



Building the church

A sermon series on the Gospel of Acts

The Power of Prayer

Acts 12

¹About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. ²He killed James the brother of John with the sword, ³and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴And 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. ⁵So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

⁶Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison. ⁷And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, “Get up quickly.” And the chains fell off his hands. ⁸And the angel said to him, “Dress yourself and put on your sandals.” And he did so. And he said to him, “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.”

⁹And he went out and followed him. He did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him. ¹¹When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.”

¹²When 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. ¹³And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.

¹⁴Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate.

¹⁵They 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!"

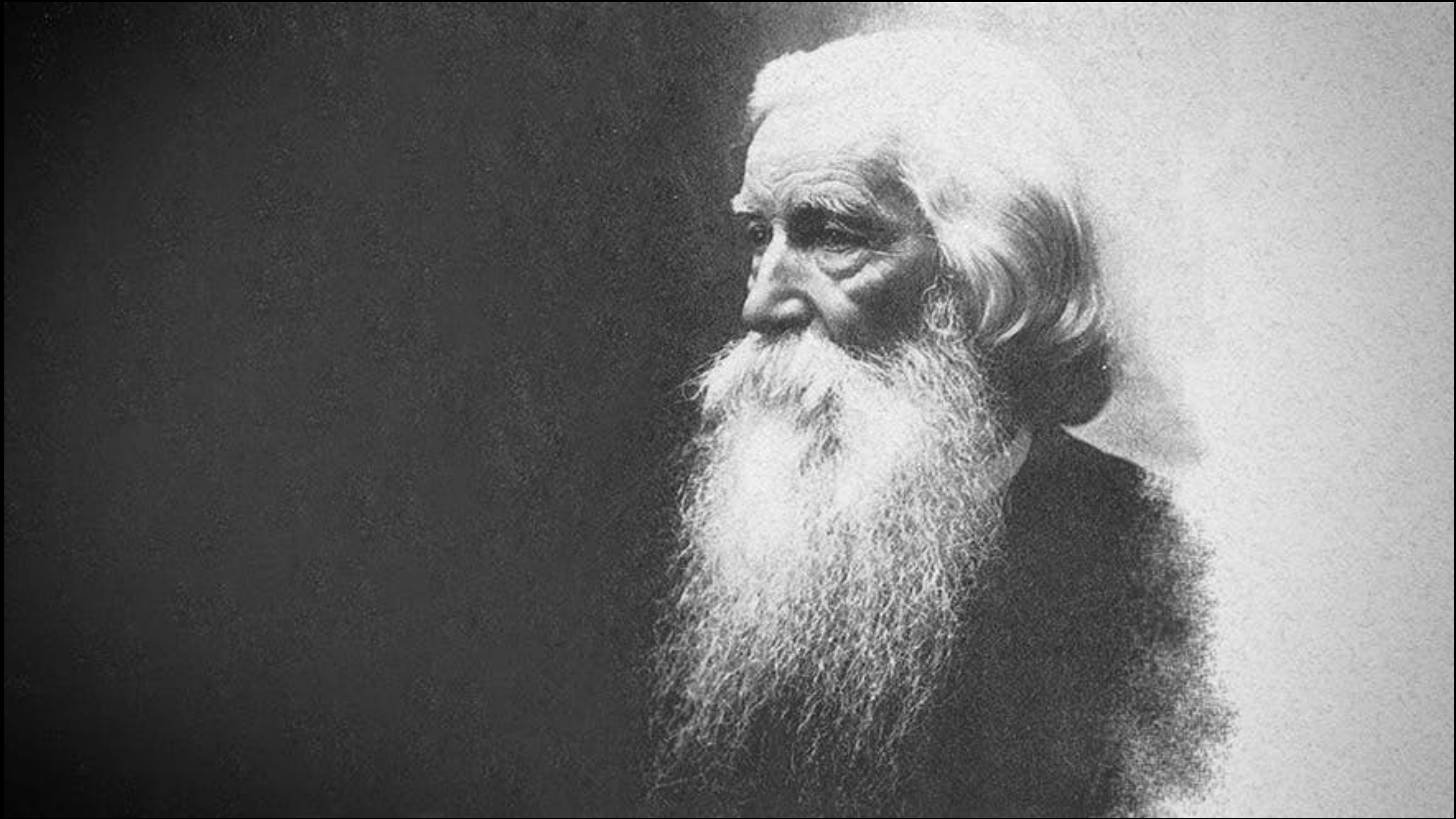
¹⁶But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed.

¹⁷But 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. ¹⁸Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. ¹⁹And after Herod searched for him and did not find him, he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be put to death. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time there.

²⁰Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and they came to him with one accord, and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country depended on the king's country for food. ²¹On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them. ²²And the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!" ²³Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.

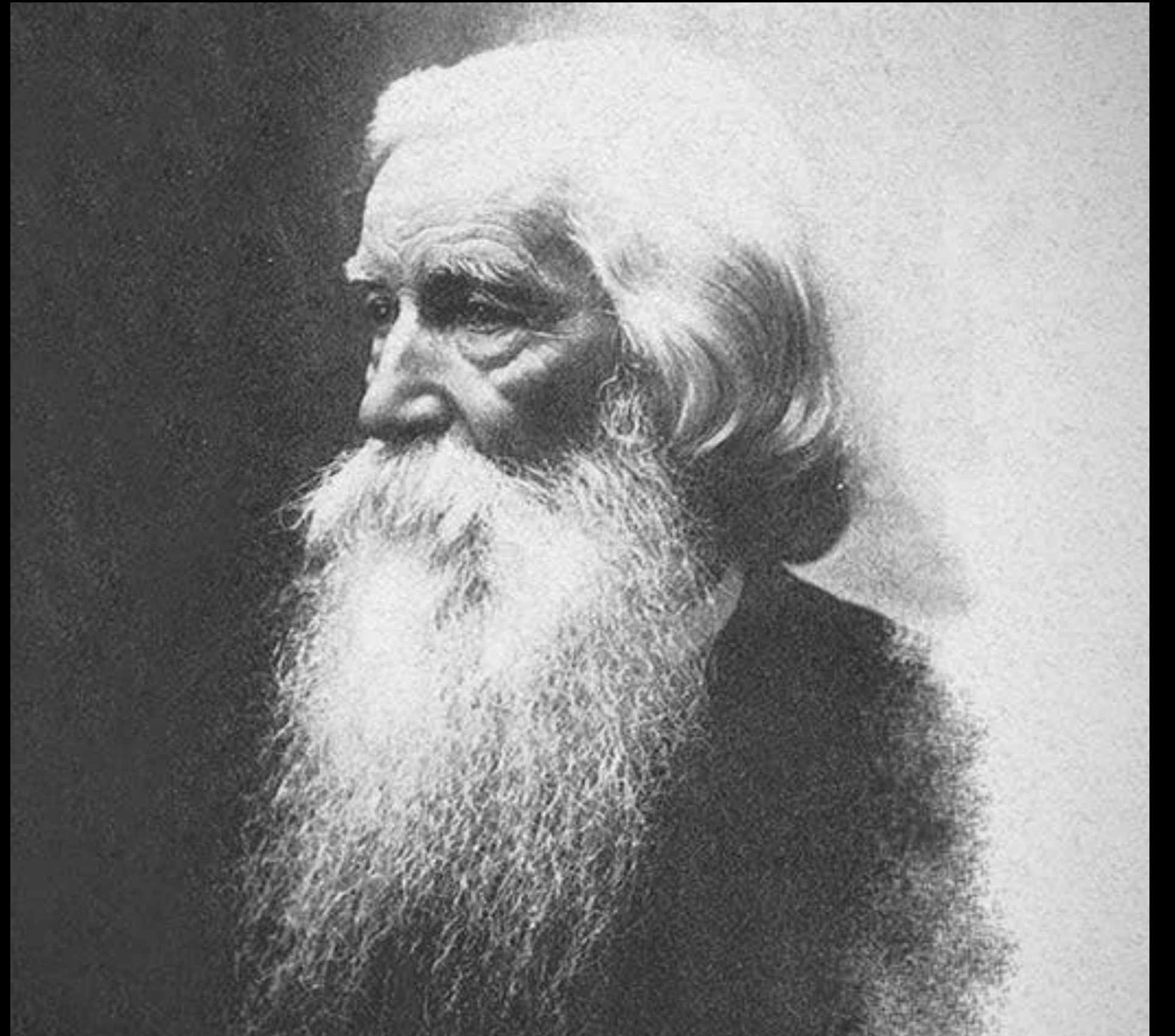
²⁴But the word of God increased and multiplied. ²⁵And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.

- Acts 12:1-25



“I confess to you, that if I can but live and die serving and honoring Jesus, it will make no difference to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or by worms.”

- *John Paton*



Acts 12

Main idea: Prayer is powerful because God is sovereign.

- **vss 1-5:** Peter Arrested in New Wave of Persecution
- **vss 6-17:** Prayers Are Answered
- **vss 18-25:** Herrod's Death

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- Acts 12:1-5

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- *Acts 12:5*

Petitions of the Lord's Prayer

Hallowed be your name:	God's Glory
Your kingdom come:	God's Reign
Your will be done:	God's Will
Daily bread:	God's Provision
Forgive us our debts (sins):	God's Pardon
Deliver us from evil:	God's Protection

Is prayer our first response or our last resort?

¹¹When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.”

- *Acts 12:11*

¹²When 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. ¹³And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate. ¹⁵They 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!" ¹⁶But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed.

- Acts 12:12-16

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (Gospel) and the fellowship (Mission), to the breaking of bread (community) and the prayers.

- *Acts 2:42*

¹⁷But 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 (the brother of Jesus and the leader of the Jerusalem church) and to the brothers.” Then he departed and went to another place.

- *Acts 12:17*

**If God is sovereign and has a plan and purpose...
what is the point of prayer?**

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- Relational
- Heart Alignment
- God Invites us to Participate in his Purposes
- Peace from Above

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

- *Philippians 4:6-7*

**If God is sovereign and has a plan and purpose...
what is the point of prayer?**

Prayer is to relate to our heavenly father, align our hearts with His will, participate in Gospel ministry, and gain peace as we place our trust in His good plans and purposes.

- Begin with a set time (best in the morning)
- Read a passage of scripture - begin by first listening to what God has to say.
- Pray these scriptural truths into your circumstances, bringing everything to the Lord as you entrust your life into his hands.
- As you pray, use the Lord's prayer as a guide:
 - God's Glory
 - God's Reign
 - God's Will
 - God's Provision
 - God's Pardon
 - God's Protection

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- *Acts 12:24*