighty work of God”
- We are asleep, like its 2am, we don't want to be disturbed
- Absence of conviction of sin, lack of fear of God ...
- Little of no concern about people going to hell
- Indifference to talking to people about Christ
- Little or no time spent in prayer for a mighty work of God

Subject:

**Every mighty movement of God has been birthed in passionate & persistent corporate prayer //
If the culture is to be reached [in power], the church must be revived [in prayer]**

Text:

Today we are going to see how the first church was saturated in prayer / soaked / drenched – as a result they became a church that changed its world for Jesus Christ / Turn with me to **Acts 4:23-31**

Context Ob's:

30 references to prayer in the book of Acts, only 28 chapters, enough refs for every single chapter
Most of these come up front – narrative technique to show what is typical, sets scene for rest of book
Praying in small groups, large groups, seemingly minor and absolutely massive decisions
All joined together constantly in prayer as one in Acts 1:14
Praying over who will replace Judas in Acts 1:24-25
Ch. Devoted to Prayer in Acts 2:42 – Proskarterew – To Persist In Something / Attach Oneself To / Be
Busily Engaged in Something / Persevere In / Be Devoted To
Picture Luke wants you to get is Church were **Passionately & Persistently Saturated in Prayer**

[Here In Acts 4 They Run to the Place of Prayer]

I. They Recalled God's Sovereignty (23-24)

23 When they were released, Peter and John went to their fellow believers and reported everything the high priests and the elders had said to them. **24** When they heard this, they raised their voices to God with one mind and said, “Master of all, you who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them...”

Released	Context = Peter & John Perform Miracle / Preaches / Put in Jail / Placed before Sanhedrin
Reacted	Immediately reacted to the storm by <i>running</i> to the rock in prayer; e.g. Luther – Storms drive to rock Before you rise to your feet, fall on your knees/Before you try to fix problem fall before God in prayer
Raised As 1	To Lift Up / As 1 – more than togetherness, unity / Psalm 133 – bros dwell in unity
Recalled	1 of 5 Hebrew Words = To Remember / Deut 8:2 – You Shall Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these 40 years to humble you, test you, & in order to know what was in your heart. [E.g. Old Fella & his wife, Marv & Sue – Your bad luck! ☺] Remember his goodness & greatness
Rulership	Look at what they recall here – God Absolute Rulership & Sovereignty One who has absolute control & authority / Master of All Ryrie – When we speak of God's Sovereignty we speak of his position (ruler) and power (control) You who by your hand created the heavens, carved the earth, brings calm to the seas, controls all things, can be counted on to hold our lives in the palm of your hand
E.g	Cindy – each morning went to prayer – holding me in the palm of his hand

[I've asked Noah to come & lead us in a song – let him sing it over you as you pray & recall & run into God's truth]

II. **They Ran Into (Recited & Rested In) God's Truth (25-28)**

25 who said by the Holy Spirit through your servant David our forefather, 'Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot foolish things? **26** The kings of the earth stood together, and the rulers assembled together, against the Lord and against his Christ.' **27** "For indeed both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, **28** to do as much as your power and your plan had decided beforehand would happen.

I don't have a lot of time to unpack this but in my prep I was blown away by:

Ran Typical - Remember Luke is recording what is typical // Throughout – Neh, JC, Paul // Truth War

Recited When you don't know what to pray – pray passage of Scripture
What Muller did – evangelist from 1800's – praying all the time – could be said of Muller:

There was not 1 passage of Scripture that he had not turned into a prayer
There was not 1 prayer from Scripture that he had not prayed over his people

And in prayer these believers recite a text from 1000 years before – where David proclaims (v25-26) – nations raged, peoples plotted, kings stood, rulers gathered against David, the lord & anointed king

Related As they ran into & recited God's truth in prayer, the HS helped them relate it to their circumstances
And what happens is they realize this passage which was written 1000 years before interpret the events they have just witnessed 100 days before

Prophesied – David did not just proclaim it was true of him, but prophesied it would be true of Christ
Penny Drops – Nations rage (v25) = Gentiles raged (v27) [active and aggressive opposition]
Peoples plotted (v25) = People of Israel plotted (v27) – plots appear all through L-A
Kings stood (v26) – Herod stood (v27) – plant their feet
Rulers assembled (v26) – Pontius Pilate gathered (v27)

Picture becomes clear – e.g. Preacher told me of California fog // As they relate God's word to their circumstances it provides clarity as to the chaos they are witnessing before them, interprets it for them from the perspective of God, and gives them wisdom for the way forward

Rest In His Plans & Purposes / Power & Protection (28)
** If he was sovereign over creation, king David, Christ on the cross – when all hell broke loose – if he was even sovereign on that day then he is sovereign on this day – over this church & our circumstances** that's where you want to get to in prayer!

MTR E.g. David McClay – dying church in E. Belfast – drugs, division, depravity all around – 5.30am walks the streets – stand at tops of streets & ask God for scriptures, stand outside schools, pray over strongholds, specific closed doors – 20 years – phenomenal impact – thriving church, multitudes from community come to know, drug dealers come to know Jesus, even Alpha course in basement of pub

Don't we need to flood our lives & our church with this kind of prayer? Run / Recite / Relate / Rest
Church / Children / Community / Culture / Country

I wonder what prayer & passage of Scripture God will lead you to pray over Fellowship? Sink, Shower, Drive, Life Group ...

III. **They Requested Boldness & Courage – That God Would Do A Mighty Work Through Them (29-31)**

29 And now, Lord, pay attention to their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your message with great courage, **30** while you extend your hand to heal, and to bring about miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." **31** When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God courageously.

Servants Nb. Servant theme – David (v25); JC (27); Believers (28) / 1 committed in total obedience, son servant

**** When you truly recall the Sov. Of God & run into the truth of that, you will conclude you cannot be anything other than his servant ****


Supplicate Def of prayer – Communion w. Creator / Fellowship w. Father / Supplicate b'fore Son / Surgery Spirit
Strengthen Striking not for change of circumstances / But put something in us – Strength, Faithfulness, Courage
Speak How will they believe if they do not hear? How will hear if there is no one to proclaim?
Stretch Hand of the Lord – Speaks of His Power. E.g. 'Prayer moves the hand of he who moves the world'
Signs/Wonders Confirm this work with signs & wonders
Shaken Oh Lord Shake us up with your power
Spirit Influence & Control leading to empowerment & missional faithfulness
Speak They proclaim Christ & used to change their world for Jesus Christ – Lives set free, strongholds, stand

IV. Every Mighty Movement of God has Been Birthed in Passionate & Persistent corporate prayer [HP]

a. E.g. Ian Hannah & Scott McNamara


23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. 25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 26 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his Anointed One." 27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.

ACTS 4:23-31



29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

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(2) THEY RAN INTO (& RESTED IN) GOD'S TRUTH (V25-28)

25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 26 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his Anointed One." 27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.





(3) THEY REQUESTED BOLDNESS & COURAGE - THAT GOD WOULD DO A MIGHTY WORK THROUGH THEM (V29-31)

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