

BIBLICAL PRAYER (68)

As we have already seen, the early Church took prayer very seriously. It was a central reason the Church became so powerful and accomplished so much. **One of the earliest testimonies we have of the type of prayer that the early Church was making is Acts 4:23-31**. J. Oswald Sanders called this “A Model Prayer Meeting” (*Prayer Power Unlimited*, p. 156).

After the Church Age had begun, Peter and John were proclaiming the truth of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem. The Jewish leaders felt threatened by the remarkable power and confidence these two apostles had, so they summoned them and commanded that they stop their teaching in the name of Christ (**Acts 4:13-18**). Peter and John refused and were finally released and went to the other believers and told them what had happened (**Acts 4:19-23**). When the other believers heard what had happened, they immediately went to prayer. There was a collective unity, not only in going to prayer, but also in the prayer itself. Since God actually recorded the essence of this prayer for us, it is worth our examination to see the specific contents:

- 1) It was a prayer made in the spirit of unity. **4:24a**

These believers were completely united, not divided or factious. Sanders said, “Prayer thrives where there is a spirit of love, unity and fellowship” (*Ibid.*, p. 156).

- 2) It was a prayer focused on the character of God. **4:24b**

It was their theological grasp of the sovereign majesty of God that enabled these believers to pray with great confidence.

- 3) It was a prayer that recognized the program of God. **4:25-28**

This prayer is theologically and prophetically accurate. It recognizes God’s sovereign program with Israel and the Gentile nations as they relate to Jesus Christ.

- 4) It was a prayer consistent with the Word of God. **4:25-28**

The basis for the prayer is a proper Biblical understanding concerning God, His power, and His program at that particular time.

- 5) It was a prayer featuring specific requests. **4:29-30**

This was not a generalized prayer. It is very specific in that it asks God to take note of those threatening them (**4:29a**), to grant boldness and confidence in being able to speak God’s Word (**4:29b**) and to give them a supernatural ability to accomplish God’s will (**4:30a**).

- 6) It was a prayer built on a relationship with Jesus Christ. **4:30b**

They prayed realizing their whole connection to God came through Jesus Christ.

BIBLICAL PRAYER (69)

The results of this prayer meeting were amazing:

- 1) There was a supernatural power. **4:31a**
- 2) There was a supernatural boldness. **4:31b**
- 3) There was a supernatural unity. **4:32**
- 4) There was a supernatural ministry. **4:33**
- 5) There was a supernatural benevolence. **4:34-35**

These were all mighty results of this powerful prayer meeting. When God's people meet and unite in prayer, there is great power and impacting ministry.

QUESTION #17 – How does prayer relate to the three members of the Godhead?

Back when I was in school, there was this one instructor who would begin the class by directing his prayer to Jesus, God the Son. The next class he would direct his prayer to the Holy Spirit, God the Spirit. Is this legitimate? Are we to pray individually to all three members of the Trinity? Is it acceptable to pray one day to God the Father and another day to God the Son and another day to God the Spirit? This question is critical to us forming a Biblical structure of prayer as it relates to all three members of the Godhead. There are four main theological realities we want to present:

Theological Reality #1 - When prayer is specifically associated with the other members of the Trinity, it is stated that it is aimed at God the Father.

- 1) **John 15:16** - Jesus Christ, Himself, states that prayer should be that which makes a request to the Father.
- 2) **Matthew 6:8-9** - Jesus Christ specifically taught His disciples to offer their prayers to the Father and He specifically did this when teaching them how to pray (**Luke 11:1-2**).
- 3) **Luke 22:42** - Jesus Christ, by His own example, aimed His prayer to God the Father, not to Himself or to the Holy Spirit.
- 4) **Romans 8:16-17, 26-27** - The Holy Spirit, who lives in the believer and intercedes for the believer, aims His prayer at God the Father, not God the Son or to Himself.
- 5) **Matthew 6:6-8** - Answers to prayer are specifically said to come from the Father (**Luke 12:30**).

From these passages we may assume that one Divine member of the Trinity is to be the object of our prayer and that is God the Father. **The only exception is Romans 10:13**