

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: How to Put Power in Your Prayer

SERMON REFERENCE: Acts 4:23-33

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The need of the hour is power in prayer.
 - i) Not merely to pray, but to pray with power to get our prayers answered.
- b) Acts 3:1-10
 - i) The disciples had done a notable miracle.
 - ii) The religious rulers of that day could not deny the miracle, but they tried to keep the disciples from preaching or teaching anymore.
 - (1) They forbade them to preach the Gospel.
- c) Acts 4:23-33
 - i) "They" in verse 23 refers to the disciples.
 - ii) It was trouble that brought the church to prayer.
 - (1) The Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was being opposed.
 - (2) Christians were being threatened.
 - (3) This was the catalyst for this great prayer meeting.
- d) The church of the Lord Jesus Christ today should be praying.
 - i) We can look around and see militant marching humanism.
 - ii) False cults are spreading like wildfire.
 - iii) The communist menace is circling the globe and surrounding America.
 - iv) There is moral corruption in the media.
 - v) There is the slaughter of unborn, innocent children; the drug epidemic; alcoholism; and sexual perversion.
 - vi) There are people who don't know God and who have never heard the name of Jesus.
 - vii) Only prayer can hold back the floodtide of sin and judgment.
 - viii) Only powerful prayer can send revival.
- e) It is not just any prayer that we need, but it is prayer with power.
 - i) It is not the rhetoric of our prayers or how eloquent our prayers are.
 - ii) It is not the music of our prayers or how beautiful our prayers are.
 - iii) It is not the logic of our prayers or how argumentative our prayers are.
 - iv) It is not the method of our prayers or how methodical our prayers are.
 - v) It is the power of our prayers that counts.
- f) Acts 4:31
 - i) There was such power that it literally shook the place.
- g) Today's message will teach us the principles of powerful prayer and how to put power in our prayers.

2) THE CONFIDENCE OF MIGHTY PRAYER (ACTS 4:24-28)

- a) They saw God as the creator of all things.
 - i) Acts 4:24
 - ii) God is a sovereign God; He is Almighty God.
 - iii) The Jewish high court told them not to preach or teach.
 - (1) But God is the creator, and the members of the high court were the created.
 - (2) The apostles didn't have to be intimidated.

- (a) All of the forces of nature are at God's fingertips.
- iv) When we are opposed and trouble comes, it is necessary that we get things in perspective.
 - (1) Look beyond the visible to the invisible.
 - (2) Look beyond the creature to the Creator.
 - (3) Bring it into focus so that we can pray with confidence.
- b) They saw God as the controller of all things.
 - i) Acts 4:25-28
 - (1) The disciples faced a difficult situation, but they looked back to the darkest day that they had ever known.
 - (a) This was the day when all of their hopes, aspirations, and dreams were nailed to a Roman cross.
 - (b) The Son of God was ganged up on by the high court, Herod, and Pontius Pilate; and He was nailed to the cross.
 - (2) But they said that nothing had gotten out of control.
 - (a) They quoted from Psalm 2.
 - (i) They understood that what David had said seven hundred years before Jesus Christ was born was what was going to happen.
 - (3) Acts 4:28
 - (a) "Determined before" means before it ever happened.
 - ii) God showed that not only is He the creator of all things, but He is also the controller of all things.
 - (1) Nothing had gotten out of the control of Almighty God.
 - (a) He foresaw it all.
 - (b) God knew exactly, precisely what was going to happen.
 - (2) We get bent out of shape and think that the devil has taken over and that things will not turn out as the Bible says they will.
 - (a) But nothing has happened that God has not already foreseen and does not control.
 - iii) Corrie Ten Boom once said that there is no panic in Heaven, only plans.
 - (1) The Holy Trinity never meets in emergency session.
 - iv) This is what God before-ordained.
 - (1) God knew it would take place.
 - v) If He is the creator, then He must be the controller.
- c) They saw God as the conqueror of all things.
 - i) If He is the controller, then He is also the conqueror of all things.
 - ii) Psalm 2 tells us how the kings would crucify the Lord Jesus Christ, and then it speaks of how the Lord Jesus Christ will rule, conquer, and prevail.
 - (1) Psalm 2:6
 - iii) God is on the throne.
 - (1) Sin cannot win.
 - (2) Faith cannot fail.
 - (3) God is the conquering God.
 - iv) God's children have read the last chapter, and we know how it will end.

- (1) Therefore, we can pray with confidence that God is the controller of all things because God is the conqueror of all things and the creator of all things.
 - d) We need to get our prayers in perspective.
 - i) Many of us are complaining when we should be praising and thanking God for the victory.
 - ii) We should be praying with the mighty confidence that these disciples prayed with so long ago.
- 3) THE COMMITMENT OF MIGHTY PRAYER (ACTS 4:29-30)
- a) Acts 4:29
 - i) The word “servants” in this verse speaks of the commitment of mighty prayer.
 - (1) It is a translation of a Greek word that literally means “bond slaves”.
 - b) The reason that many of our prayers are not answered is that we have not made that commitment to the Lord.
 - i) God is not our co-pilot, and He is not our partner.
 - ii) We are His slave; He is our sovereign Lord.
 - iii) Many times, we want to use God; but God will not be used.
 - c) If we want God to answer our prayers, then we need to submit ourselves totally to Him as Lord.
 - i) Why should God increase our strength to give us more power to serve the devil?
 - ii) Why should God answer our prayers unless we are committed to Him totally?
 - iii) Here were people who were committed to Him.
 - (1) Answered prayer is not for rebels.
 - d) As servants, they deserved three things:
 - i) To express God’s Word.
 - (1) Acts 4:29
 - (2) Is the desire of your heart to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to obey the Great Commission?
 - (3) It was the preaching of God’s Word that got them into trouble to begin with.
 - (a) They didn’t ask the Lord to move them to more favorable circumstances or to keep them safe.
 - (b) They prayed for more of what got them into trouble in the first place.
 - (i) They asked for boldness to preach more of God’s Word.
 - (4) Jesus didn’t come to get us out of trouble; He came to get into trouble with us.
 - (a) The disciples stayed in trouble.
 - ii) To extend God’s hand.
 - (1) Acts 4:30

- (2) They wanted the Lord to stretch forth His hand.
 - (a) How was Jesus going to stretch forth His hand?
 - (i) The disciples' hands were to become His hands.
 - (b) Acts 5:12 shows us how this prayer was answered.
 - (3) We are now the body of Christ.
 - (a) He wants to inhabit our humanity and display His deity through our humanity.
 - (i) Are you committed to Him like that?
 - (4) Matthew 11:28
 - (5) He has no hands but our hands.
 - iii) To exalt God's Son.
 - (1) Acts 4:30
 - (a) Not in our name, but in the name of Jesus.
 - (i) "The name" stands for character and person.
 - (ii) When it is done, it will be obvious that Jesus Christ is doing it, and Jesus Christ will get the glory and the praise.
 - (2) We are to pray in Jesus' name.
 - (a) John 14:13-14
 - (b) Praying in the name of Jesus does not mean just tacking on the phrase, "In Jesus' name, amen," at the end of our prayers.
 - (i) It means, "Jesus, with Your authority, in Your power, and for Your glory, Lord, do this. We want You to be exalted."
 - (3) Many of our prayers are selfish.
 - (a) We are not concerned with the glory of Jesus.
 - (b) James 4:3
 - (c) God is not a glorified bellhop running up and down the corridors of Heaven to find things to satisfy our whims and wants.
 - e) Prayer is a means of bringing the power of Heaven into our lives.
 - i) When we are interested in expressing God's Word, extending God's hand, and exalting God's Son, then we will see our prayers answered.
 - f) The confidence of powerful prayer sees God as creator, controller, and conqueror.
 - i) Not only is there the sovereignty of God, but there is also the servanthood of man where we exalt Jesus, extend the hand of God, and express the Word of God.
- 4) THE CONSEQUENCES OF MIGHTY PRAYER (ACTS 4:31-33)
- a) The Spirit is received.
 - i) Acts 4:31
 - ii) They had already been filled with the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:4, but they were filled with the Holy Ghost again.
 - (1) We cannot operate on yesterday's experience.
 - (2) There must be a fresh filling of God's Holy Spirit.

- iii) We cannot divorce the fullness of the Spirit from the witness of the servant.
 - (1) Acts 4:31
 - (2) God doesn't fill us with the Holy Spirit to make us feel good or to soothe us, but to empower us.
 - (a) Acts 1:8
 - (3) The Holy Spirit will fill us when we are committed to being a witness for Jesus Christ.
 - (4) They were committed as servants.
 - (a) And when they prayed, they were filled with the Holy Spirit.
- iv) They knew when they were filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) They knew the time and place that it happened.
 - (2) Are you consciously filled with God's Spirit where you could say, "Yes, that was the time when God's Spirit came upon me in power"?
- b) Unity is achieved.
 - i) Acts 4:32
 - ii) They were fused together; they became one.
 - iii) Prayer unites the church.
 - (1) We are not to be wired together by organization, frozen together by formalism, or rusted together by tradition.
 - (2) We are to be fused and melted together by prayer.
 - (a) When the church prays, the Spirit is received, and unity is achieved.
 - iv) They were of one heart and one soul.
 - (1) The Jesus that is in me is the Jesus that is in you.
 - v) Psalm 133:1
 - vi) Proverbs 6:19
 - vii) Unity is achieved through prayer as we seek the face of God.
 - viii) People who pray together become friends for life.
 - (1) There is unity that is achieved in prayer that can be achieved in no other way.
 - ix) For the church to stay unified, we must practice this kind of prayer.
- c) The Gospel is believed.
 - i) Acts 4:33
 - ii) These three things ring throughout the book of Acts:
 - (1) Great power
 - (2) Great grace
 - (3) Great fear
 - iii) We are fused together by the Holy Spirit of God, and there is a unity and a power that causes the Gospel to be believed when we preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - iv) Our first duty is not to preach the Gospel, but to be ready and worthy to preach it through prayer.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) The time will come, if it has not already, when it will mean more to you than anything else on this Earth for God to answer your prayer.
- b) Many of us have loved ones who are going to die and go to Hell if we don't learn how to pray and witness.
- c) Your life, your home, your family, your church, your community, America, and our world will never see the power of God as they should until God's people learn how to put power in our prayers.
 - i) The need of the hour is prayer with power.
- d) Luke 11:1
- e) If you want to be able to pray with power, you must first have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16