

Sunday School Lesson for the Month of January 2019

When a Church Prays

(Acts 4:23-31)

Sunday, January 6, 2019

Probably one of the greatest weaknesses of our church today is our weakness in Prayer. It was not so in the early church. Prayer was much a part of the life of the early church. When Peter and John were arrested after the healing of the lame man in the Temple, the church prayed. And when they prayed, God demonstrated that their prayer had been heard.

One of the marks of the church of the living Christ must be prayer. Christ's church must be a praying church.

I. When the Church prays, there is a response.

When Peter and John were released from Jail, they joined other Christian friends in Jerusalem. While Acts does not say it, those friends may have been praying for Peter and John's release at that moment. And what did Peter and John do upon their release? They did not hold a conference or plan retaliation or try to find a way to keep from being arrested again. They prayed!

Prayer is the natural response of the Christian to God's grace. It is often difficult to teach children to write thank-you notes after receiving gifts. They are quick to receive but slow to respond. Christians are much the same – quick to receive the gifts of God but slow to respond to Him.

Prayer is our most immediate response!

The God to Whom we respond is described in these verses:

- ❖ He is the sovereign Lord (Acts 4:24,28)
- ❖ He is the self-revealing Lord (Acts 4:25-27)
- ❖ He is the seeing Lord (Acts 4:29)

Sunday, January 13, 2019

II. When a Church prays, there is a request.

Request or petition is only a part of prayer, but it is the part we practice most often. Prayer should involve praise, thanksgiving, confession, and intercession as well as petition.

Notice the requests in this prayer as expressed in Acts 4:29. It was a request

that centered on their obedience to God and on their task of witnessing. The believers did not pray. “Grant that we may be kept safe,” or “grant that Peter and John may be protected,” or “Lord, don’t let it happen again,” but “Lord, help us to get on with the job of proclaiming the gospel.”

That may be our most needed request. We pray for all sorts of personal and physical matters, and that is fine, but we should also pray for boldness in proclaiming the gospel of Christ.

Sunday, January 20, 2019

III. When a Church prays, there is a resource.

They prayed with expectation. They expected God to do something for them. They knew that there was an adequate and powerful resource in the hand of God and they claimed it.

Do you really expect God to do something when you pray? Even this saved group of Christians fell short later. In Acts 12, they again prayed for Peter and John to be released from prison. They were but when they came to the prayer meeting, they were not recognized.

Sometimes we feel that it is an admission of weakness to admit that we need outside help. That is what it is, and that is what we need - God’s help!

How ridiculous it is for the greatest resource of all – the power of God – to be present and available and we choose not to use it!

Sunday, January 27, 2019

IV. When the Church prays, there are results.

The presence and the power of the Holy Spirit were with them. What a result of prayer! One result of prayer is that something will happen. It may not always be like we expect but something will happen. God may deny the form of your request and grant to you the substance of your prayer. Your prayer is sometime ultimately answered not in the way you expected.

When a Church prays, something happens. It is for God and it is Good!