

In the life of the Christian there must be the “shut door” (private prayer), and in the life of any church there must be an “upper room” (public prayer). And just as there is no substitute for private prayer in the life of the Christian, so nothing can take the place of public prayer in the life of the church.

**Acts 1:14a: “All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer”**

- **Grammatical Usage:** “**one accord**” or in the Greek, “homothymadon” meaning, “same passion”; “**devoting**” or “proskarterountes” meaning, “earnestly interacting”; “**in prayer**” or “proseuchē” meaning, “worship”.
- **Literal Interpretation:** They were united, earnestly interacting with God in worship.
- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word. The church was born in the upper room. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, for which those early disciples were told to wait, was to mark the birth and the beginning of the infant church; and for ten days this company of praying souls was gathered in the place of united worshipful prayer until the heavens were rent and “**all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit**” (**Acts 2:4**). It is in such upper rooms that the greatest business in the world is transacted by the church, under the auspices of the Holy Spirit, where humble, born-again souls meet and willingly pray to discern and do His will.

In many respects, this eve-of-Pentecost prayer meeting was a model one, so let us note some of its characteristics mentioned in **Acts 1:14**:

1. Notice the word “**ALL**”: “**They all joined together constantly in prayer....**” That is, the eleven apostles, the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and our Lord’s brothers – and there were about 120 present (**v. 15**). The lesson is simple: it is the privilege and responsibility of all to join in prayer.
2. They “**joined together EARNESTLY in prayer....**” Their praying was persevering and steadfast. There is no suggestion that they ate, slept or lived in the upper room, but the Holy Spirit records the fact that they all joined together constantly (**Acts 12:5-17**).
3. They were “**United**.” They prayed with one mind and one heart. There was unanimity about the matters for which they prayed; there was heart-agreement between the participants, and they enjoyed the unity of the Spirit (**Ephesians 4:3**). United prayer is vain if the participants are not on good terms with one another (**Psalms 133**; **Matthew 5:23-24**).
4. They continued in “**PRAYER**.” The use of the word “prayer” reminds us that it includes praise, worship, thanksgiving, adoration, confession and intercession.

What is the power of prayer?

The idea that power is inherent in prayer is a very popular one. According to the Bible, the power of prayer is, quite simply, the power of God, who hears and answers prayer. Consider the following:

- 1) The Lord God Almighty can do all things; there is nothing impossible for Him (**Luke 1:37**).
- 2) The Lord God Almighty invites His people to pray to Him. Prayer to God should be made persistently (**Luke 18:1**), with thanksgiving (**Philippians 4:6**), in faith (**James 1:5**), within the

will of God (**Matthew 6:10**), for the glory of God (**John 14:13-14**), and from a heart right with God (**James 5:16**).

3) The Lord God Almighty hears the prayers of His children. He commands us to pray, and He promises to listen when we do (**Psalm 18:6**).

4) The Lord God Almighty answers prayer. "**I call on you, O God, for you will answer me**" (**Psalm 17:6; Psalm 34:17**). Two points to consider:

- A popular idea is that the amount of faith we have determines whether or not God will answer our prayers. However, sometimes the Lord answers our prayers in spite of our own lack of faith (**Acts 12**).
- The power of prayer does not flow from us; it is not special words we say or the special way we say them or even how often we say them. The power of prayer comes from the omnipotent One who hears our prayers and answers them.

What is the result of such meetings of the church for united prayer?

1. The first result is guidance in the administration of the church.

Only where there is united prayer on the part of the members can there be the accomplishing of God's will in and through the church. Without such praying, wrong decisions will be made, man's wisdom will be exalted and God's work will be hindered; but with much praying the work of God will go forward and His will can be accomplished.

2. The second result will be the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

The result of this prayer meeting was Pentecost! More prayer on the part of the whole fellowship of God's people means more of the convicting and converting power of the Holy Spirit in the personal and public preaching of the gospel, and more power in the lives of God's people, enabling them to show forth the beauty of the Lord Jesus in their daily walk and witness.

3. The third result will be the presence and power of Satan.

As soon as the Spirit of God began to work in the church, the Adversary began also. In the Book of Acts, see how Satan did his utmost to disturb the work of God. A full and prosperous prayer meeting is the guarantee of the presence of two great personalities – the Holy Spirit and Satan. Thank God, however, for the truth in **1 John 4:4**! The Devil is a defeated foe, and when a church knows how to "pray through", the Spirit of the Lord will put him to flight (**Isaiah 59:19**). The Devil leaves some churches alone: he does not attack the church that is little more than a religious club, or that is propagating a different gospel (**Galatians 1:6**), or that is worldly and places no great value on the preaching of the Word, the ministry of prayer and the desperate need of lost men and women. No, he attacks the church in which the Holy Spirit is at work! The fact that Satan is on the warpath need not be a cause for discouragement; where God's people know how to pray through, the powers of darkness will not only be held back, but Satan's devices will be used by God to further His purposes.

4. The fourth result will be the mighty spread of the gospel.

Within a few days of the conclusion of this prayer meeting, the whole of Heaven's machinery was set in motion for the spreading of the gospel (**Acts 1:8**).

➤ **Conclusion:** Will I commit to personal and fellowship prayer to advance the Gospel?