

Praying again

Acts 12:1-5

Welcome

- Hello and welcome to Mission Sent
- Hopefully you are well after celebrating Thanksgiving
- Tonight are big question is this, How is your prayer life?
- So as we ponder this, I will pray and we will jump into it

Acts 12:1-3

About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. 2 He killed James the brother of John with the sword, 3 and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread.

Acts 12:1-3

- Alright as we jump in tonight we start off with some dark themes here
- Herod, by the way this is not the same Herod from the Christmas story, this is that Herod's grandson
- Herod is doing what all of us do, he is trying to gain power
- Herod is a false king, in the fact he really doesn't have a kingdom
- He is granted this fake title by Rome because Rome at this point is too big to rule everywhere so they set up these kings, or governors, to rule on their behalf

Acts 12:1-3

- Now Rome really didn't care what happened in your province, as long as taxes came in
- So what these fake kings would do is try to enlarge their territories so they could feel more important
- Isn't this something we all do, I mean every single one of us knows someone who got a little power and it went straight to their heads
- We call it controlling, or a control freak, and chances are at some point everyone in this room can relate to what Herod must be thinking (not saying we would be killing people, but hey rules are different for those in power)

Acts 12:1-3

- See Herod knew this would get him points with the Jews, if he harassed the church
- Ultimately, and we saw this with Saul, Herod is persecuting Jesus
- This is what persecution looks like, not an unfriending on social media, death
- And this is what Jesus means when he says in Luke 9:23-26, “23 And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. 25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? 26 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.”

Acts 12:1-3

- See there is a cost for following Jesus
- Yes, salvation is free in that we cannot earn it, but the cost of following Jesus is to deny ourselves
- Stop chasing the big house, the promotion at work, the American dream
- Focus everything we are on showing Jesus to others
- On being the hands and feet
- Who cares what you stack here, it will all be sold at a garage sale eventually anyway

Acts 12:1-3

- James, the brother of John who wrote 5 of the new testament books, is killed simply because he followed Jesus
- Are we following Jesus like this?
- If it was illegal to follow Jesus, is there enough evidence in your life to convict you of this crime?
- And let's see what happens with Peter here

Acts 12:4-5

4 And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. 5 So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

Acts 12:4-5

- Alright to start with here, Peter is locked up
- Herod puts him in jail and tells four squads of guards to watch him
- Intending after passover to bring him out
- For some in this room we may pick up on this quickly, but for some of us this may seem like an extra detail
- However, the reason Herod is waiting until after passover is because he intends to kill Peter

Acts 12:4-5

- There is no jury ready to hear this case either
- Herod had Peter arrested, and Peter is sitting on death row
- Now there are similarities to another execution carried out here can anyone take a guess as to who it was?
- Yes, Jesus is arrested at night, there is a mock trial held in secret, and they hurried to kill him before passover so they would not be unclean
- Peter is walking the same line Jesus did
- The biggest difference is Jesus' death paid for sin, Peters will not

Acts 12:4-5

- See we can look at all this with our enlightened, sophisticated minds, and go this isn't right
- They didn't commit any crimes
- However, understand this, without Jesus being crucified there is no forgiveness of sins
- See most of us in this room can really easily look at our lives and know we are sinners, you really do not need me or anyone else to point that fact out
- And the Bible is very clear about the wages of sin in Romans 6:23

Acts 12:4-5

- But when Jesus allowed Himself to be nailed to that cross, He took all the sin of the world
- See Jesus was man just like us, but he was born of a virgin, he lived a sinless life, he upheld the law perfectly, and then laid down His life to save ours
- This is why we follow Jesus, this is why Jesus alone is worthy to be worshipped, this is the gospel. This is the good news, that whoever so believes, shall not perish but have everlasting life
- And like we looked at a few weeks ago, when 1 person repents all of heaven rejoices

Acts 12:4-5

- Now Peter is sitting on death row, and look at the response of the church
- They prayed earnestly
- They didn't picket the jail, they didn't take to social media, they bowed their knees and prayed
- Is this our response? Is this what we do?
- How many of us spend times daily in prayer?
- To quote Joby Martin, how many of us, if all our prayers were answered would be changing the world for the better?

Acts 12:4-5

- Not changing our world, but the entire world
- See we will see next week the amount of power in this prayer of the church
- But what we need to focus on this week is to start praying
- It doesn't matter if we have prayed before or not, if you need help on how to pray come see me after service
- We need to be more diligent in our prayers for sure

Closing

- So as Josh comes up and we sing, pray earnestly
- Pray for whatever God is laying on your heart, pray for Mission Sent, that we find a place of our own
- Pray Mission Media continues to grow to new audiences
- Pray for every person we come into contact with to see Jesus in all we do
- Pray to the lord of the harvest to make us laborers
- Just pray