

Acts 4 “The First Prayer”

Acts 4:23-31

June 15, 2025

Acts 4:23-31

23 When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, 25 who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, ““Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?

26

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'[e]—

27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. 29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

“Sovereign Lord.”

Acts 4:28

28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

The church prays with a deep understanding of who God is nature and character.

If God is sovereign, then why pray to Him?

Proverbs 19:21

21 Many are the plans in a person's heart,
but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.

Isaiah 46:10

10 I make known the end from the beginning,
from ancient times, what is still to come.
I say, 'My purpose will stand,
and I will do all that I please.'

What did the church ask for?

Acts 4:29

29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness,

The early church knew they were part of something bigger than themselves.

Genesis 45:4-5 (NIV)

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! 5 And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.

They prayed for boldness and received it.

Psalms 121:1-2, 5

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?
2 My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

5 The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade on your right hand.

What do your prayers reveal about you?

Life Group Discussion Questions

- What did God say to you through His Word during our Sunday gathering?
- When Peter and John came back from the Sanhedrin, they gathered with other Christians to pray. How often are you sharing requests and concerns with other Christians? What are the reservations to being more open, honest and frequent with others?
- What aspects of prayers are being modeled for by the early church?
- Discuss the surprise within the early church's prayer to ask for boldness rather than protection? How often are your prayers wanting God to remove discomforts rather than boldness to press through them?
- In what personal situation is a prayer for boldness appropriate?
- Spend a few moments in prayer with your Life Group asking for boldness to share the gospel in a specific situation?