

groups

Study Group: Leader Guide | Acts 12 – May 7-13

CHECK-IN

An opportunity to show authentic community as we **share the struggles** and **celebrate the victories** we've experienced in the last week.

STUDY

Main Topics: Persecution, prayer, God's sovereignty

Read Acts 12:1-19

- Why could Peter and James both have complete trust in God, even when their persecution had different outcomes?
- What does the incident with Peter teach us about prayer?
 - **v. 5** – What do these verses show us about how we should pray?
 - **v. 6-11** – How do these verses show us prayer's power over obstacles?
 - **v. 12-17** – How do these verses show us how little we believe about the power of prayer?
- What knowledge about God's character gives us peace in times of struggle? (Psalm 25:8, Isaiah 6:3, Philippians 1:6, Romans 8:38-39)

Read Acts 12:20-25

- What do we see happen to those who think they are equal to God? (v. 21-23)
- Although people may not be physically struck down like Herod, what scriptures point to how God will someday respond to our arrogance? (Psalm 52, Revelation 20, etc)
- If God was glorified through his own Son's death, how could he not also be glorified through the persecution of the church, which sometimes leads to death?

APPLY

- How can we use the knowledge about God's character to have trust in His sovereignty and a willingness to go through whatever his plan for our lives may hold?
- How do we tend to react when we struggle through life and see others who seem to have it easy?
- How do our prayers need to change to reflect a desire for God's glory above our own wishes?

CLOSE

Which attributes of God did you see in this week's passage? How should it change the way that you pray, think, speak or act this week?

Leader Notes:

What does the incident about Peter teach us about prayer?

V. 5 tells us about prayer's character — it must be *earnest* and corporate. The word for "earnestly" can be translated "agonized". It is the strongest word possible — it means intensity of feeling, of thinking, and of will.

V. 6-11 tells us about prayer's power over obstacles — Peter was a) chained, b) between two soldiers, c) then guarded by two sets of sentries, d) finally locked in behind an iron gate. Prayer cut through them all.

V. 12-17 tells us about how little we believe in the power of prayer. Even the people whose prayers were strong enough for God to work did not have enough faith to believe they were answered. Do we believe that intercessory prayer has this kind of power? (2 Cor.1:8-11; Eph.3:20,21).

Reminders to Leaders:

- This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Study Group.
- Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word.
- There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth.
- Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to **facilitate this experience, not to complete** the discussion guide.

What are Groups?

Groups at Boca Community fall into 1 of 3 categories: Study, Serve or Outreach. Each group consists of 8-16 people who encourage, challenge and care for one another as they walk through life together.

A full list of Groups can be found at bocacommunity.org/groups