
❖SERMON NOTES ❖

Sunday, November 17, 2013

“SEVEN MARKS OF A PRAYING CHURCH”

(Acts 4:23-37)

The early church was known as a praying people. We will do more than talk about prayer this morning. At the end of each section of the sermon, we will have a directed time of prayer. May God grow us to be a praying people.

1. There is a _____ for prayer (v. 24).

2. There is an _____ in the Lord (v. 24).

3. There is _____ to the Great Commission (v. 29).

4. There is faith to _____ to be displayed (v. 30).

5. There is a demonstration of the _____ of the Holy Spirit (v. 31).

6. There is power in sharing the _____ (v. 31, 33).

7. There is _____ in the lives of God’s people (v. 33).

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14, ESV).

“You do not have because you do not ask God” (James 4:2, NIV).

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them” (Matthew 18:20, ESV).

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(Acts 4:23-37)

“Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk” (Acts 3:6, NIV).

“The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men who had had no special training. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus” Acts 4:13, NLT).

“Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.’ When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age” (Luke 3: 21-23a, NASB).

“Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit” (Luke 23:46, NKJV).

1. There is a spontaneous desire for prayer (v. 24).

PRAYER PROMPT: Ask God to forgive you for the sin of prayerlessness. Spend time in confession of sin...asking God to reveal the areas of your life where you have failed to take things to God in prayer.

2. There is an acknowledgment of faith in the Lord (v. 24).

PRAYER PROMPT: Ask God to reveal Himself as He really is. Pray a prayer of praise to God. Maybe you begin, “God, You are...” Ask God to help you to see Him as bigger so that your problems can be right-sized. (Psalm 111 or Psalm 113).

3. There is obedience to the Great Commission (v. 29).

PRAYER PROMPT: Ask God to reveal how you can be a testimony to Christ through your problems. Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal the lost people around you and the opportunities to share Christ that you are missing out on. Peter wrote, “And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it” (1 Peter 3:15, NLT).

4. There is faith to expect God’s power to be displayed (v. 30).

“You do not have because you do not ask God” (James 4:2, NIV).

PRAYER PROMPT: What have you not trusted God for because it seemed too big? Maybe your god is too small. What big prayer...what miracle would God have you pray for today? “You do not have because you do not ask God” (James 4:2, NIV).

5. There is a demonstration of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit (v. 31).

“The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord God, you know.” Then he said to me, “Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord” (Ezekiel 37:1-6, ESV).

PRAYER PROMPT: Pray for God’s power to come and bring life where there is nothing but dry bones. Pray God’s Spirit will sweep over the “dry bones” places in your life...a dry spirit, a dry marriage, a dry work, a dry relationship to Christ. Pray that God will sweep over you with a new freshness in your faith and spiritual power in your life...in the dry places.

6. There is power in sharing the Word of God (v. 31, 33).

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14, ESV).

PRAYER PROMPT: Pray asking God to break through the hearts of people you know who don't know Jesus. Pray that lost people will be saved and the Gospel of Jesus will go out in power to penetrate even the hardest of hearts. Pray for people by name. Beg God for souls and opportunity to introduce others to Jesus.

7. There is abundant grace in the lives of God's people (v. 33).

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them” (Matthew 18:20, ESV).

PRAYER PROMPT: Pray for God to burden your heart and call you to be a person of prayer? Pray that God will lead you into a group of praying people...praying for God's Kingdom priorities...big, bold, faith-filled prayers...for God's glory.