



WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

ACTS 4:23-31 / October 7

Welcome! Thank you for joining us in studying through Acts! Today's study is from Acts 4. We will begin by studying a whole-church prayer recorded in Acts, and the second half of our time we will pray together.

Let's review: What happens at the end of chapter 3?

At the end of Acts 3 and the beginning of 4, Peter and John have been put in prison overnight for speaking and teaching about Jesus. The leaders warn them not to do that anymore and they let them go. We will pick up the story here to see how the apostles and church will respond to the threats.

Begin by reading Acts 4:23-31. How do Peter and John's friends respond? Would prayer have been your first response? If not, what would you have said or done?

Re-read verses 24-30. What does the word sovereign mean? Why do you think they begin their prayer with "Sovereign Lord"? What do they say is true about God because He is sovereign?

Here's a good definition of sovereignty by theologian John Piper: "God's sovereignty is His right and power to do all that He decides to do."

— How does (or should) God's sovereignty change the way you pray? (*When we understand that He is in charge over everything and also has the power to do anything he pleases, we can pray bold prayers!*)

Re-read verses 29-30. What did they ask God to do? Why do you think they chose boldness to speak His word instead of something else? If you were praying that day, what is the first thing you would have prayed for? (*Examples: safety, wipe out enemies, stir their hearts, convince them another way, give me a sign that I should stay here.*)

— How did the friends know that they could and should pray for boldness as opposed to asking for protection, comfort, or anything else? (*Examples: Because they had seen God work powerfully, because of the Holy Spirit, and because of the Gospel.*)

— Why can you (and collectively, our church) pray similar prayers?

The friends that are praying together understand that God is sovereign, they know the mission of God for them, they are rooted in the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit is working in them.

—How would it change your prayers if you had a better understanding of all of these things?

Respond in prayer as group. Ask group members to pray for the following:

–Praise God for being sovereign! And pray that we would understand and submit to God’s sovereignty. Acknowledge that God has the right and the power to do all that He decides to do and that all things happen for His glory.

–Pray for our church. Pray that God would continue working in the lives of individuals and the church itself.

–Pray for the pastors of the church. Pray that they will have wisdom and peace and that they will find their rest in Jesus.

–Pray for the lost. Pray that God would rescue them from sin and death and bring salvation.

–Pray for boldness. Pray that we, like Peter and John in Acts 4:20, could not “but speak of what we have seen and heard.”

If you have questions, need to pray, or just need to talk through this study with someone, contact one of our pastors or a fellow church member anytime!

KIDS FOCUS

In today’s story, Peter and John go to their friends because they were in trouble for speaking about Jesus. Their friends pray to God for them!

Begin by reading Acts 4:24 What do you think the word sovereign mean? Who does it say made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them?

–If God made all things, does that mean He is “in control” of those things? Would it help you pray if you know that God is in control?

What are some of the things you might pray for if you were afraid?

— **Read verse 4:29.** What do these people ask for? Why do they ask for boldness?

They believed that the mission that God gave them was more important than their safety, and the Holy Spirit was working in them to help them pray for boldness.

What are some things that you would like to pray for tonight? Here are some ideas:

–Thank God that He is in control of all things!

–Pray for our church.

–Pray for the pastors of our church.

–Pray for people who don’t know Jesus.

–Pray for boldness to tell other people you know about Jesus!