



WEEKLY STUDY

Week One

This week marks the start of a new season of sermons simply called, And They Prayed. In this series we are seeking God's direction, and seeking to have hearts that are ready to listen to His voice. Prayer was a defining marker of the young church as it began to spread across the globe in the years following Jesus' death and resurrection. It can be a defining marker in the story that God invites us into now.

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/signup and click on Small Groups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture. Follow the daily prayer prompt and then pray this or your own prayer.

*Dear God,
I desire to know you more.
Help me to fix my eyes on Jesus.
Today, as best I know how, I give my whole life to you.
Lead me. Heal me. Give me power.
I will go wherever you want me to go.
In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: ACTS 1.6-7

Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.

- These verses remind me of the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray. "Our Father...Your Kingdom come." The disciples had been through it all in the days leading up to this question in verse 6 of Acts chapter 1. They were tired, exhilarated, confused. Many of our prayers are for restoration. We pray restoration for our relationships, our children's hearts, our country, this broken world. The answer to the question the disciples asked is/was yes. But not in the way they thought. The kingdom of God is being restored in us.

- *Pray for the restoration that Jesus came to bring in your own life.*

TUESDAY: ACTS 1.8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- When we pray together and individually, we can receive power. Not just relief, but power. Not just energy, but the power of God that is given through the Holy Spirit. And that power creates the church. The church is more than an institution, it is a movement that is changing the world. Even now.
- *Pray, and wait for the power to do what God calls you to do.*

WEDNESDAY: ACTS 1.9-11

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

- The disciples were swept up in this moment. It makes sense that they were staring up into the sky, dumbfounded by what they witnessed. Jesus was taken away in a cloud. Sometimes it may seem like God is leaving us right in the middle of a conversation. Sometimes God responds to our prayers in ways that leave us feeling dumbfounded. The good news from the two men dressed in white is that Jesus is in the full presence of his Heavenly Father. And that he will return. If he can come down, he can go up. If he can go up, he can come back again.
- *Pray with your eyes open thanking God for the ways He shows up in the world around you.*

THURSDAY: ACTS 1.12-14

Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. ¹³When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

- The people who had most intimately experienced the resurrection of Jesus were faithfully waiting for the next move. Their prayers were constant and unified. Our prayers can be constant when our hearts are set on God even while we work and play and rest.
- *Dedicate yourself to a prayerful heart and awareness of God in every aspect of your day today.*

FRIDAY: 2 CHRONICLES 7.14

...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. ¹⁵

Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. ¹⁶ I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there.

- The world-changing truth is that God hears the prayers of God's people. And God responds. God promises to be present in God's house. And Jesus declared that God's house is a house of prayer. Have you ever wondered if God heard your prayers? Have you ever wondered if God saw you? Take this promise for yourself today. God's eyes and heart are upon you and with you.
- *Pray in a humble posture and seek God's face.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 17.6-9

*I call on you, my God, for you will answer me;
turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.*

⁷ *Show me the wonders of your great love,
you who save by your right hand
those who take refuge in you from their foes.*

⁸ *Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings*

⁹ *from the wicked who are out to destroy me,
from my mortal enemies who surround me.*

- David cried out these words to God. He asked God to turn God's ear to him and to show up in a big display of His great love. The turning implies that David thought God might have turned away for a time. This prayer helps David himself to see that God's gaze was upon him.
- *Pray for the wonders of God's great love to be made visible to you.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Jacob shared that this current sermon series is actually a diversion from the typical planning. When we follow the disciples' activity after Jesus' death and resurrection, we see that they were all over the map...until they prayed. When have you had to change course from your best laid plans? How does God show up when you give up control?