



THE POWER — OF — CHURCH

Pastor Dave Patterson THE POWER OF CHURCH Part 2: The Power of Prayer

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures referenced in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to facilitate a discussion.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together.

While the questions are important, remember your small group's goal is not to pound through the questions but to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships, so knock yourself out with the discussion questions but spend more time laughing than answering the questions.

God shows up, and The Holy Spirit moves, in an atmosphere where Jesus is exalted with expectation.

[Hebrews 10.25, NLT]

And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near.

The condition of the church may be very accurately gauged by its prayer meetings. If God be near a church, it must pray.

- C.H. Spurgeon

If you want to see how popular the church is, attend Sunday morning worship. If you want to see how popular God is, attend the prayer meeting.

- Armin Gesswein

The New Testament prayer meetings reveal the master plan of Jesus. The last thing Jesus did on earth was to build that prayer meeting, and it is the only thing He left behind on planet Earth when He ascended to heaven.

- Everything by Prayer, Fred Hartley

A church is never more like the New Testament Church than when it is praying.

- J.B. Johnston

[Acts 1.14]

*They (the 120 gathered) all met together and **were constantly united in prayer**, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.*

[Acts 1.14, NKJV]

*These **all continued with one accord in prayer**.*

[Acts 2.42]

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals **and to prayer**.

"Devotion": *An unwavering commitment; a determination to accomplish; a consistent diligence toward*

[Acts 2.42]

*All the believers **devoted themselves...***

[Acts 12.1-16, NLT]

About that time King Herod Agrippa began to persecute some believers in the church. He had the apostle James (John's brother) killed with a sword. When Herod saw how much this pleased the Jewish people, he also arrested Peter. (This took place during the Passover celebration.) Then he imprisoned him, placing him under the guard of four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring Peter out for public trial after the Passover. But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him. The night before Peter was to be placed on trial, he was asleep, fastened with two chains between two soldiers. Others stood guard at the prison gate. Suddenly, there was a bright light in the cell, and an angel of the Lord stood before Peter. The angel struck him on the side to awaken him and said, "Quick! Get up!" And the chains fell off his wrists. Then the angel told him, "Get dressed and put on your sandals." And he did. "Now put on your coat and follow me," the angel ordered. So Peter left the cell, following the angel. But all the time he thought it was a vision. He didn't realize it was actually happening. They passed the first and second guard posts and came to the iron gate leading to the city, and this opened for them all by itself. So they passed through and started walking down the street, and then the angel suddenly left him. Peter finally came to his senses. "It's really true!" he said. "The Lord has sent his angel and saved me from Herod and from what the

Jewish leaders had planned to do to me!” When he realized this, he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many were gathered for prayer. He knocked at the door in the gate, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to open it. When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed that, instead of opening the door, she ran back inside and told everyone, “Peter is standing at the door!” “You’re out of your mind!” they said. When she insisted, they decided, “It must be his angel.” Meanwhile, Peter continued knocking. When they finally opened the door and saw him, they were amazed.

[Acts 12.5, NLT]

*But while Peter was in prison, **the church prayed very earnestly for him...***

[Acts 12.5, MSG]

*All the time that Peter was under heavy guard in the jailhouse, **the church prayed for him most strenuously.***

[Acts 12.5, AMP]

*So Peter was kept in prison, but fervent prayer for him was persistently made to God **by the church** (the assembly).*

When the church prays, history is changed!

Biblical Principles of Prayer:

1. Prayer is the highest law. [2 Chronicles 7.14]

[Ezekiel 22.23-31, NLT]

Again a message came to me from the Lord : “Son of man, give the people of Israel this message: In the day of my indignation, you will be like a polluted land, a land without rain. Your princes plot conspiracies just as lions stalk their prey. They devour innocent people, seizing treasures and extorting wealth. They make many widows in the land. Your priests have violated my instructions and defiled my holy things. They make no distinction between what is holy and what is not. And they do not teach my people the difference between what is ceremonially clean and unclean. They disregard my Sabbath days so that I am dishonored among them. Your leaders are like wolves who tear apart their victims. They actually destroy people’s lives for money! And your prophets cover up for them by announcing false visions and making lying predictions. They say, ‘My message is from the Sovereign Lord,’ when the Lord hasn’t spoken a single word to them. Even common people oppress the poor, rob the needy, and deprive foreigners of justice. “I looked for someone who might rebuild the wall of righteousness that guards the land. I searched for someone to stand in the gap in the wall so I wouldn’t have to destroy the land, but I found no one. So now I will pour out my fury on them, consuming them with the fire of my anger. I will heap on their heads the full penalty for all their sins. I, the Sovereign Lord, have spoken!”

[Isaiah 30.18-19]

So the LORD must wait for you to come to him so he can show you his love and compassion. For the LORD is a faithful God. Blessed are those who wait for his help. O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no

more. He will be gracious if you ask for help. He will surely respond to the sound of your cries.

2. The Church is called to "make some noise" (the one accord factor).

[Acts 12.12]

*When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where **many people had gathered and were praying.***

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. How significant is the church prayer meeting? Why do you think our pastors say that All Church Prayer is "the most important meeting of the week?"**
- 2. Would you consider yourself a devoted person? What are you committed, truly devoted, to? According to The Bible, what were New Testament believers devoted to?**
- 3. What typically are motivations for our fervent (*hot, intense, passionate*) prayers? Personally? As a church? As a nation?**
- 4. What is the difference between a theory and a law (i.e. theory of evolution vs. law of sin and death)? How does delay sometimes interpreted by people as escaping the law? How does Jesus' work on the cross supersede the law of sin and death? How about the law of intercession (i.e. church praying for Peter on death row, justifying the intervention of God)?**
- 5. How have you seen the blessing of God (the compassion and mercy) released through prayer? [Isaiah 30.18-19]**