

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CHURCH PRAYS?

April 17, 2016 Acts 4:23-31 by Bob Branch
Changing The World Through Prayer, Part 3 of 4

BIG IDEA: When God's people unite in bold prayer, align themselves with his purposes and promise, amazing things follow. The church prays, the kingdom comes/advances.

²³ On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices [with one passion] to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: " 'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.'

1. The church met their hard circumstances TOGETHER with prayer. (Acts 12)

2. The church anchored their prayer in God's PROMISE.

"Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father is well pleased to give you the kingdom." **Luke 12:32** LEB

"And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." **Luke 11:9-10** NLT

HOW? Fixate on God by speaking directly to him (letting the circumstances fade), **verbalizing what he has said in his Word** (speaking Scripture back to him), **and agreeing aloud with his view of reality** (that how he sees it is how it truly is).

²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

3. The church prayed themselves into God's PURPOSES.

What are those purposes?

HOW? Verbally declare to God that we know He is great, sovereign and is working in the midst of everything!

HOW? Ask God to help us meet the situation with his vision, heart and resources.

HOW? Pray God's purposes...

"Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel... Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should." **Ephesians 6:19-20**

4. The church's prayers were BOLD and SPECIFIC.

³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

5. When the church prays into God's purposes, God RESPONDS with heaven's resources and power.

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." **Ephesians 3:20-21**