PRAYER AND PENTECOST

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

Context

Acts 1:3-5 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 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.”

I Corinthians 12:13(NASB) For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Acts 1:6-8 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 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 24:48 “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.”

Acts 1:9-11 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

John 20:19a 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.”

Acts 1:12-14 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Acts 1:15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty)

NIV “They all joined together constantly in prayer”

NASV “They all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer”

ESV “All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer”

Acts 2:1-4 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

After Pentecost

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:47b And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Romans 12:12(NASB) rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,

Colossians 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

Acts 4:21a After further threats they let them go.

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.

Acts 6:4(NASB) “But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

Ephesians 6:18-20(NASB) With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Putting It All Together – Why So Much Emphasis on Prayer

The disciples were still meeting in a locked room for fear of the Jewish leaders even after the first appearance of Jesus to them. The were told that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came on them and be witnesses to the ends of the earth and then watched Jesus ascend into heaven. It seems to be obvious that one of their prayer requests during the next ten days when they devoted themselves continually to prayer was for boldness in witnessing.

After ten days of devoting themselves continually to prayer, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and went out on the streets boldly proclaiming the Gospel in other languages and then Peter boldly preached a sermon about Jesus and about 3,000 people accepted his message and were baptized.

After Pentecost, the church “devoted itself to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” and “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

After the Apostles were arrested, and “commanded…not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:18) and then further threatened they went back to the church and the church prayed “consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness” and “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”

The Apostles delegated the work of caring for widows to others so they could “devote (themselves) to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

Part of the weapons we have been given for fighting spiritual battles is to persevere (devote ourselves to) in prayer. And even Paul asked the Ephesians to pray for him for boldness in proclaiming the Gospel boldly.

Things to Think About

The commands to preach the Gospel and make disciples are still in effect.

The Apostles were told to wait in Jerusalem “until they were clothed with power.”

The power to boldly witness came after ten days of continual prayer. From the circumstances, it is logical to assume they were praying, at least in part, for boldness.

The entire early church and especially the Apostles devoted themselves to prayer.

When the apostles were persecuted, they prayed for boldness and were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Speaking truth boldly is a major sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit, something the Word of God commands.

As we face increasing opposition to proclaiming what the Bible teaches, perhaps part of our problem is not enough time in prayer seeking the power of the Holy Spirit to speak the word of God boldly.