

Theme: A thriving, growing church is fueled by a life of prayer, enjoying communion with God, and crying out for Him to work in their midst.

## I. Intro – “Pastor Can You Do Something?”

- A. Pastor telling story of plane flight with turbulence
- B. People were very afraid - asked him to do something
- C. So he took up an offering.....
- D. What do we do when there is fear, uncertainty, anger
- E. What is our first move?
- F. Today we will see the early church’s move - prayer

## II. Context - A Time of (Anxious) Waiting

- A. The church had been commanded to wait
  - 1. Jesus’ command to wait (Acts 1:4)
  - 2. They were going to be receiving power (Acts 1:8)
- B. The church was faced with a seemingly impossible task
  - 1. Reach the whole world????? (Acts 1:8)
  - 2. Was Jesus kidding? This group?
  - 3. A task unfinished for over 2,000 years - get it done!
  - 4. This will lead to serious prayer!
  - 5. Often we are prayerless because our vision is small!

## III. The Prayer Life of the Early Church

- A. The church was constantly in prayer - thriving!

- 1. Joined together constantly in prayer (Acts 1:14)
  - 2. 2:42 - devoted to prayer (literally ‘the prayers’)
  - 3. 3:1 - time of prayer - to pray!
  - 4. 4:24,31 - prayed, shaken, bold proclamation
  - 5. 6:3-4 - prayer and word - not corporate CEO!!!
  - 6. 10:9 - prayer; vision to go to Gentiles
  - 7. 12:5 - church praying for Peter - petition God!!
  - 8. 13:2-3 - fasting & prayer - Gentile missions!!
  - 9. 14:23 - prayer and fasting for leaders
  - 10. 16:25 - prayer - in jail!!!
  - 11. Others - but we will stop - you get the point!
- B. Thriving in prayer - together
    - 1. Joined together in prayer (Acts 1:14)
    - 2. Note that much of this prayer is corporate
      - a. Devoted to “the prayers” (2:42 literal)
      - b. Raised voices together (4:24)
      - c. Church was earnestly praying (12:5)
      - d. Fasting and praying together (13:2-3)
      - e. Paul, Barnabas & church pray for elders (14:23)
    - 3. Of course we pray alone as well
    - 4. But there is real power in corporate prayer!

## IV. A Thriving Life of Prayer

- A. Thriving prayer recognizes God's Sovereignty
  - 1. Sovereign Lord... you made all (Acts 4:24)
  - 2. What you decided beforehand (Acts 4:28)
  - 3. If God is not Sovereign - why pray?
  - 4. Meditate on God's Sovereignty - & pray!
  - 5. Example - praying for one of our kids - God worked!
- B. Thriving prayer is built upon Scripture
  - 1. They quote Psalm 2:1-2 (Acts 4:25-26)
  - 2. If you don't know what to pray - pray Scripture
  - 3. Psalms, prayers of Paul, Lord's Prayer
  - 4. They did more than recite - they applied (Acts 4:27)
  - 5. Pray Scripture for self, friends, lost, etc.
- C. Thriving prayer asks God to move mightily
  - 1. Enable us to speak boldly! (Acts 4:29)
  - 2. Stretch out your hand to do miracles (Acts 4:30)
  - 3. Lift up the name of Jesus! (Acts 4:30)
- D. Thriving prayer communes with God
  - 1. It talks openly with God (look at those Psalms!)
  - 2. It listens to God to hear from Him
  - 3. It prays, praises, pleads, proclaims God's Word

E. Thriving prayer receives power to act (Acts 4:31)

## V. Applying the Word - Thriving in Prayer

- A. Encouragement to pray!
  - 1. Our God is Sovereign - He can change anything!
  - 2. God has given us His Word - pray it back to Him!
  - 3. God delights to answer - ask Him to move mightily!
  - 4. God delights to commune with us - talk to Him
  - 5. It is not about flowery words - just talk to Him!
  - 6. God delights to commune with us - listen to Him
- B. A Time of Prayer

### A Thriving Life of Prayer

Acts 1:12-14; 4:23-31  
September 25, 2011  
Prayer  
Deuteronomy 1:11

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. Acts 1:12–14

On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heaven 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 take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.’ 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 miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” 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. Acts 4:23–31

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Acts 3:1

When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God... 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. Acts 4:24, 31

“Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” Acts 6:3–4

About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. Acts 10:9

So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. Acts 12:5

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. Acts 13:2–3

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. Acts 14:23

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Acts 16:25