

# CHRIST OF EVERY CRISIS

Acts 12:1-17

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) We all experience trials and troubles, but every so often we experience a true crisis.
- b) Acts 12:1-10
  - i) King Herod was a wicked man who wanted to torture the church.
    - (1) He had already put James to death, the brother of John.
    - (2) Herod now wanted to put Peter to death.
- c) What do you do in times of crisis?

## 2) RESPECT THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE (Acts 12:1-10)

- a) God is working in a mysterious, inexplicable way.
  - i) Just because it doesn't make sense to us doesn't mean it does not make sense.
  - ii) We may have many questions.
    - (1) We don't live by explanations.
      - (a) Life is not a problem to be solved but a mystery to be lived.
      - (2) We sometimes simply need to back off and see the hidden hand of God.
      - (3) Just because we cannot see God working doesn't mean He isn't working.
- b) Romans 8:28
  - i) All things are working together; this is the sovereignty and providence of God.
    - (1) God works through both the good and the bad in life for His glory and for our good.
      - (a) We do not live by explanations but by promises.
- c) Allow God to be God.
  - i) When you are in a crisis, don't demand to understand.

## 3) REQUEST THE MINISTRY OF GOD'S PEOPLE (Acts 12:5)

- a) There seemed to be no hope for Peter.
  - i) Every door was closed except the door to God.
- b) In a crisis, there is always prayer.
  - i) When there is no hope on the horizontal level, there is always hope on the vertical level.
- c) The ministry of God's people is prayer.
  - i) The frequency of the prayer
    - (1) They prayed and did not stop praying.
    - (2) One of the great lessons about prayer is persistence.
    - (3) Matthew 7:7
      - (a) This Scripture literally says, "Keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking."
    - (4) Luke 18:1
      - (a) We are to keep on praying.
      - (b) God's delays are not denials.
  - ii) The fervency of the prayer

- (1) The word for “without ceasing” may be translated “intensely.”
  - (2) Jeremiah 29:13
  - (3) The Bible calls prayer “wrestling.”
    - (a) Romans 15:30
      - (i) Prayer is referred to here as “striving,” “wrestling.”
      - (b) When we engage in real intercession, the devil will fight to oppose us.
  - iii) The fellowship of the prayer
    - (1) They came together to pray.
    - (2) Matthew 18:19-20
      - (a) God is pleased when His children pray, and He is more pleased when His children pray in fellowship.
      - (b) There is nothing that will bind a church together more than praying.
  - iv) The faith of the prayer
    - (1) Prayer was made unto God.
      - (a) They were not praying to one another; they were not praying to impress one another.
    - (2) The devil may mock at our schemes and laugh at our organizations, but he fears our prayers.
    - (3) When we pray, we’re praying to God, who controls the universe.
  - v) The focus of the prayer
    - (1) They were praying for Peter.
    - (2) It was a prayer not only with intensity, but with specificity.
      - (a) Many of our prayers are so vague that we wouldn’t know whether or not God had answered them.
  - d) Jeremiah 33:3
- 4) REST IN THE MASTERY OF GOD’S PEACE (Acts 12:6-7)
- a) Peter was to be executed the next morning, but here he is sleeping soundly in the prison.
    - i) How could Peter sleep in such a crisis?
      - (1) He is no longer afraid of death.
        - (a) He has seen the risen Christ.
        - (b) A man is not ready to live until he is no longer afraid to die.
      - (2) He knows that God’s people are praying for him.
      - (3) He is aware of God’s presence.
        - (a) Psalm 121:4
  - b) Isaiah 26:3
    - i) Roll your problem onto the Lord.
  - c) Philippians 4:6-7
    - i) The prison guards thought they were the ones who were guarding Peter in prison, but it was God’s peace guarding him.
  - d) Take your eyes off the storm and put them on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 5) REJOICE IN THE MAJESTY OF GOD’S POWER (Acts 12:7-10)
- a) God was still on His throne when James was killed and when Peter was arrested.
  - b) Peter’s deliverance came at the last moment.
    - i) The entire account of Peter’s deliverance is marked by leisure.

- (1) The angel wakes Peter up and tells Peter to put on his sandals and his garment, and he then walks out.
- c) Acts 12:11-17
  - i) Prayer is never an excuse for laziness.
  - ii) There was no way for Peter to open the prison gate, but there was a way for the garden gate to be opened at the prayer meeting.
    - (1) We cannot change water into wine, but we can fill earthen pots.
    - (2) We cannot raise Lazarus from the dead, but we can remove the grave clothes.
    - (3) There are certain things we can do, and prayer should not be used as an excuse for laziness.
      - (a) 2 Thessalonians 3:10

## 6) CONCLUSION

- a) Acts 12:19-24
  - i) King Herod is stricken dead because of his arrogance and pride.
  - ii) The hidden hand of God can be seen through it all.
- b) If you are in a situation and God doesn't deliver you, it is not because He can't.
  - i) God did not deliver James.
- c) If God is not working according to what you can see, it doesn't mean that He is not working.
- d) If evil seems to succeed, remember that the success of evil is only temporary.
- e) If you are in a crisis:
  - i) Don't demand to understand.
  - ii) Remember the resource of prayer.
  - iii) Put your eyes upon God and rest in His love.
  - iv) Expect God's power to move in His own time and in His own way.
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31