

The Church – When the Church Prays

Dr. John Carmichael

[Act 12:5 NASB95] 5 So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.

- The early church was under attack. James was executed, and Peter was imprisoned under Herod. It looked like the church's leaders were being systematically destroyed.
- Yet, in the midst of crisis, the church did not scatter or despair, they prayed earnestly and together (Acts 12:5). Much of our prayer is powerless because it lacks earnestness. Too often we almost pray with the attitude of wanting God to care about things we really don't care too much about. (Guzik)
- Corporate prayer is God's ordained means of protection, deliverance, and empowerment for His church and leaders. The NT churches often engaged in prolonged times of corporate prayer (i.e., all-together prayer meetings, Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:24–31; 12:5, 12; 13:2).
- Fire Bible Notes: Apart from prayer, no amount of preaching, teaching, singing, music or activity will bring the genuine power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

What does church need to learn about corporate prayer?

Here are three powerful lessons the church needs to learn about corporate prayer.

I. The Church Must Pray for Its Leaders in Times of Attack

- [Act 12:5 NASB95] 5 So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.
- James was killed (v. 2), Peter was next in line. Without prayer, the church would lose another key leader.
- Leaders are prime targets for the enemy. When the shepherd is struck, the sheep scatter.
- Jesus prayed for Peter's faith, that he would not fail. Even leaders need the prayers of others. [Luk 22:31-32 NASB95] 31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded [permission] to sift you like wheat; 32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."
- Pray regularly and corporately for your pastors, missionaries, elders, and spiritual leaders. Organize prayer gatherings, not just for personal needs, but for the covering of church leadership.

II. The Church Must Pray for Boldness and Open Doors

- [Eph 6:19 NASB95] 19 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,
- Paul depended on the church's prayers to preach effectively. Prayer is not optional. It fuels the ministry of the Word.
- [1Co 16:9 NASB95] 9 for a wide door for effective [service] has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.
- Every open door comes with opposition, which must be met by prayer.
- Pray for the church to have open doors in the community, for revival in the city, and for the Word to go forth with power.
- Don't just pray for problems to go away. Pray for opportunities for the Gospel to expand, even in hostile environments.

III. The Church's Prayer Releases Supernatural Deliverance

- While the church prayed, God sent an angel to set Peter free. Chains fell off, guards were bypassed, iron gates opened. [Act 12:6-11 NASB95]

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- b. Prayer changes things that are humanly impossible.
 - c. What the church could not do in the natural, God accomplished through their prayers.
 - d. [Jas 5:16 NASB95] 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
 - e. The church united is a powerhouse of spiritual authority.
 - f. When facing impossible circumstances, gather with the church to pray corporately.
 - g. Expect miracles when the body of Christ prays together—healings, deliverance, financial provision, revival.
- **When the church unites in prayer, God releases power to protect His leaders, advance His Kingdom, and overcome every plan of the enemy.**
 - **Peter’s story in Acts 12 shows us that corporate prayer is the key to survival, revival, and advancement of the church.**
 - **Jesus prayed for Peter, Paul asked for prayer, and the early church united in prayer. This is God’s pattern.**
 - **We must become a praying church, not only for ourselves but for the leaders and the mission of God.**

Heavenly Father, we come together in one heart and one voice, lifting up North Church before You. Lord, You are the builder of the house, and unless You build it, we labor in vain. We thank You for Your hand upon Dr. John and Pastor Erin. Strengthen them with wisdom, courage, and fresh anointing for this season of transition. Guard their family, bless their health, and multiply their effectiveness for Your glory. We pray for the Oversight Board and the Local Leadership Team. Grant them unity of spirit, clarity of vision, and boldness to lead with integrity and humility. Let them discern Your will and walk in step with the Holy Spirit. Father, we lift up the Secure the House Capital Campaign. You are Yahweh Jireh, our Provider. Stir generosity in every heart, release supernatural provision, and bring in the resources needed to establish this house of worship, prayer, and mission. We declare North Church will be a light in Clarksville and beyond, a place where souls are saved, lives are healed, and disciples are made. Protect us, empower us, and let Your glory dwell among us. In Jesus’ mighty name, Amen.



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