

Day 1 - January 30, 2022

Weekly Theme - Praying As The Early Church

Day 1 - Core values of the Early Church

Scripture - Acts 2.42-44.

As we press on in the 100 Days of Prayer, it is imperative that we look back to the early church to learn what they focused on and the above passage indicates the believers devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. Today, the believers desire to meet together seems to be, 'if there is nothing else to attend, then I'll go to church.' The 'devoted' few are what is keeping churches going today, but the enthusiasm and awe, wonder and unity noted in Acts 2:43-44 is often missing.

Let us be a part of this teaching, fellowship and prayer. Let us pray for God's direction to lead us individually and in fellowship to know our core values and them daily. Prayer, corporate prayer, as a church body was an integral part of the church life. Read through Acts 1-4, 12-13 and 20 to see that it wasn't something they tagged on the church activities but they got down to the business of praying.

We see throughout the New Testament and history, that any great movement of God was AFTER a focused, intentional season of corporate prayer. Why would we expect anything God is to do through us to be different in the year 2022? LETS DO THIS!

#### **Themes to Prayer**

- Pray for your spirit to be dedicated to learning and living Scripture
- Pray for passion to memorize key Bible verses
- Pray for a vision of how Hope Fellowship could look more like the early church

#### **A prayer to bring to the Lord**

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the wonderful example of the early Church, who continually devoted themselves to apostolic teaching, Christian fellowship, the breaking of bread and earnest prayer. As we look for the any day return of our Lord Jesus Christ, may we follow the wonderful example of these early members of Christ's body and may we grow in grace and in a knowledge of You, as we seek to share the truth of the glorious gospel of the grace of God with everyone we meet, in humility and love, in Jesus name, AMEN.

#### **A Heart Question**

- What would it take for you to experience the same awe and wonder that the early church experienced? Will you pray for that renewed enthusiasm in your life and the life of the church?

#### **Journal**

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Day 2 - January 31, 2022

Weekly Theme - Praying As The Early Church

Daily Theme - What Does It Mean To Be Devoted?

Scripture - Acts 2.42

I am devoted to drinking coffee and I dabble with the occasional crossword puzzle. I am devoted to reading my Bible, I dabble in memorizing Scripture. Try this for yourself. I am devoted to \_\_\_\_\_ and I dabble in \_\_\_\_\_.

To be devoted to something basically means that it's a constant in your life. To dabble in something reveals that it's an occasional occurrence.

It's time to be reminded as to what the early church was devoted to and to pray for the same passion for devotion to the teaching of Scripture, the fellowship in caring for the Body and community, the necessity of prayer and its prominent place in the church and the breaking of bread (there is debate as to whether this is a consistent meal together or the element of remembering the death of Christ over communion.)

As our world crumbles, the hope of the cross is the only thing that will make a difference in the lives of those we know and the church is the vehicle to bring that hope to the world. Are we devoted to this?

### Themes To Pray Over

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal what you are truly devoted to
- Ask God for forgiveness if He has taken a back seat in your life
- Pray for a deepening devotion to Jesus and His followers
- Pray to be passionate to the core values of learning from the Word, fellowship and caring of believers, breaking of bread and prayer.

### A Prayer For Us All

*Dear Lord, help me to cultivate the simplicity of devotion to You. I want You to be my primary ambition in life. I desire to behold Your beauty, and dwell in Your house all the days of my life (Psalm 27:4). Let seeking Your heart be the goal of my life even in busy and stressful times. Help me to be one who seeks after Your beauty. Help me to discover Your emotions and the purposes of Your heart. I want to be a lover of God and thirst after You daily (Psalm 42:1-2a). "Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings" (Psalm 17:8).*

### A Heart Question

- How would you define devotion to God? How does your definition differ from what we read in Acts 2.42?

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Day 3 - February 1, 2022

Weekly Theme - Praying As The Early Church

Daily Theme - Praying Scripture

Scripture - Acts 4:23-31 from Psalm 2

I remember my mother saying that in as a younger Christian, she was very shy about praying out loud with a group of Christ-followers. She was a naturally quiet person and was a tad intimidated by those ahead of her in years. She also admitted that it was her insecurities and not the attitudes of others. When my mom shared her fears with another lady, that woman touched her arm and encouraged her to simply pray back Scripture to God.

What that woman told my mom was totally Biblical and it was the catalyst to her starting to pray in a public setting. We see the early church doing the same thing after Peter and John returned to the church family after being dressed down by the religious leaders of the day.

If you read the passage listed above of Acts 4:23-31, you'll see that the church pulled Psalm 2 into their prayer (Acts 4:25-26). What a beautiful sound to God's ear that must be, to hear His Word prayed back to Him. We see that Peter and John praying boldly, they had been taught and were seeing results. We have the written word and just reading and praying Acts 4 gives us so much to talk to God about. This is the same with much of recorded scripture that is so available to us today. The scriptures deal with issues we face today, even as our society changes.

Are you wanting to pray but finding yourself not knowing where to start, why not turn to a Psalm and pray that back to God? Try Psalm 3, 51, 63, or 84. Pray it a 3 or 4 times to God, let the words of Scripture direct your words to the Lord.

#### **Themes to pray today**

- Pray for the awarenesses to go to Scripture to know what to pray
- Thank God for His provision of His Word, to help us
- Thank God for the example of the early church in teaching us to do this
- Pray for spiritual awakening as we pray God's Word back to Him

#### **A prayer for us all**

- Dear Lord God, thank You for giving me Your Word, which leads me to Your Son and provides Your plan for my life. Thank you that Your Word gives me the words to say to You and thank you for the first Christ-followers, the men and women who walked with Jesus and set the example to fellowship with You. May my passion for Your Word increase, may it transform my life to be like Jesus. Amen.

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Day 4 - February 2, 2022

In Tune With The Holy Spirit

Daily theme - Move To Pray, then Move in Ministry

Scripture - Acts 13:1-3

HANDS UP, have you ever started a project and never finished it? For some of us, that is a daily occurrence. Sometimes we may be stalled because of legitimate reasons (think COVID pandemic), other times we simply lose interest because another great idea flashes before our eyes.

When it happens while we are painting a room and decide to change the colour, that's one thing. But when it happens in the life of a church, that can hinder the building of the kingdom.

We need to ensure that we spend time in prayer before moving new directions in ministry. In the above passage, we see that the early church prayed (AND FASTED, mind you) before making a major ministry move. In the midst of their worship, praying and fasting, the Holy Spirit led them to launch a missionary journey for Paul and Barnabas.

Why are we in the midst of 100 Days of Prayer? To seek the Lord and His direction. Prayer before a ministry move is desperately needed...let's cement that habit in the life of Hope Fellowship.

### Themes To Pray Today

- Pray for patience in decision making
- Pray for decrement to know the difference between good and great ministry
- Pray for a listening ear to the Holy Spirit's direction.

### Prayer

O Father, move in your people through the Holy Spirit. Stir up leaders in all parts of the world. Speak into the hearts of those who are worshipping and fasting to know your will for them. Fashion more of our churches to be like the early church in Antioch, welcoming all sorts of people into our fellowship and committed to go all over the world to share the love and grace of Jesus with all people. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

### Heart Question

**What impact could our prayer meetings have on reaching the lost?**

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Day 5 - February 3, 2022

Weekly Theme - Praying like the Early Church

Daily Theme - Threatened? Then pray!

Scripture - Acts 4.23-31

Often when we feel a threat, the thought of praying doesn't occur to us right away. We like to talk it out, seek some support and stress about it.

Then we may take a moment to pray personally and after a few days we may reach out to gain some prayer support from others.

Why not embrace the methods of the early church. When Peter and John were brought before the church leaders and ordered to shut down their ministry about Jesus, the Holy Spirit empowered them and gave them the words to say.

When Peter and John made their way back to the church and reported on the threat to them and the possible future persecution for the church, what did the assembly of believers do? They prayed.

It's a model that we need to embrace as our culture becomes more hostile to the Good News of Jesus.

### Themes To Pray Today

- Pray over the ways you see culture threatening God's church today
- Pray for missionaries around this world and the threat they face
- Pray over any personal threats you sense as a Christ-follower

### A prayer for us all

Father, I come to You today, bowing in my heart, asking for protection from the evil one. Lord, we are assailed moment by moment with images on television, the internet, books and newspapers that leave us vulnerable to sin of every kind. Surround us with Your divine hedge of protection. Encompass us round about with Your strength and Your might. Let all who take refuge in You be glad, let them ever sing for joy. And may You shelter us, that those who love Your name may exult in You. For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O LORD, You surround him favor as with a shield. (Psalm 5:11-12)

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Day 6 - January 28, 2022

Day 6 - February 4, 2022

Weekly Theme - Praying like the Early Church

Daily Theme - The Holy Spirit Pours in Grace and Power

Daily Theme - Boldness to Speak

Acts 4.29, 31

I am sure you are getting quite familiar with this passage from Acts 4, but there is so much to learn and apply in this passage about the early church.

As Peter and John are released after ministering in the name of Jesus, they give a report to their peers and instantly everyone recognizes the future opposition that they are going to face. So they pray and they pray for boldness in their future conversations, preaching and actions that will live for Christ in the days to come. This group with Peter and John had no intention of keeping quiet and slinking off, they wanted to continue to bring hope to this world and they prayed for boldness to do so.

Why not pray for boldness for the conversations that you know you will have that day...and for the conversations that you don't know that you will have.

#### Themes to pray over

- Pray for boldness for all churches to be a voice of holiness in this culture
- Pray that our boldness for Christ is also presented with a voice of love
- Pray for protection that needs to accompany boldness

#### A prayer for us all

***As I face my fears, when I am feeling afraid, when I am feeling timid, remind me of who YOU are, and who I am in You. You are strong and courageous, the Almighty King and loving Father. You have said in Your word that as I wait upon You, I can "take courage," because I know You are with me, You are for me, and You will empower me with the courage and the strength I need for whatever is placed before me. Remind me of who You have created me to be and what You have empowered me to do. Amen.***

#### Heart Question

- Have you struggled to be bold for Christ? Have you prayed about it? God will answer that prayer.

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Day 7 - February 5, 2022

Weekly Theme - Praying like the Early Church

Daily Theme - The clock is ticking Tim

Scripture - Ephesians 5.15-17

One of the secrets to writing a good thriller is to have a time element to it, a deadline where everything is going to come crumbling down unless the hero saves the day. Time is of the essence.

Time is important. Time is running out, especially when culture is just getting worse. That is part of the message that Paul is giving to Timothy in the 3 verses listed above from Ephesians 5.

The idea in the Greek word for time in this passage is the stressing that this is **the time**, a definite season of opportunity that Christians must use. That window of opportunity may not be open much longer, so we need to make the most of that time.

The church is to bring the hope of Christ to the world. We as a community of faith want to be diligent to that, and that is why we are seeking the Lord to be more effective for the Kingdom of God...but time is running out. Let's do this!

#### **Themes to pray over**

- Pray we have the sense of urgency for kingdom matters
- Pray for people you know who need the Lord, time is running out
- Pray for an awareness to the testimony we leave each day
- Pray we make the most of each opportunity to plant seeds of the gospel

#### **A prayer for us all**

Give me wisdom, O LORD, to discern the best way to use my time and my influence. Open my eyes to see the temptation the evil one puts in my path. Give me courage to boldly stand for you and sensitivity to know the best way to bless others according to their needs. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

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