

The Monthly Ministry Focus: May 2017

A Moment of Scripture Focus for Every Ministry in First Baptist Church



To Ministry Leader: Please read or have this scripture read at your monthly meeting /activity/rehearsal.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS FOR THIS MONTH

Note to ministry leader: The full verse reference is ACTS 12:6-25. If you meet more than once a month, you may want to read all verses. What appears below are the key verses from Acts 12: 6- 12

⁶ The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. ⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists⁸ ... ⁹ Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ They passed the first and second guards and came to the Iron Gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.¹¹ Then Peter came to himself and said, “Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches... ¹² When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying [for him].”

Commentary: This particular passage, shared by our speaker on Homecoming Sunday last month, reminds us that the Lord has the same power to rescue now as He did when He delivered Israel from Egypt and in this example, Peter from the prison. Peter is delivered from the jail and certain execution; his escape confounds the sixteen guards, King Herod, and even the Christian believers who were praying for him while they were gathered at the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. What can WE learn from Peter’s miraculous escape?

Prayer can change things, and the Lord’s response to our prayers may not be in the form (or the terms) we *sought*, but His deliverance is complete *and* always on time. We should not receive God’s answers to our prayers with surprise or disbelief. While we wait for a response, we need to wait in confidence and faith, and in our waiting, we should strive to emulate I Peter 5:7- *we should cast our anxieties upon Him, confident that God cares for us.*

Optional Questions for a BRIEF Discussion or Individual Study (CHOOSE ONE)

- 1) What is the connection of this passage to these verses: Philippians 4: 6 OR Matthew 6:25-34
- 2) What lessons can we take from this passage of scripture in witnessing Peter’s being shaken awake? Peter’s escape? The servant Rhoda’s reaction to seeing Peter at the door?
- 3) Recount an instance in which God’s answer exceeded your request or in which you now thank God the answer to your prayer was “no.”