



Faith and Love C.O.G.I.C
Sunday School

Lesson 1 September 7, 2025

PRAYING FOR ONE
ANOTHER

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE VALUES



SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. **Psalm 133:1**

School/Class: But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. **Hebrews 13:16**

Superintendent/Teacher: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

School/Class: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. **Psalm 119:105**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:4**

School/Class: He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. **Proverbs 22:9**

Superintendent/Teacher: Therefore he says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” **Ephesians 4:8**

School/Class: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:10**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12**

School/Class: For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. **Romans 12:4**

Superintendent/Teacher: By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:35**

School/Class: For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal. 5:13**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

ALL:

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. **2 Peter 3:18**

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- Bible Basis: Acts 4:23-31
- Bible Truth: Prayer is a powerful weapon that God has given His people.
- Memory Verse: VERSE: "And when they prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31).
- Lesson Aim: By the end of the lesson, we will: REVIEW the apostles' prayer for strength to speak with boldness and to continue Jesus' ministry while under political duress; GAIN insights into prayer as a means through which Christians can remain strong voices for change and effective ministries in their communities today; and ASK God in bold prayers to empower their mission and ministry.
- Background Scriptures: Acts 4:1-31 & Matthew 6:9-15 - Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

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Acts 4:23-31, KJV

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

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Acts 4:23-31, KJV

27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Sadducees. The Sadducees were a sectarian party within the Jewish priesthood comprised mostly of aristocrats. They tended to be conservative and were more interested in maintaining power than in the religious purity of Israel. They were frequently in conflict with the Pharisees, rejecting the Oral Torah and teachings on angels and demons, along with the notion of resurrection. Because of their associations with the Temple, they disappeared after its destruction in 70 AD. Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was the highest Jewish tribunal during the Greco-Roman period. They were a council that consisted of 70 aristocratic elders who were led by a hereditary high priest. According to Matthew 16:21 and 27:41, the Sanhedrin consisted of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Its decisions were final in matters concerning Mosaic Law.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:

AIM: Students will discuss how they share their various gifts and talents in various ways.

INTRODUCTION

The Power of God's Word

In Chapter 3, God uses Peter to heal a crippled man who sat at the temple gate daily begging for help. Once the man was healed, he began to dance and praise God to the amazement of those around him. Peter and John used this moment as an opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ and explain how faith in Christ made the man whole. The priests, temple guard, and Sadducees were disturbed by Peter and John teaching the people about Jesus and His Resurrection, and threw them both in jail. As a result of Peter and John's message, the church added five thousand believers. The council was afraid of the people's reaction if they were to harm Peter and John, so they decided to bring them before the council and question them.

INTRODUCTION

The Power of God's Word

The Holy Spirit gave Peter the courage to speak and the words to say to the council. The council was amazed by the boldness and skillful use of Scripture by these ordinary men. Since they were not able to deny the miracle that had been performed, the council decided to try to stop the Gospel's spread by demanding that Peter and John stop preaching about Jesus and threatening them.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: Students will know that the Holy Spirit will fill them to speak God's Word with boldness.

I. PREPARED FOR OPPOSITION

Acts 4:23

In verse 23, Peter and John return to the believers and share all that the council did and said to them. Jesus had warned His followers of this very situation (Luke 12:11-12). Peter and John had experienced opposition because of their commitment to the Gospel. They had healed a crippled beggar in the name of Jesus. This had confused the council members of the Sanhedrin because Peter and John were not religious teachers, but men of Galilee who healed in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, a man the council had condemned to death.

I. PREPARED FOR OPPOSITION

Acts 4:23

Peter and John reported to the fledgling church what the Sanhedrin told them. They were officially told to not speak or preach in the name of Jesus. It wasn't the healing that was so bad in the eyes of the Jewish leaders, but the Gospel message and the name of Jesus. The two apostles were beaten as an act of discipline to ensure the Sanhedrin's orders were followed. This beating was also probably used as an example to instill fear in their followers. Ultimately Peter and John rejoiced in their suffering, since they were suffering for Christ. It was the treasure of the Gospel message that inspired the prayers of the new church, and it should inspire our prayers as well.

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I. PREPARED FOR OPPOSITION

Acts 4:23-31

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

The expression "their own company" (Gk. *idios*, I-dee-os), or "their own circle," denotes the Christian community. It suggests that after their release, Peter and John returned to "headquarters," perhaps the Upper Room of Acts 1:13, where members of the new community had no doubt been engaged in intercessory prayer for them. They reported their experience with the council. This report must have caused the early company fear. The persecution of leaders is a tactic that is often used to silence their followers.

II. GOD PREVAILS OVER OPPOSITION

Judgment, Repentance, and Mercy
Acts 4:24-28

This portion of the lesson begins what is sometimes called the Believer's Prayer. These early believers quote Psalm 2 in their prayer. This psalm, most likely a coronation psalm, is attributed to David. It describes the hostility that accompanied the installation of a king. The king, God's servant, is a consecrated worshiper and the recipient of hostility from the Gentile nations. As the nations attempt to oppose or dethrone the king God has anointed, they are told it is all for nothing; their efforts will fail. These nations are not just opposing an earthly king, but God Himself.

II. GOD PREVAILS OVER OPPOSITION

Acts 4:24-28

The believers go on to describe the hostility that Jesus faced at the hands of these same leaders and how their treatment of Jesus did not derail God's divine plan. The Jewish leaders and Roman authorities had attempted to silence Jesus in death, but in vain-He rose from the dead. Now Jesus is crowned Lord of the universe due to His Resurrection and ascension to Heaven. The believers trust in the resurrected King who is sovereign over the authorities of this earth. Any attempt at opposing the spread of the Gospel message is a vain attempt. Just like the Gentile kings of Psalm 2, the Jewish leaders' opposition is in vain.

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II. GOD PREVAILS OVER OPPOSITION

Acts 4:24-28

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.

With one accord, they turned to God in prayer. The Greek word for "one accord" or "together" is *homothumadon* (ho-mo-thoo-ma-DON), which indicates that they were like one person in prayer. It is a combination of two Greek words meaning "together" and "passion." The disciples were all praying together with the same passion and ardor. It does not mean they all simultaneously said the same words. One of the leaders may have prayed accompanied by a responsive "amen" from the rest. It was more like an orchestra with the Holy Spirit as the conductor. There is power in a gathering of believers when they are in "one accord" (see vv. 24-31).

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They addressed God as "Lord" or "Master" (Gk. des-potes, des-POE-tace), a term denoting the sovereignty of God and His absolute control over all creation. The term is also used for a slave owner or a ruler with unchallengeable power. In the disciples' prayer, the term certainly points to the fact that the authority of the council was subject to a higher authority still, and that the law of men cannot overturn the decrees of God (cf. vv. 19-20). The disciples filled their minds with thoughts of the sovereignty of God before stating their petition. The sovereign God is the God of creation. He made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything in them (cf. 17:24, 26; see also Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 146:6).

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II. GOD PREVAILS OVER OPPOSITION

Acts 4:24-28

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together. 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

The sovereign Lord is the God of revelation. He had revealed to His servant David the opposition Christ would face from various groups. "Why did the heathen rage" is quoted from Psalm 2:1-2. Psalm 2 originally referred to the accession of a Davidic king, the Lord's Anointed, and the revolt of His vassals. It was interpreted by the Jews and the early Christian church as a Messianic psalm (cf. Acts 13:33; Hebrews 5:5). In the psalm, the "heathen" (Gk. ETH-nos, people other than the Israelites) is paired with the "people" (Gk. lah-OSE, Israelites, the people of God). In other words, both God's people and those from outside resisted God's chosen leader. Here the community references the psalm to reveal the extent of Jesus' rejection as the Messiah. Once again, it is only a few from among God's people and from the Gentiles who accept God's chosen Messiah.

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"The kings of the earth" (and "the rulers," who stood up against the Lord and His Christ, were represented by Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea (Luke 23:7), Pontius Pilate, and even Herod the Great, who attempted to kill Jesus at the start of His time on earth. This shows that the sovereign Lord is the God of history. The Greek conjunction gar (GAR), which indicates a cause or reason proves the truth of the preceding prophecy by pointing to its historical fulfillment. Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel are clearly identified with the kings, the rulers, the nations, and the people of Psalm 2:1-2 as quoted in Acts 4:25.

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The expression "thy Holy child Jesus" explicitly identifies Jesus with the royal Son of God addressed in Psalm 2:7. Jesus is both the obedient Son and the One whom God anointed or made Messiah. Jesus, "whom thou hast anointed," refers to the Holy Spirit's identification of Him as Messiah at His baptism. The Holy Spirit's resting on Jesus signaled His anointing or empowerment and the inauguration of His earthly ministry (cf. 10:38; Luke 3:21-22; 4:18-21; Isaiah 61:1).

LIGHT ON THE WORD

God's Power and Guidance

God causes even His enemies to do what He has determined beforehand. The purposes of the rulers and the people were overruled by the sovereign Lord for the accomplishment of His will. Herod and Pilate simply carried out the foreordained counsel of God that His Messiah would suffer (cf. Acts 2:23, 3:18). The word "hand" (cheir, KHAIR) refers to God's action, His controlling power as well as his guidance (cf. 11:21; 13:11; Exodus 3:20; Jeremiah 15:6; Ezekiel 6:14).

III. EMPOWERED FOR OPPOSITION

Acts 4:29-31

At the end of the prayer, the believers appeal to God to give them greater boldness and empower them to perform greater works in Jesus' name. They accept and embrace the fact that they will face opposition. David faced it. Jesus faced it. Their request is not for God to alleviate it or make a way for them to escape it. They are not concerned about themselves, but focused on the Gospel being heard, and they understand that the plan of God has a history of hostility from those who feel threatened by it. They seek God and ask to be empowered and strengthened so that they can continue to serve Him with boldness.

III. EMPOWERED FOR OPPOSITION

Acts 4:29-31

God responds to their request with a physical sign: the entire place shakes. This must have confirmed and strengthened their faith. The disciples are then empowered with boldness to preach the name of Jesus. It is important to note that the power the apostles sought was so they could better serve God and others, while the power that the council sought was strictly for their own benefit. As we seek God for power, we need to have a proper understanding of what power is for. God empowers us to serve others and not ourselves.

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III. EMPOWERED FOR OPPOSITION

Acts 4:29-31

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word. 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

The council's threats were not a cause for fear and silence, but bolder speech. The apostles therefore prayed that they might have courage to proclaim the Word of God "with all boldness." The Greek word for "boldness" (parresia, pah-reh-SEE-a) in this context refers to freedom in speaking and unreservedness of utterance. The disciples wanted to speak the message of the Gospel without fear. The word "servants" comes from the Greek word doulos (DOO-las), which means slave and contrasts with the majesty of "Lord" from verse 24.

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The disciples' next request is that God would place the seal of His public approval on their witness by granting further mighty works of healing and similar signs and wonders through the same name that had cured the lame man-the name of Jesus.

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The term "hand," most frequently used to refer to God's act of punishment, here denotes His action in bringing blessing (cf. Luke 5:13). It was of course the apostles' hands that were stretched out to heal, but, as in Acts 3:16, they attributed their power to God working through them as they restored men to wholeness in the name of Jesus.

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The account here is reminiscent of the description of what happened on the Day of Pentecost, both in the external signs of the Spirit's coming and in the disciples' prayerful attitude when He comes. In answer to the disciples' united and earnest prayers, the place was shaken, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they proclaimed the Word of God boldly. They were encouraged to continue to proclaim the faith despite the council's threats.

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The shaking (Gk. saleuo, sal-EW-oh) of the place where the disciples were symbolizes the presence of God (cf. Exodus 19:18; Isaiah 6:4). The assurance of divine favor and help came even as they prayed. An earthquake might be a cause for fear to some, but to those who see it as an answer to prayer, it is an encouragement. The verb "filled" followed by the verb "spake" indicates the immediate and continuous action of the disciples. They were continuously proclaiming the Word of God with boldness.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Prayer and Power

Christians must come together to pray for strength and boldness to serve others. As the church faces many challenges, bold prayer is needed from believers to empower the mission and ministry that God has given believers.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: Students will know that followers of Christ will draw strength from Him as they seek God in prayer.

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BIBLE APPLICATION

Many circumstances in life can challenge our faith and hinder our relationship with God. This is why we must stay ready and willing to pray for one another. In order for Christians to witness boldly, we must have uncompromising trust in God's plan in spite of opposition.

STUDENT RESPONSES

AIM: Believers will take comfort in knowing
that God answers prayer.

STUDENT RESPONSES

Our ability to effect change is directly related to our prayer life, personal worship, and relationship with God. This is where we start. The church in Acts began with prayer, but their prayer empowered them to go out into the community and do works for the benefit of others. Brainstorm some areas in which your community needs change. Pray as a class for God to empower you to serve. Ask God for boldness to step out and serve the community and watch Him move.

Prayer

Dear Lord,

We pray for boldness to speak Your Word and live Your Word as we share the Christian faith with others.

In Jesus' Name we pray.

Amen.

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Next Sunday
September 14, 2025
Lesson 2
Sharing All Things
Acts 4:34-5:10