

Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

“HOW PRAYER EMBOLDENS THE CHURCH”

Discuss

When you find yourself in trouble of some kind, what is your go-to reaction? Google the problem? Call a friend, spouse, or relative? Carefully analyze the situation and determine how to fix it? Form a committee?

Peter and John had just faced a whole council of threatening Jewish elders and rulers of the law. They knew that this same council had conspired against Jesus so that he would be put to death. They were clearly aware of the power of Herod and Pontius Pilate. Does it surprise you that when Peter and John reported to their “own people” what had just happened to them that they all, in complete unity, immediately turned to prayer?

- 1) The entire first half of the prayer is full of analysis.
 - On what facts (or truths) does the prayer focus?
 - How did they explain the crucifixion of Jesus?
 - What do you think gave hope to those praying?
- 2) We may say with conviction that we believe that God is in control. Many of us know or have said these words from the answer to Heidelberg Catechism question #1 : “without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head.”
 - Knowing about God’s sovereignty on an intellectual level or being able to repeat the answer to the catechism question doesn’t necessarily mean, however, that we completely understand how divine sovereignty works or feel ready to explain it to others.
 - ◇ Are Christians no more than fatalists who believe that everything is foreordained, and therefore we should all just sit back and let what God has willed come to pass? (See vv. 29-30, Jer. 18:1-12, and Phil. 2:12-13)
 - ◇ Will Pilate and Herod be held accountable for their actions? (See Rom. 1:18-19 and Rom. 14:12)
 - ◇ How would you answer someone who accused you of believing that human beings are no more than puppets in the hands of a distant deity?
 - ◇ Do you believe that God is completely sovereign over everything? Or some things? Explain your answer.
- 3) What are some of the things that the people praying with Peter and John did *not* ask for?
 - Is it wrong to ask for difficult or terrible circumstances to be removed? Is it wrong to pray for comfort, safety, or healing? (See Matt. 26:39 and 2 Cor. 12:7-9)
- 4) Given the particular circumstances that we as believers face today in our own place and time, for what, and perhaps even more importantly, *how* should we be praying?

DATE: October 6, 2019

SPEAKER: Brian/Frank

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 4:23-31

Pray

Our God,
our help in ages past, our hope for
years to come, our shelter from the
stormy blast, and our eternal home.
Be our guard when we experience
troubles. Remind us that your arm
alone is sufficient, that we dwell
completely secure under the
shadow of your throne.
We praise you as the Creator God
who made the heaven and the earth
and the sea, and everything in
them.
We praise you as the inspiration of
all of Scripture. There is nothing in
your Word that we cannot trust.
Help us to follow you and speak
about you with boldness, resting in
your care and trusting in your
absolute sovereignty.
In the name of our powerful Savior.
Amen.
*– based in part on the hymn by Isaac Watts
and Acts 4:24-25*

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS
Choices Pregnancy Resource Center

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS
Agape Mission