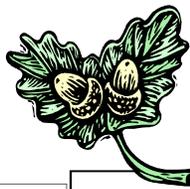


Sept 06, 2015



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Praying for others is a privilege,
and a responsibility

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
Lord, help us be encouragers
By praying for our friends in
need; And give us opportunities
To show them love in word and
deed. —Sper

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
*Do not cease to give thanks for
you, making mention of you in
my prayers*

(Eph 1:16 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Jul 3, 2012)

**Series: THE CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY COMES ALIVE**

UNIT: Seeds of New Growth

NEXT WEEK

Sharing All Things
(Acts 4:34-5:10)

Praying for One Another Acts 4:23-31

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson admonishes us to always keep **Praying for One Another**. The study's aim is to recognize that praying for one another is an essential part of living together as a Christian community. The study's application is to show our concern by praying for one another and to understand the role of prayer for believers.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

The nine verses of today's lesson come at the very end of the larger textual section of Acts 3:1-4:31. The chain of events in this larger section occurs within a two-day time frame (note particularly the time references "because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day" and "the next day" in Acts 4:3, 5). These events were preceded, of course, by the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost in AD 30, related in Acts 2:1-41. Following that birth, Acts 2:42-47 describes the pattern of fellowship that developed. The indefinite time references "every day" and "daily" in verses 46, 47 and "one day" that opens chapter 3 mean that we are unable to calculate how much time elapsed between the Day of Pentecost and the chain of events of Acts 3:1-4:31. It may be tempting to suggest a time frame based on the growth of the church from "about three thousand" on the Day of Pentecost (2:41) to "the number of men . . . grew to about five thousand" (4:4), but such efforts are speculative. The first link in the chain of events that leads up to our lesson text is the healing miracle of Acts 3:1-10, which took place in the temple precincts. That miracle resulted in an opportunity to teach the crowd that gathered (3:11-26). Peter's gospel message did not sit well with "the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees" (4:1). So they arrested Peter and John, holding them in custody to answer to the Jewish religious authorities the next day (4:3, 5, 6). Those authorities constituted "the Sanhedrin" (4:15). Referring to the miracle described in Acts 3:6-8, the question the council posed to the two apostles was straightforward: "By what power or what name did you do this?" (Acts 4:7). The bold response by the two "unschooled, ordinary men" was startling (4:13). The fact that the man who had been healed was standing right there was an enormous complication for the Sanhedrin (4:14-16, 21, 22)! The best the members of the council could do was to order Peter and John "not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus" (Acts 4:18). Peter and John, however, already had received orders that superseded those of the council, and they fearlessly.

The phrase "the Christian community" has special meaning for believers. It describes the relationship of love and concern we experience in our local churches and even among believers worldwide. This sense of community began in the first century as the believers lived and shared together. We use the word "community" in different ways. Sometimes we refer to the city or to the part of the city in which we live. Other times we use the word to refer to a social group bound together by some common characteristics or interests. When we speak of the Christian community, we usually use the latter meaning. Our faith in Christ and our concern for each other bind us together into a close-knit community. One way we demonstrate our concern is by praying for one another. What can we do to increase our practice of praying for each other as the early church did? We can attend our midweek prayer meeting and pray earnestly and diligently for each other. Among other requests, we should remember to pray that all of us will speak boldly for the Lord. We can ask our Christian friends to share their prayer needs and then remember those needs in our prayers. We may even want to keep a record of these prayer requests. If we are talking to a Christian friend about a concern, we can pray with him at that time. One of our responsibilities as a part of the Christian community is to pray for each other (James 5:16).

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

ELEMENTS OF CORPORATE PRAYERS (ACTS 4:23-25)

Sharing one another's burdens (23)

God wants us to help carry other's burdens (Gal 6:2)

By undoing bonds and burdens of the oppressed (Isa 58:6-7)

By sharing in suffering (1 Cor 12:26)

By forgiving one another (Col 3:13)

By helping one another (1 Thess 5:14)

Being on one accord (24)

One accord through the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:3-6)

One accord in the Church (Eph 4:11-13)

One accord through love (Col 3:14)

One accord in Christ (Phil 2:1-4)

One accord through baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:12-13)

Praising God for His protection (24-25)

Protection through God being our refuge (Ps 9:9)

Protection through God being our rock, fortress and deliverer (Ps 18:2)

Protection through God being an ever-present help in trouble (Ps 46:1)

Protection through God's faithfulness (2 Thess 3:3)

Protection through God's knowledge of how to rescue godly men (2 Peter 2:9)

Protection because we love God (Ps 91:14)

Protection through wisdom (Prov 4:6)

ELEMENTS OF PRAYERS OF PETITION (ACTS 4:26-30)

Aware of opposition (26-27)

Opposition that is never too large for God (Judg 7:4-7)

Opposition of the mighty (2 Chron 14:9-12)

Opposition that cannot be overcome by strength and size (Ps 33:16-19)

Opposition that may seem to be overbearing (2 Cor 1:8-10)

Opposition by people who have been captivated by Satan (2 Tim 2:24-26)

Opposition sometimes seem overwhelming, but the answer is to consult and rely on God (Josh 9:1-2)

Opposition because of doing God's work (2 Tim. 3:12)

In agreement with God's purposes (28)

Because we don't know the future (James 4:13-16)

Because God determines the outcome (Prov 16:9)

Because God's purposes will prevail (Prov 19:21)

Because God has sworn to do what He has planned (Isa 14:24)

Because God's purposes will stand (Isa 46:10)

Because of God's great power (Jer 32:17)

Because nothing is impossible for God (Matt 19:26)

Depending on the power of God (29-30)

God's power that performs miracles (Ps 77:14)

God's power that is our life's stronghold (Ps 27:1)

God's power that gives us strength (Phil 4:13)

God's power through His grace (2 Cor 12:9-10)

God's power that provides endurance and patience (Col 1:11)

POWER OF ANSWERED PRAYER (ACTS 4:31)

Power over the physical (31)

Power over physical death (Mark 5:38-42)

Power over physical placement of resources (Matt 21:1-6)

Power over the use of all resources (Mark 14:13-16)

Power over Divine intervention (Jonah 4:5-8)

Power over provision of resources (Gen 22:9-13)

Power over the spiritual (31)

Spiritual power for eternal life (John 4:14)

Spiritual power that leads us into the likeness of Jesus (1 Cor 15:46-49)

Spiritual power that leads to perfection (Heb 12:22-24)

Spiritual power through the full armor of God (Eph 6:12-13)

Spiritual power in the inner being (Eph 3:16-19)

Power through the Holy Spirit (31)

Power of the Holy Spirit to preach (1 Cor 2:3-5)

Power of the Holy Spirit to demolish strongholds (2 Cor 10:3-4)

Power of the Holy Spirit working in us (Eph 3:20)

Power of the Holy Spirit that works in our weaknesses (2 Cor 12:9)