

# One Lord – One People – One Voice

## Acts 4:23-31 | PART 3 of 3

### Introduction

#### Five Necessary Elements of Churches that have *Power*

- I. They fear God more than man (vv18-20)
- II. They gather together and lift their voices in prayer (v23-24a)
- III. They embrace a sovereign view of God (v24b)
- IV. They define their situation with biblical accuracy (vv25-28)
- V. They confidently make their request known to God (vv29-31)

#### IV. They define their situation with biblical accuracy – vv25-26

*“Sovereign Lord...who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,*

*'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'—*

Isaiah 37:16-20

**When the thoughts of man align themselves with the *counsel of God* unity exists.**

‘Like draws like.’ People gravitate toward those who share their views in order to validate their claims.

**Selfish personal protectionism draws evil ones together. Persecution unifies God’s people.**

**There is no true unity in a shared covenant of peace in the absence of biblical truth.**

**It is the Scriptures that draw the people of God together in mutual agreement.**

It is the Word of God that informs and guides the prayers of God’s people.

**They were determined to extinguish the reality of Jesus Christ and thus silence the counsel of God.**

Determined with wicked intent to thwart the plan of God, they unwittingly fulfilled it! (vv27-28)

**Their praying was based solidly on a right understanding of the Word of God – His revelation to us.**

**The Word of God and prayer must always go together.**

“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” John 15:7

True prayer is not telling God what to do, but asking God to do His will in us and through us.

1 John 5:14-15

**True prayer seeks God's will done on earth, not man's will done in heaven.**

**The Church meets every threat with prayer. We neither tremble with fear, nor seek vengeance.**

V. They confidently make their request known to God – vv29-31

*“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’ And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”*

**The name “Jesus Christ” has not lost its power, the people have.**

**Their prayer was filled with conviction, courage and confidence.**

- 1) *Conviction* because of the prophecy of God.
- 2) *Courage* because of the power of God.
- 3) *Confidence* because of the plan of God.

The apostle Paul understood the divine power unleashed through human weakness when he sought relief from the Lord: 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

**Notice: They did not pray to have their circumstances changed or their enemies neutralized.**

Rather, they asked God to empower them to make the best use of their circumstances and to accomplish what He had already predetermined (v28).

Note also that they wanted to glorify God's Servant Jesus Christ (Acts 4:27,30).

**The glory of God, not the needs of men, is the highest purpose of answered prayer.**

The people were of one heart and mind, and God was pleased to answer their requests.

They asked for divine enablement, not escape; and God gave them the power that they needed.

**They did not ask for protection or vindication; they asked for the power to endure their situation.**

Don't pray for circumstances to change to meet your strength or ability. Pray for the strength and ability to meet the God-ordained circumstances.

**Their great desire was for boldness to preach gospel truth in the face of opposition.**

It was His name that gave them power to minister the Word and to perform miracles, and His name alone deserved the glory.

*“Pray for great things, expect great things, work for great things, but above all - pray.”* R.A. Torrey

That is the way the early Christians prayed, and that is the way God's people should pray today.

*“God gives grace for the time being, but no stock for [future times], because he will keep all his followers continually dependent on himself.”* Adam Clarke

The early church prayed, and God answered in mighty power.