

**INTRO**

- What habits or traditions do you have? Where did they come from? How have they shaped you?
- What is a specific prayer that you saw God clearly answer?

**READ**

Read 1:1-14

**REFLECT**

In Acts, we see the centrality of prayer for the Early church with incredible results. What can we learn about prayer from the Early Church?

**1. COMMUNITY OF PRAYER**

Communal prayer was a major emphasis in the early church. They didn't just pray for one another, they prayed *with* one another regularly. (see Acts 1:14, 4:24, 4:31, 12:12, 13:3).

*Qu: what are the challenges to praying together more regularly today? What are the advantages to praying together?*

Who we regularly pray with has a way of growing that relationship.

*Qu: who do you regularly pray with? Or, who can you begin to regularly pray with?*

*Qu: how can we as a church become more of a praying community?*

**2. COMMITMENT TO PRAYER**

Read Acts 2:42.

*Qu: what does it say the church was devoted to? What are challenges today towards being devoted to prayer?*

The earliest Christians were devoted to prayer and *the prayers*. In other words, they had a engrained ritual of prayer with set times (3x daily) set places (Temple and homes), and set

prayers (She'ma, Psalms, Lord's Prayer). We need a recovery of set times and prayers today to help us engrain a lifestyle of prayer.

*Qu: what aspects of traditions or rituals can be beneficial to us? How can set prayers help us?*

Try incorporate set prayers into your prayer time this week by using the Psalms or a resource like [commonprayer.net](http://commonprayer.net).

**3. COURAGE IN PRAYER**

The early church regularly prayed for **boldness**, **leaders** and the **miraculous** for God's mission to advance (e.g. healing, signs & wonders, boldness to face persecution, Peter's release from prison). They prayed courageous prayers because **they believed in God's power to change any situation**, no matter how seemingly impossible. And God answered!

Sometimes we are discouraged in prayer because we are either too resigned to circumstances (ie. they'll never change), or rely too much on our own strength to change things (ie. a form of practical atheism).

The Early Church encourages us to believe in God's power in any situation to bring change, and pray courageously.

*Qu: would you describe your prayers as courageous? If not, why not? How can we grow in courage in our prayers?*

**RESPOND & PRAY**

- Where is God challenge and opportunity for you to grow in prayer: community, commitment, or courage?
- What encouraged/challenged you the most from this discussion?
- Spend time praying courageously with one another for one another, our church, and city.

**Further Resources on Prayer:**

*Face to Face: Praying the Scriptures for Intimate Worship*  
By Kenneth Boa

*Prayer: Finding the Hearts True Home*  
by Richard Foster

*Red Moon Rising: How 24-7 Prayer is Awakening a Generation*  
by Pete Grieg

*A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World*  
by Paul Miller

*Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*  
by Tim Keller

*Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*  
by Eugene Peterson