

Discussion Guide

The Summer Sessions Wk 3

7/16/2023

When The Church Prays

Pastor Daniel Floyd

Main Idea

Have you had a setback? Maybe everything was going great and then you had a setback and it brought down the rest of your life. This is what the early church was experiencing. Many were being added to the church daily, miracles were happening, and faith was spreading. Then they had a major back that brought them to a place of prayer.

Acts 12:5-17 (NIV)

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

Earnestly Prayer is Not a Personality Thing

When we get desperate enough, we move out of our personality and become bold enough and hungry enough to pray sincere and passionate prayers. What were (or what currently are) the circumstances surrounding the last time you prayed earnestly?

Earnest Prayer Brings Alignment

Alignment and agreement carries the idea of having the same opinion and conviction. We should not agree with what the enemy or others says about us. We agree with what God has spoken over our lives. We will stay in a setback if we stay in agreement with the wrong things. What lies from the devil are you believing about yourself or your situation? What is God saying?

Read: Matthew 18:19-20, Deuteronomy 28:13, Jeremiah 29:11, John 8:36,

*The church would not have been praying like this if Peter had not been in prison.
The pain of prison purposed the church to pray.*

Acts 12:6-10

6 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance.

7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

8 Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him.

9 Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision.

10 They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

Earnest Prayer Moves the Hand of God

Peter was in prison, probably facing an execution in the morning, and yet we see him sleeping. How is that possible? Just because chaos is around us doesn't mean we have to allow it to affect us. When the Church prays, God moves. What is purposing your earnest prayer right now?

Read: Ephesians 1:9, John 16:33, Acts 5:13-17

SUMMARY

In this life you will have trouble, but you have a choice in how you will respond. We have been called to be a walking contradiction. You can be in the middle of a set back and yet have the kind of faith that the early church had. It happens through earnest prayer.

CALL TO ACTION

1. Talk to some of your inner circle of friends and family (your connect group), and ask them to pray earnestly over the setback that you may be facing.
2. Search the Scripture to discover some passages that speak life over the setback that you are facing.
3. Be intentional about standing in the gap for others and pray earnestly for your friends, family, church, and community.
4. Consider saying YES to serving during Days of Hope in the month of July. Check out hopecity.com/days-of-hope for more information.

5. Mark your calendars for 21 Days of Prayer and fasting starting August 6 through August 26. We will be hosting Saturday morning prayer (9am) at all of our campuses on August 12 and 19.

GROUP LEADER RESOURCE

Game: Blind Drawing

All it takes is a blindfold, a suggestion, a whiteboard, and a lot of amusement. Can you draw something without being able to see? There might be a few artists among the pack!

*If you don't have a white board, simply substitute it with a standard sheet of paper.