

What can kill the church

Acts 12:12-25

Welcome

- Hello and welcome to Mission Sent
- Tonight our big question is what can kill the church?
- We looked last week and saw that according to numbers the church is in decline, but is it really?
- So I hope you have clicked or flipped there, I will pray and we will jump in

Acts 12:12

12 When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

Acts 12:12

- Alright to sum up last week, Peter in faith followed the commands of the angel of the Lord and was miraculously released from prison
- The angel leaves Peter and we see here when he realized everything that was happening was real and not just a vision, Peter goes to where the disciples are gathered and praying.
- Again, one of the reasons we gather is so that we all have a place to go, we have a family we belong to
- I have said this since before we planted, but if we are just church friends, this whole thing falls apart

Acts 13:13-15

13 And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. 14 Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate. 15 They said to her, "You are out of your mind." But she kept insisting that it was so, and they kept saying, "It is his angel!"

Acts 13:13-15

- So Peter, who when we think about it is an escaped convict on the run, gets to the house where the church is gathering, he knocks this girl hears him and leaves him outside
- She is so excited that Peter is here that she just runs to tell everyone about it
- This is what our response to answered prayers should look like
- Think about it, the church has been gathered and praying earnestly for Peter, and then look here they see their prayers answered
- She is so excited Jesus heard and answered she didn't even think to let Peter in the door

Acts 13:13-15

- Think about it, we are super quick to go “Hey Jesus it is me again, I need....”
- But are we just as excited when Jesus answers that prayer?
- Are we sitting here going look everyone I prayed for blank and Jesus answered
- Why do you think my boat and truck come up in almost every sermon I preach? It is an answered prayer!!
- We should always be sharing this, and here is why the Bible no less than 233 times tells us to rejoice, to be joyful

Acts 13:13-15

- I mean think about it, one of the gifts of the spirit is joy
- We should be a joyous people
- Listen to what Paul says in Philippians 4:4-7, “4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- Want peace, want that peace that surpasses understanding, then rejoice

Acts 12:16-17

16 But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed. 17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brothers." Then he departed and went to another place.

Acts 12:16-17

- Alright so they finally let Peter in and he quiets them down and then tells them the story
- Here's everything that happened, then he tells them to tell James and the others
- Here is another reason why we gather, to be encouraged, to be equipped to go do the mission
- What Peter is doing here is encouraging the church, he you guys prayed, and look at what Jesus showed up and did

Acts 12:16-17

- Keep doing that, tell everyone about it
- This is the same thing we are doing right now
- We are continuing to share this same good news, we are still some 2,000 years later talking about how Jesus showed up and rescued Peter
- See we should be talking about the things Jesus has done in our lives, we should be telling every one here about how Jesus rescued us
- How Jesus showed up when we were facing death

Acts 12:16-17

- And if you are sitting here tonight going I have never faced death
- Then understand this, you were dead in your trespass and sin, but God being rich in mercy with a great love for which he loved us made us alive together with Christ, for by grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:4-5)
- See you if you are in Christ, you have a rescue story, about how the God of creation was born in the city of David, the word became flesh lived a perfect life
- Hung on a cross to pay for your sin, and now simply because you have placed faith in him, counts you as one of His own
- All we have to do is share that

Acts 12:24

24 But the word of God increased and multiplied.

Acts 12:24

- Now in the verses before this one it talks about how Herod killed the guards who allowed Peter to escape, he went back to Ceaserea and then he dies
- Feel free to go back and read it, but I want to finish our time with this last verse
- But the word of God increased and multiplied
- See again, we look at this and see trials
- James lost his life, Peter was arrested and almost crucified, Herod tried everything he could to stomp out the church

Acts 12:24

- But it increases and multiplies
- See when the church is the church, when the church does in faith, when the church shares their testimony, when the church is on mission, it multiplies
- In Matthew 16:18 Jesus tells us this, “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
- There is nothing in this world that will ever stop the church, because Jesus is the One who builds His church
- The same God who spoke into the darkness and created the light, is the same God who builds His church

Acts 12:24

- I don't care who is elected to what position, they are not higher than Jesus
- I don't care what man says is lawful or not, they are nothing to the law of Christ
- I don't care what obstacles stand in our way, the church cannot be killed, crushed or bruised because Jesus already was
- The question simply comes in, are we on the mission of seeking and saving what is lost?

Closing

- As Josh comes back up and we close ask yourself
- Is the church dying?
- Has the church lost its power, and if it hasn't what am I doing as part of the church to seek and save what is lost?
- I have said this so much over the past few months, but the harvest is plentiful it is the laborers that are few who is ready to be a laborer?
- Pray