



unexpected

THE DIVINE ⇌ IN BETWEEN

ACTS 12:1-19

the expectation of prayer

I. Difficult _____ produce dependent prayer.

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

II. Our dependent prayer reveals God's _____.

Now 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. And 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. And 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." And 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. When 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. vv. 6-10

III. God's power is always _____ than our difficult circumstances.

When 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." v. 11

how do we align our expectations? (vv. 12-19)

... he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate. They 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!" But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed. ... vv. 12-16

Align your _____ to His way.

Align your _____ to His will.

Align your _____ to His Son.

SERMON DEVOTIONAL STUDY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His truth and wisdom as you go through this lesson.

1. Read Acts 12:1-19. What role did Peter's obedience play in his rescue? Why was that the case?

"THE FACT THAT PETER HAD been a prisoner twice before is not what gave him his calm heart. For that matter, this prison experience was different from the other two. This time, he was alone, and the deliverance did not come right away. The other two times, he was able to witness, but this time, no special witnessing opportunities appeared. Peter's previous arrests had taken place after great victories, but this one followed the death of James, his dear friend and colleague. It was a new situation altogether. What gave Peter such confidence and peace? To begin with, many believers were praying for him, and kept it up day and night for a week, and this helped to bring him peace (Phil 4:6-7). But the main cause of Peter's peace was the knowledge that Herod could not kill him. Jesus had promised Peter that he would live to be an old man and end his life crucified on a Roman cross (Jn 21:18-19). Peter simply laid hold of that promise and committed the entire situation to the Lord, and God gave him peace and rest. He did not know how or when God would deliver him, but he did know that deliverance was coming."

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2. God saved Peter from being executed by Herod (vv. 6-11), but He allowed James to die (v. 2). What conclusions about persecution, prayer, deliverance and God's sovereignty might we draw from these facts?

3. Why are we often surprised by God's answers to our prayers, as the church was at Peter's release from jail?

4. How do you think the church's prayer life might have been different after Peter's release?

5. Do you believe your prayers matter? How can you be more involved in praying for others?

6. Spend the rest of the time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads your heart.

A WONDERFUL OFFER

Being a Christian isn't based on membership in a local church or keeping a set of rules. It involves a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and an understanding of who He is and what He has done to provide man with a way to experience God's love for us. Here's how to know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior:

1. Realize that you are sinful and separated from God. (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6)
2. Recognize that the penalty for your sin is death—eternal separation from God and all that is good. (Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:27)
3. Understand that Jesus Christ took the penalty for your sin by dying in your place and that He rose again. (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
4. Receive the free gift of salvation by trusting in Christ alone as your Savior. (Romans 4:4-5; Ephesians 2:8-9)
"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16 NASB) You can use this prayer to express your decision to God:
"Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for me and rose from the dead. I trust in Him alone as the only way to get right with You. Thank You for the forgiveness of sins and the eternal life I now have. Amen."

For more about having a personal relationship with Jesus visit www.ccbcfamily.org/nextsteps.

COMING UP AT CHRIST CHAPEL

Here's a glimpse at what you need to know for this week at Christ Chapel. If you'd like to find out even more, visit www.ccbcfamily.org/events.



ELDER AND DEACON CANDIDATES This Sunday, and for the next three Sundays, you can scan this QR code to see our full list of Elder and Deacon nominations. This list has been unanimously approved by our Board of Elders, and there you'll also find the constitutional requirements for these leadership positions. If you are a constitutional member of Christ Chapel, you'll receive a voting link at the end of the month to cast your vote. This link will be sent out prior to our annual meeting held on Sunday, Aug. 27.

QUARTERLY DAY OF PRAYER Setting aside an hour on Monday, Aug. 7, we'll gather to pray together! Focusing on the richness of our salvation and reading through verses in Ephesians, this will be a special time. Be a part by coming to the Chapel from noon to 1 p.m. or follow along with a time of personal prayer with a prayer guide at www.ccbcfamily.org/qdop.

FAMILY VISION NIGHT Join us for Family Vision Night on Sunday, Aug. 27 from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. All families with students in Grades 5-12 are invited to enjoy dinner together, connect with other families, meet the Fort Worth Campus team and learn about the vision for the upcoming year in student ministry. No RSVP is required. See you there!

AVENEW Whether you're dating, engaged or newly married, there's a spot for you at AVENEW this fall. This class walks with couples through topics every relationship encounters while pointing back to Jesus and what His Word says about relationships, communication, conflict and more. Find details today by visiting www.ccbcfamily.org/avenew.

WOMEN IN THE WORD: DAVID'S SONGS A place to connect, grow and learn, Women in the Word is a ministry designed for women of all ages to be in community around God's Word! This fall, join the Women in the Word study on Psalms at www.ccbcfamily.org/wiw.

BAND OF BROTHERS: THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED Starting this fall, Band of Brothers will continue their journey through Exodus and witness the steadfast faithfulness God has for his people. To learn more about Band of Brothers, and this upcoming study, visit www.ccbcfamily.org/bob.

OPERATION ZIP CODE We have the privilege of partnering with Freedom Shield, a foundation that strives to end hunger insecurity within our metroplex. On Saturday, Sept. 2, they will be hosting an event at Jacquet Middle School to hand out lunches and we would love for you to join us! Learn more by visiting www.ccbcfamily.org/zipcode.



LOOKING FOR THE CONNECT CARD? Scan the QR code here to fill out a Connect Card. Our team will reach out this week to answer your questions and tell you more about Christ Chapel.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO GIVE AN OFFERING TODAY, YOU CAN DO SO STRAIGHT FROM YOUR PHONE. The process is quick and easy—text GIVE to 24253 to get started.