

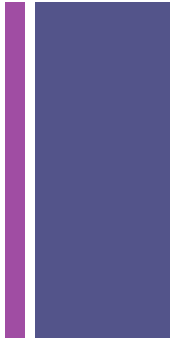
Seven Prayers
that Changed the
World and Can
Change Your
Life



The Prayer of the
Triumphant Church
Acts 4:23-31

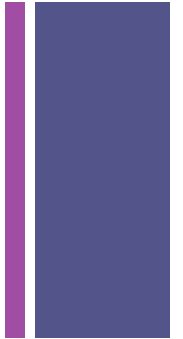


Acts 4:23-31



When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, ²⁵ who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, [\[d\]](#) said by the Holy Spirit,

+ Acts 4:23-31, continued

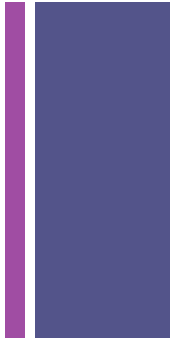


““Why did the Gentiles rage,
and the peoples plot in vain?

²⁶The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers were gathered together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed’^[e]—

²⁷for truly in this city there were gathered
together against your holy servant Jesus, whom
you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate,
along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

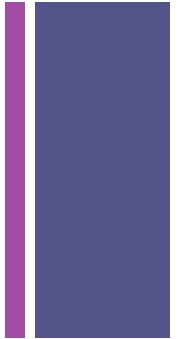
+ Acts 4:23-31, continued



²⁸ to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. ²⁹ And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants^[f] to continue to speak your word with all boldness, ³⁰ while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.



Prayers that Changed the World and Can Change You



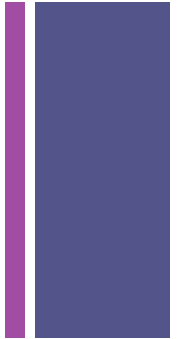
1. Lord, I trust you with the details of my life. Bless me according to Your will and plan.
2. Lord, my heart is hungry for You. Show me Your glory.
3. Lord, contemporize my faith for today. I commit my life into Your hands for You to use now.
4. Lord, make me holy through Your Word. Your Word is truth.
5. Lord, I commit my heart to passionately pursue the center of Your will in my life.
6. **Lord, teach me to look past my challenges and find my sufficiency in Your grace and in Your grace alone.**

+ The Early Church



- Here, in these earliest days of the church, is where we all return to see the purity of the Christian church in its infancy.
- In these earliest days we see the church at its most innocent and purest state.
- 7 Key characteristics of the unity of the early church: Passion, Purpose, Purity, Praise, Power, Perseverance, and Proclaiming – all of this amid persecution.

+ This Prayer in Acts 4



- Was prayed “together” – meaning that the Spirit led the church to this common prayer.
- In this prayer we see the spirit of the church as a composite, combining biblical knowledge, passionate commitment, brotherly love, bold ministry, vision, and faith.
- We are not told exactly how they achieved this singularity in prayer, except by the fact that the Spirit led them to it.

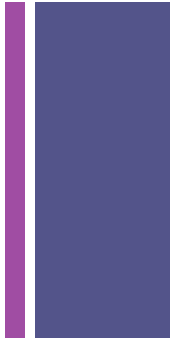
+ The background



“Then Peter filled with the Holy Spirit said to them, ‘If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed’” (Acts 4:8-10).

“After further threats they let them go” (Acts 4:21).

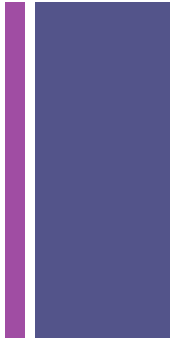
+ In this prayer we find...



- The Overwhelming Awareness of the Sovereignty of God – nothing can oppose Him, 4:24-26
- The Utmost Confidence in the Person and Work of Christ – He is the Savior of the world, 4:27-28
- The Unlimited Surrender of their lives to the Work of Christ, 4:29-31
- ***Lord, Set us on fire for You!***



1. The Overwhelming Awareness God's Sovereignty, Acts 4:24-26



- “Sovereign Lord,” *despota* in the Greek, (“despot” English and German) – the idea of absolute rule and authority. God has no one above Himself to whom He must give an answer or to whom He is accountable.
- He is answerable only to His own heart.
- Three thoughts here about God's sovereignty: He creates, He speaks, He counsels



Simeon blessed the infant Jesus, Luke 2:25-35

“Now, *despota* or Lord,
let thy servant depart in
peace” (Luke 2:29).

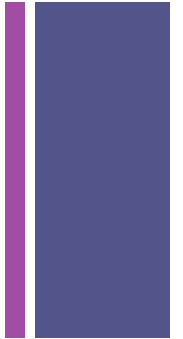
This old devout servant
knew that God was
sovereign over all
creation.

What Simeon alone
knew, the entire Church
now realized!





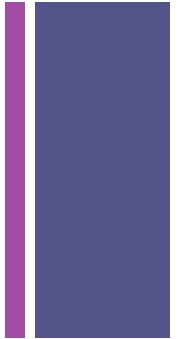
Since we have a sovereign God, how should we act?



- Response of Praise – expressing the confidence we have in God.
- Response of Perspective – banishing fear from our hearts.
- Response of Proclamation – sharing the good news of the **Kingdom** with the world.
- Response of Puzzlement – why does the world reject Christ?

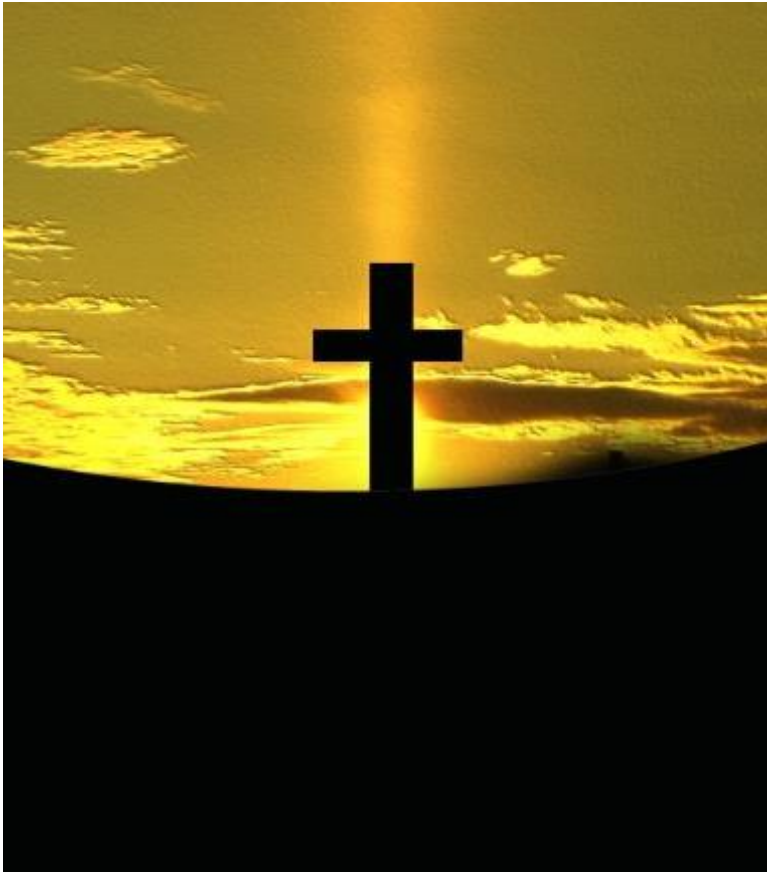


2. The Utmost Confidence in Christ, Acts 4:27-28



- Christ was the “anointed One” – prophesied and foretold in Scripture.
- Earthly powers conspired against Him and put Him to death, sought to discredit Him.
- This was done only by God’s permission...
- This was done by God’s plan – “They did what your power and will had decided before hand should happen” (Acts 4:28).

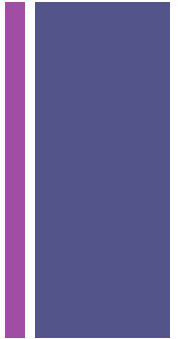
+ The Christ of the cross



- The redemptive act of God to save humanity.
- A display of His sovereignty and His love. The remedy for the sin of the world.
- A church on fire is passionately committed to the proclamation of this gospel!



3. The Unlimited Surrender of their lives to God's work, Acts 4:29-30



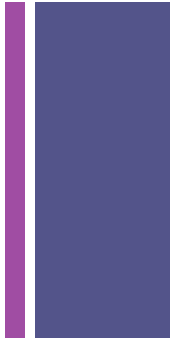
- The same Sovereign Lord was active in their lives and in their midst.
- The same world that had rejected and crucified Christ was the world in which they lived.
- They were a persecuted church and they prayed for boldness, healing, signs, and wonders.

+ The Gadarenes in contrast to the church (Luke 8:26-39)

- Jesus healed demoniacs in that region more than once.
- The people pleaded with Jesus to leave, however, because they were “overcome with fear.”
- The church on fire asked for more of God’s work.



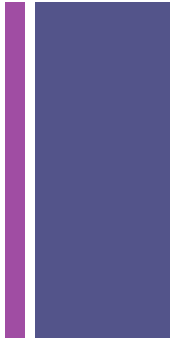
+ 3 Reactions to miracles



- Fear! I don't like them! (Gadarenes). To them miracles repel.
- Envy! I want to do that! (Simon Magnus). To them miracles trip them up or distract.
- Faith! I want to know the One who cares like that. To them miracles lead them to want to know the compassionate Christ.



The church on fire prays for



- Boldness – the courage to take a stance
- Compassion – they see the needs around them, the people who need healing, and even their own hearts.
- Signs – movements of God that appeal to the mind.
- Wonders – movements of God that appeal to the imagination.



How do we measure our faith?



- **Acceptance:** Which is more important, God's or the world's?
- **Passion:** Do we care?
- **Understanding:** Do we grasp God's truth?
- **Wonder:** Do we ever stop and stand in awe of the work of God?

