WHAT DID THEY PRAY ABOUT FOR TEN DAYS?

Acts 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Clues from Acts 1:4-8

Acts 1:4&5 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

John 14:17 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Luke 24:49 “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Clues from the Gospel of John

John 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”

John 20:26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”

What the Church Prayed in a Similar Situation

Acts 4:2&3 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day.

Acts 4:18-21a Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” After further threats they let them go.

Acts 4:23&24 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them.”

Acts 4:25&26 “You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: ‘Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.’ ”

Acts 4:27&28 “Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.”

Acts 4:29-31 “Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Filled with the Holy Spirit and the Bold Proclamation of Truth

Luke 1:15b “He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.”

Mark 6:18 For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.”

Matthew 3:7&8 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

Luke 4:1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Matthew 23:33-35 “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.”

Acts 2:4a All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:11b “We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!”

Acts 4:8-10 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.”

Acts 4:11&12 Jesus is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

Acts 6:3a “Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.

Acts 6:5b They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 7:51-53 “You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? The even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him – you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”

Acts 7:55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

Acts 9:17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord – Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here – has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 9:20 At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.

Acts 11:24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Acts 13:9-11a Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, “You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun.”

Being Filled with the Holy Spirit is a Command

And What It Looks Like

Ephesians 5:15-17(ESV) Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, make the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:18-21(ESV) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

And from the verses about being filled with the Spirit, being bold in proclaiming the truth of God in the face of opposition is probably the most common sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Common Themes in Acts Chapters 1&4

They knew there would be intense opposition if they did what God wanted them to do.

They knew God wanted them to boldly proclaim the Gospel.

God had promised to give them the power to do what He had told them to do through the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8 and Luke 24:49.

What We Are Praying for And Why

That God will first change us so that we might be change agents in our community and that He will do the same in other Christians all around our country.

The change we want to see in ourselves is that we be filled with the Holy Spirit as a way of life so that the Holy Spirit can powerfully work through us.

To be filled we must first be in fellowship as described in I John 1:5-10.

Then we must be willing to do what God is telling us to do, even if we know there may be negative consequences.

Then when situations arise, we must choose to obey God and let His Spirit work through us.