

Sermon Discussion Guide:

Peter's Arrest and Rescue

Sunday, September 25, 2022

Scripture: **Acts 12:1-11**

Series: **The Spirit & The Church**

OVERVIEW

The church (which is about 10 years old at this point) faces its most severe persecution to date when the apostle James, the brother of John, is executed by King Herod. James is the second martyr in Acts and the first of the 12 apostles to be executed. Next, Peter, the most recognized leader in the church, is arrested and put in jail to await his trial—and likely his death. The church prays and God intervenes in a miraculous way to rescue Peter. **The love of God for his people moves us to trust and pray.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. First, King Herod violently attacked some who belonged to the church (12:1), then he executed James (12:2), and then he arrested Peter (12:3). According to 12:3, what is motivating Herod to do these things? Can you think of any modern-day examples of people persecuting Christians in order to score political points and gain power?
2. Why do you think Herod put Peter in prison to await trial rather than executing him immediately? (see 12:3-4) And why do you think he went so far as to assign four squads of four soldiers each to guard Peter? (see Acts 5:18-25)
3. How did the church respond to the news of Peter's imprisonment? Share a time when you prayed fervently/earnestly for God to intervene in a way that only He could.
4. When did God answer the church's prayers for Peter's rescue? (See 12:6.) Share a time when you prayed for something important and God kept you in suspense, waiting on his timing. Why doesn't He always give us what we ask for when we ask for it?
5. How could Peter be sound asleep at a time like this? Read Psalm 3:1-5 and Psalm 4:8 for a similar example in David's life.
6. How can we tell in verses 7-10 that Peter was not the one who planned his own escape? How many miraculous events can you count in verses 7-10?
7. How has God miraculously set you free from prison, metaphorically speaking? Recite or sing the fourth stanza of the hymn, "And Can It Be."
8. Why should we persevere in prayer? How does God's love motivate you to pray? (See Romans 8:31-39, Ephesians 6:18-20, Hebrews 13:3.)
9. What else "struck" you in this week's sermon and passage?