



Pray with...

Week 3: Pray with Power

Find the message podcasts and group guides in this series at actschurchlakeway.com/sermons or the ACTS Lakeway app, available for download in the app store for your phone or tablet.

Big Idea from the Message

The aim for Christians in most circumstances is to approach it quietly and cautiously. There are plenty of times that this is an appropriate and noble approach. But when it comes to prayer, we are charged to pray with boldness and POWER. Prayer becomes even more powerful when it is done in agreement with other believers.

Opening Things Up

1. Think back upon your years growing up. Is there ever a time when you were placed in authority over other kids (team captain, hall monitor, student body president, youth group president)? Talk about the role you were given but also rate yourself: How well did you handle 'power' over other students? Is there a down side to granting power to someone who is not very mature?
2. When we talk about 'praying with power,' we acknowledge that it is possible to get overwhelmed by our lack of maturity or carried away by our own sense of power. This is why the command, 'Be still and know that I am God' is so vital for us to remember (see Psalm 46:10-11). When we pray with power, it is *God's* power that we are referring to, not our own! Are there any activities or rhythms that you practice which help you re-center yourself on the power of God? Talk about it.
3. Power corrupts. Power reveals character. Therefore, only God is capable of holding unlimited power. That's because only God is pure in character! How might you be reassured, knowing that God is completely trustworthy to hear your prayers, even when you are most desperate and vulnerable?
4. As Christians, we often underestimate the power of agreement with other believers in prayer. Read Matthew 18:19-20 and share reactions. Why do you think Jesus puts such a focus on praying in line with other believers? How does praying within a Community of Christians limit any potential abuses of power?

Living It Out

5. In this series, we have an opportunity to reclaim our theology of prayer. We are asking the Lord to *teach* us to pray:
 - with Expectation
 - with Presence
 - with Power
 - with Urgency

Which of these characteristics of prayer might best describe your prayer life? Explain. Can you identify one of these categories that you would like to experience more consistently or to a greater degree?

6. Martin Luther, in the Large Catechism, writes: *It was the prayer of a few godly people standing in the middle like an iron wall for our side... For whenever a godly Christian prays, 'Dear Father, let your will be done,' God speaks from on high and says, 'Yes, dear child, it shall be so, in spite of the devil and all the world' (Large Catechism, 30-32).* Talk about a time when you experienced something similar... when a few godly people stood together in agreement and made a significant difference in the outcome.
7. If you had a dream or desire for Christians to stand together in agreement, praying with power over an issue or situation, what would it be? What are you willing to do in order to make that wish a reality?
8. Read the following prayer and share initial reactions before answering the question below.

*Let me know the the work of prayer
is to bring my will to thine,
and that without this it is folly to pray;
When I try to bring thy will to mine
it is to command Christ,
to be above him, and wiser than he:
this is my sin and my pride.
I can only succeed when I pray
according to thy precept and promise,
and to be done with as it pleases thee,
according to thy sovereign will.*

Valley of Vision: 'Living by Prayer'

In your experience, how has prayer been effective in bending your will to match God's Will?

Lifting it up

It can be easy to talk about the topic of prayer, without actually dedicating time for prayer! Today explore praying 'with power' - in agreement with other believers in Jesus.