

## Praying Boldly and Confidently

Lesson 05 in the series "Dangerous Prayers"

### 1. God wants us to pray **bold, confident** prayers.

"So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most." Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

### 2. Four lessons we can learn from an early Christian prayer meeting:

"It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him." Acts 12:1-5 (NIV)

#### a. We need to pray earnestly.

"The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results."

James 5:16b (NLT)

"One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up. 'There was a judge in a certain city,' he said, 'who neither feared God nor cared about people. A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, "Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy." The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, "I don't fear God or care about people, but this woman is driving me crazy. I'm going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!" Then the Lord said, 'Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly! But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?'" Luke 18:1-8 (NLT)

#### b. We need to pray to the God of the Bible.

"For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths." 2 Timothy 4:3-4 (NLT)

"People will be...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people." 2 Timothy 3:2,4b-5 (NIV)

"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." Acts 12:6-12 (NLT)

#### c. We need to pray together.

"...If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." Matthew 18:19-20 (NLT)

"Amen" = "I agree!"

"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. He motioned for them to quiet down and told them how the Lord had led

him out of prison. 'Tell James and the other brothers what happened,' he said. And then he went to another place." Acts 12:13-17 (NLT)

- d. We need to pray expectantly.

"And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for."

1 John 5:14-15 (NLT)

"Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.' 'What do you mean, "If I can"?' Jesus asked. 'Anything is possible if a person believes.'" Mark 9:22b-23 (NLT)

John Schmidt • 01-31-21 • [john@centeringlives.com](mailto:john@centeringlives.com)

## Connect Group Questions

1. Who taught you how to pray? How did they do it?
2. Read Acts 12:1-17. How would you have felt if you had been invited to someone's house to pray for Peter to be released from jail? Would you have gone? Would you have been surprised when Peter showed up?
3. Read Mark 9:14-29. Why did the father of the demon-possessed boy doubt Jesus could help him? How did Jesus respond?
4. Do you pray boldly and confidently? Do you expect God to answer your prayers? (see Hebrews 4:16 & 1 John 5:14-15)
5. Discuss the following reasons many people give for being afraid to pray with others:
  - I feel unsure of what to say.
  - I'm afraid of what others will think of me.
  - Other people pray better than I do.

How comfortable are you praying with others in your Connect Group? ...with members of your family?  
...with a pastor?

6. Spend some time as a group praying for each other's needs and for our church.
  - Ask God to help everyone involved with Centerpoint to feel comfortable praying alone and with others. Ask Him to make us a church of prayer.
  - Ask God to guide our church and to give us fully surrendered hearts.
  - Ask God to move powerfully in the lives of our people restoring marriages, helping people overcome addictions, giving us boldness in our faith, healing broken hearts, etc.
  - Praise God and celebrate His goodness, forgiveness, provision, protection, and love.
  - Thank God for His many blessings.
  - Pray for specific needs of people in your group.
7. Discuss the following quotations:

"Prayer succeeds when all else fails." E.M. Bounds

"(The prayers of God's people in the Bible) were honest. Desperate. Fiery. Gutsy. Real. And there I was praying that God would keep me safe and bless my burger and fries." Craig Groeschel

"We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on our difficulties." Oswald Chambers

## Great Resource:

**Dangerous Prayers: Because Following Jesus was Never meant to be Safe.** By Craig Groeschel, Zondervan, 2020