

**The Freedom Found in the Lord**  
**Acts 12:1-19 and Luke 24:1-35**  
**April 17, 2022**

**Vision:** Rejoicing as people come to life in Christ.

**Mission:** Building relationships that lead to Gospel transformation.

"The Bible tells the truth about God. The four Gospels tell the truth about Jesus. We read the Bible together as God's people to hear God's Word to us. We will engage in the faithful interpretation of the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We gladly hear the Word with open minds and full hearts. Together we will hear and do the Word from God as a faithful and obedient people. Amen." ~ **Dr. Rodney Kennedy**

If you are a guest and you are joining us the morning, we have been on a journey of the Old and New Testament (currently) for some time now. Our journey today takes us to Acts 12 and the arrest of Peter and his release. As we look at this account as well as the account of the Resurrection there are several similarities.

**1) God does and will use “evil” people for His plan and glory (vs. 1-4).**

The first of the Herods is often known as “Herod the Great” and is the one who sought to kill Jesus in Matthew 2 by slaughtering all the infant boys. This Herod also tried to enlist the Wise Men to reveal the whereabouts of the baby Jesus.

Herod Agrippa I was the grandson of Herod the Great (Acts 12). It was he who persecuted the church in Jerusalem and had the apostle James, the brother of John and son of Zebedee, put to death by the sword. By the hand of Herod Agrippa I, James became the first apostle to be martyred. Two of Agrippa I's daughters were Bernice and Drusilla, mentioned in Acts 24 and Acts 25.<sup>1</sup>

So here are just two people, that God used even in spite of themselves, for His purpose. As I have said many times and Scripture supports, God will either use your obedience or He will use you in spite of your disobedience.

Keep in mind those who wanted to kill Jesus and those who were yelling “crucify” Him not to mention the “religious leaders” who literally put Him on the cross.

Think of some of the evil people (all “evil” means without God) around our world today. God can even use them.

Side note, just because God is silent doesn't mean He isn't working. Remember, Jesus was dead for three days; it was doom, gloom and dark. God was working even though it couldn't be seen.

**2) God uses the prayers of His people (vs. 5-11).**

“Constant prayer”

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Herods.html>

Prayer is the single greatest asset in the life of a Believer. It is also the one asset used the least and spent the least time on.

Jesus was constantly teaching the disciples to pray! Why? Many reasons, but a big one was He knew what was coming, He knew He was leaving and they needed the Spirit.

*Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.* **James 5:16**

Notice their greatest asset wasn't to boycott, cry foul, sign petitions, or run it up the flag pole but rather to pray!!!

Harps Crossing Baptist Church at Hollonville, this morning I am calling us to prayer, to pray for revival, the lost, our Church. In fact, I will ask you this morning at our invitation time that if you will commit or recommit to be a person of active prayer and to pray for revival that you will come to the altar during our invitation time.

### **3) God always gets the last word (vs. 12-19).**

Peter was arrested, but the Lord freed Him.

Acts 12:20-24, God got the last word on Herod.

God got the last word at the Resurrection.

God will get the last word at the end of time.

### **4) God wants to free you from your prison.**

Peter was in prison for standing on Truth and preaching and proclaiming Jesus, He was in the prison for the wrong reason you might say.

Many of us this morning are in prison, oh not a physical prison, maybe even worse. We are in bondage to ourselves, bondage to our sin. We are in bondage to hate, bitterness, lust, unforgiveness, jealousy, greed, gluttony, lying, gossiping and the like and God wants to free you.

You must first know Him and then you can die to yourself daily.

### **Prayer Focus:**

- **Am I being used by obedience or in spite of my disobedience?**
- **Will I commit to be a person of active prayer (or recommit to be)?**
- **Will I trust God gets the last word?**
- **Will I let God free me from my prison(s) this morning?**