

# PRAYER AS MISSION: THE EARLY CHURCH

GREAT PRAYERS OF THE BIBLE | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON | AUGUST 18/19, 2018 | ACTS 1:12-14, 24-25; 2:42-47; 3:1-6; 4:23-31; 7:59-60; 10:9-23; 12:5; 13:1-3; 20:36; 21:5-6

*They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.” (Acts 2:14)*

## Prayer as Preparation (Acts 1:12-14, 24-25)

Waiting in prayer

Decisions in prayer

## Prayer as Community (Acts 2:42-47; 20:36; 21:5-6)

Devoted to prayer

Sustained by prayer

## Prayer as Power in Suffering (Acts 4:23-31; 7:59-60; 12:5)

From pressure to prayer

From vanquished to victorious

## Prayer as Breakthrough (Acts 3:1-6; 10:9-23; 13:1-3)

Fresh seeing and hearing through prayer

Holy Spirit interruptions in prayer

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever been prompted to pray for someone who doesn't know the Lord? What happened through your prayers, either in that person's life or your life?
2. This week we continue our "Great Prayers of the Bible" series by looking at the life of the early church at prayer in the book of Acts. Ask God to speak to you and then continue with the study.
3. Background: The book of Acts is usually known as 'The Acts of the Apostles,' indicating the early leaders of the church. However, the book is in another sense 'The Acts of the Holy Spirit,' as the Spirit leads the church into the mission God has for them.
4. In response to Jesus' instruction, the early believers wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). What do they do while waiting (1:12-14, 24-25)? Why do you think this is important?
5. If you're waiting for someone, what do you fill your time with? Why? What do you think it would look like if you filled that time with prayer instead?
6. Now read through the description about the early Christians' community found in Acts 2:42-47. What does this tell you about their approach to community?
7. What do you think it means for us to be "devoted" to prayer?
8. The early Christians often suffer for their faith in the book of Acts. They seem to always respond to their sufferings in prayer. Read through Acts 4:23-31; 7:59-60; and 12:5 to observe how they pray in relation to suffering.
9. How might the early Christians' example inform your response to suffering?
10. One of the most interesting things about the book of Acts is that the early church seems carried, like a tiny boat along ocean waves, into new breakthroughs of ministry to those apparently outside the community (e.g., Samaritans in 7:59-8:4, Gentiles in Acts 10:9-48). Why do you think this is?
11. What is one specific thing that God is speaking to you through this study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and pray for one another. If you are studying on your own, write it down and share it with someone.

**TAKE IT FURTHER:** Send an email ([info@eastbrook.org](mailto:info@eastbrook.org)) or post to social media ([facebook.com/eastbrookchurch](https://www.facebook.com/eastbrookchurch), [@eastbrookchurch](https://www.instagram.com/eastbrookchurch) on Instagram and Twitter) your story of something God has been speaking to you through the Summer of Prayer. Also, mark your calendars for the 2nd Tuesday in September (September 11), when we will have a time where you can share your stories of God's work in your life through the Summer of Prayer.