Sermon Notes

June 6, 2021

Prayer and Power

Acts 12:1-17

King Herod - Popular and Powerful

Acts 12:1b-3 “King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. When he saw this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also.

Wikipedia – “Agrippa governed Judea to the satisfaction of the Jews. His zeal, private and public for Judaism is record by Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, and the rabbis.”

King Herod imprisoned Peter because:

1. Peter killed someone.
2. Peter was constantly speeding in his chariot.
3. Peter was confused with a pickpocket.
4. Herod thought this would be a popular move.

Prayer Meeting Kicks into Gear

Acts 12:4-5 After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. So Peter was kept in prison, *but the church was earnestly praying for him*.”

Christians are persecuted throughout the world

Some live in fear, lose family, and some are in jail.

What should our response be as Christians? PRAY

2 Corinthians 1:7-9 And our hope for you is firm, *because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so you also share in our comfort*. We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed we felt we had received the sentence of death. **But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.**

Just in time Prayer Solutions

Acts 12:6-9 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists. Then the angel said to him, “Put on your clothes and sandals.” And Peter did so. “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me,” the angel told him. Peter followed him out of prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision.”

Things we can learn from Peter

He is sleeping soundly the night before his trial starts.

He immediately follows the instructions of the angel.

If you were freed from prison where would you go?

Peter chooses to go where his brothers and sisters in Christ were.

Acts 12:12b He went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.

Acts 12:13-14 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, Peter is at the door.”

Knock Knock

Acts 12:15-16 You’re out of your mind,” they told her. When she kept insisting it was so, they said, “It must be his angel.” But Peter kept on knocking and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished.

Acts 12:17b “Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this,” he said, and then he left for another place.

Why does Luke the author of Acts tell this story?

To show God’s power to do the miraculous?

Because of the additional ways that God would use Peter in the scriptures?

To show the importance of prayer and that God answers prayer?

Prayer and Peace

Not such a good situation (prison and persecution).

God loves to raise the dead.

When we seek God’s glory he gives us peace.