

My Witnesses - A Study of Acts Discussion Guide: Week 31 - Acts 12:1-25

Summary of this week's teaching: This week's passage details another wave of persecution which swept through the early church. This time the persecution stemmed from King Herod Agrippa, who killed the apostle James and hoped to do the same to Peter. In reaction to this, the local church gathered and prayed fervently for him. Contrary to the king's plans, the Lord sent an angel who miraculously freed Peter from impending death. In a drastic turn of events, the chapter ends with a liberated Peter and a dead king. Herod initially appeared to have power, authority, and control...until the Lord demonstrated His divine sovereignty over the situation.

Connect: Relational questions to get conversations started.

1. What moment in this last week brought you the most joy? Which moment was most challenging for you?

Seed: The Bible, God's inspired Word, is very much like a seed - it contains everything we need to experience life. Please read the following passages of scripture as a group: (perhaps in two different translations) Acts 12:1-25, and Hebrews 11:23-40.

1. Why do you think the Lord allowed James to be martyred while He spared Peter's life?
2. What lessons does King Herod Agrippa teach us?
3. What stands out to you most from this week's passage? What questions does it leave you with?
4. What lessons does Hebrews 11 teach us about faith?

Roots: Like subterranean tree roots which extend in all directions searching out water, each believer needs to grow and develop spiritual roots that allow us to make personal connections with our God.

1. Has the Lord ever used personal hardships and/or persecution to draw you into a deeper relationship with Him? If so, please share how.
2. Once more in Acts we see prayer playing an outsized role in the storyline. What role does prayer play in your day-to-day faith journey? How can you grow in this area?

Trunk: Without trunks, plants may be large, useful, and beautiful, but they are not trees. The same is true for our faith - without it we are not saved and cannot please God. These questions will help us grow our faith in Him.

1. Hebrews 11 details numerous examples of genuine, God-honoring faith. Please reread verses 32-38. Why does saving faith sometimes result in what appears to be worldly success, and why does it sometimes lead to what appears to be worldly failure?

Crown: Crowns are the glory of a tree; the culmination of the roots and trunk working in harmony and can be seen for miles around. The crown of a tree represents the visible portion of our faithlife. These questions will encourage us to apply these principles into our everyday lives.

1. Please read Philippians 4:6-7. How can you (individually and as a group) live in conformity to this passage this week?

