Breathe #5 “But Prayer… Our power” Acts 12:5

Tell the Story of Acts 12:1-19

* Peter held for a show trial and execution.
* Last Night; four guards, doors locked and chains; Peter was sleeping so sounding… angel and bright light.. Punch Peter’s side to wake him up! (Resting in Perfect Submission)
* Lead him out of prison… chains falling off and door springing open, guard rendered helpless… like a dream until night air.
* House of Mary, mother of John Mark… Big House (outer gate)
* Rhoda came to answer… recognized voice… so excited that she forgot to open the gate… ran inside to tell.
* Church… Praying… “***You are out of your mind***!”

**Acts 12: 1-5**

Vs. 1 – clear date of 42 to 44 AD; Herod Agrippa over Jerusalem.

 (13 to 15 years after the resurrection)

 Maybe the church is moving to become less Jewish? (Acts 10)

Vs. 4 – Public show trial and execution after Festival when city is Full.

 Four squads of four soldiers… maximum secutiry!

Vs. 5 is our Focus

 ***So Peter was kept in Prison, but Prayer…***

Luke sets this contrast between the Power of Herod and the Church.

* Soldiers, Swords, Chains and Locked Doors…. Prayer
* Political, Social and Military Power… Spiritual Power

**Acts 12: 22-24** – Remember how Herod’s life ends.

**Notice Three Keys to Powerful Prayer in Acts 12:5**

**We Pray To God.**

Exp – “***To God***” seems like an unnecessary phrase; obvious.

 The Church in Mary’s house was praying unto God.

* Isn’t all prayer unto God?

In Truth…. NO. Our minds are a dozen other places besides the throne room of the Almighty!

ILL – Did you watch the Inauguration? Prayer service?

 Not sure who some were talking to when they prayed!

App – Minds focus on *our words, our needs, others listening*…

Torrey, “*A definite and vivid realization that God is bending over us and listening as we pray*.”

* **Approaching His Throne of Grace**…

Wednesday Night Bible Study…. Begin with Praise.

 Address God Thoughtfully

 Approach God Intentionally (Spirit Help)

 Praise God Accurately, Scripturally….

**We Pray Together**

**Exp** – The church was united in prayer… **Acts 12:12**

 There is power in the prayers of God’s Gathered People.

 A harmony of Prayer is pleasing and powerful before God.

 The Church was born in a Prayer Meeting (Acts 1-2)

 Mission of Paul was produced in a prayer meeting (Acts 13)

 Ebenezer… People gathered, cried out and LORD Thundered!

App – Corporate Prayer has Power.

**We Pray Earnestly**

Exp – Prayer was being made fervently… (without ceasing)

 “stretch, strain… stretched out-ed-ly” (dynamic not duration)

 **Luke 22:44**

 **Romans 15:30; Colossians 4:12**

**Ill** – A brother in our church and I were with a Seminary president.

 The President prayed casually… talking to each other.

 Our Brother fell on his knees… praying Earnestly To God!

**App** – We all know the difference when we hear it.

**Conclusion** – We/I have neglected corporate prayer.

* Prayer Meeting on Wednesdays
* Prayer time on Sunday evenings.

Let’s Pray --- to God, Together, Earnestly

1. Pastor and/or Minister and family.
2. Our New President and cabinet.
3. James and Pam Bradford (surgery Tuesday)
4. A harvest of Souls… lost person… push us out to fields.