

Sermon Series Title: "Church Beginnings"

Sermon Series Summary: From now until around Easter, we will be in the book of Acts, covering chapters 1-12. After the Ascension of Jesus Christ, we see the NT church being born by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through this series, we see the church being built, the kingdom going forth, and the gospel being proclaimed.

"We are in our "Church Beginnings" sermon series, and through this series, we're going to see that we need to know where we come from to know who we are now and to know who we will become in the future."

Call: Exodus 15:18

Text: Acts 4:23-31

Title: "The Prayer"

Next Week's Call: Deuteronomy 32:1-3

Next Week's Text: Acts 4:32-37

Next Week's Title: "The Provision"

Future Calls: Deuteronomy 32:4, 8-9, 10-12, 13, 35-36, 39, 43

Future Titles:

Fallen Condition Focus: We will face suffering in this life in Christ.

Christ redeeming FCF: We can go to God in prayer through faith in Christ.

Proposition: "Persecution and pain lead God's people to pray in Christ."

Summary: After being told to not speak of Jesus anymore, the disciples and the church are driven to prayer. They pray according to Psalm 2, speaking of the creation, sovereignty, and judgment of God. Praying biblically leads them to pray boldly, knowing who God is and what His will is. They can pray in belief, knowing God is with them because of Christ.

Reflective Questions:

1. What does our passage teach us about prayer?
2. What does our passage teach us about our faith?

I. Introduction

- A. Hook
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

II. Praying Biblically (vv. 23-28)

- A. The Jewish leaders arrested Peter and John, trying to intimidate them, and charged them not to speak of Jesus.
- B. After being released, they told the church, because we are called to carry each other's burdens.
- C. The church then is led to pray. They don't try to create an uprising or pump themselves up in another way. They are led to pray.
- D. They pray the attributes of God- sovereign, creator; that puts everything into perspective- who God is, who we are, who the world is, our fears and anxieties
- E. They pray biblically (Word- God speaking to us, prayer- us speaking to God)
 - 1. The right way to pray is to pray biblically. The right way to study Scripture is to study it prayerfully.
- F. They cite Psalm 2- David talking about the nations (not just Israel) plotting in vain and setting themselves against the Anointed One (Messiah); at the time, David is speaking about himself with the struggles becoming king (Ishbosheth- Saul's son).
 - 1. The people see the fulfillment of that passage in Christ. Gives perspective- knowing that everything is under God's control (predestination).

III. Praying Boldly (vv. 29-30)

- A. They don't pray for the suffering to go away.
- B. Instead, they pray that they will speak with boldness.
 - 1. They know that speaking and sharing Christ is God's will. They are not confused on that.
 - 2. Church in China- prayer regarding suffering
- C. They pray that God will continue the work (healings, signs, wonders) through Jesus Christ.
- D. They can pray WITH boldness because of who God is, what His will is, and what His promise is.
- E. They can pray FOR boldness because of what Christ has accomplished.

IV. Praying in Belief (v. 31)

- A. Praying biblically, according to His will, allow us to pray in hope. We know He will accomplish His will according to His word and character, so we rest in faith in Him.

- B. The place that they prayed start to shake- showing the mighty presence of God- Mt. Sinai, Isaiah 6 in the temple.
 - 1. But this power is not for their judgment but for their empowerment.
- C. God answers their prayer, as they are filled with the Spirit and are bold with the gospel.
- D. This is possible, because Jesus is the fulfillment of Scripture. Every promise of God has their yes and amen in Christ.
 - 1. We pray in faith, knowing that God's promises will come to pass because of Jesus' death and resurrection.
 - 2. We can pray in faith, according to God's will even through suffering, because God used the worst suffering, the sinless Son of God, being crucified shamefully... in His sovereignty... to save humanity.
 - 3. We can pray in faith, looking forward to the resurrection on the last day... because Jesus was resurrected from the dead.