

Sermon Series Title: "Church Beginnings"

Sermon Series Summary: From now until around Easter, we will be in the book of Acts, covering chapters 1-12. After the Ascension of Jesus Christ, we see the NT church being born by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through this series, we see the church being built, the kingdom going forth, and the gospel being proclaimed.

"We are in our "Church Beginnings" sermon series, and through this series, we're going to see that we need to know where we come from to know who we are now and to know who we will become in the future."

Call: 2 Samuel 22:14-16

Text: Acts 12:6-19

Title: "Rest and Rescue"

Next Week's Call: 2 Samuel 22:17

Next Week's Text: Ruth 1:1-5, 4:13-17

Next Week's Title: "Jesus Christ, Our Grace"

Future Calls: 2 Samuel 22:18, 19, 20, 21-22, 23-25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 47-49, 50-51

Future Titles: "Futility and Fruit" (Acts 12:20-25); "Obedience Unto Death" (Matthew 26:36-56); "Resurrection Accomplished, Resurrection Applied" (Matthew 28:1-20)

Fallen Condition Focus: We are imprisoned in our sin, and we suffer in this world.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ sets us free and restores our suffering.

Proposition: "Christ has rescued us from the penalty of sin and one day will rescue us from the presence of sin."

Summary: In our passage, we see the miraculous rescue of Peter from prison. He is found at peace, arrested in between two guards. After his rescue, he goes to the house of Mary where he eventually gives a report of what happened. This passage teaches us about prayer, suffering, peace, and rescue. And it points to our ultimate rescue in Jesus Christ.

Reflective Questions:

1. How can we find peace and rest in the midst of the storm in our lives?
2. What does this passage teach us about deliverance?
3. How are we challenged in our prayer life through this passage?

I. Introduction

- A. Hook
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

II. The Rest (v. 6)

- A. One of Peter's closest friends, James, was executed.
- B. Peter is chained to two soldiers (usually just one), awaiting his death sentence- same as James.
- C. Peter is sleeping!
 1. He probably shared the gospel with the soldiers multiple times since they are switching every three hours.
 2. He knows the church is praying, and he probably prayed himself.
- D. He is at so much peace and his heart is in so much rest that he is sleeping!
 1. Two soldiers- smell of sweat, blood; incredibly uncomfortable
 2. He is so deeply asleep that the angel has to hit him to wake him up.
 3. Katrina relief- elderly woman who fell asleep as the tide rose
- E. Are we at peace and are our hearts at rest? How are we sleeping? What is our bodies telling us?

III. The Rescue (vv. 7-11)

- A. An angel stood next to him, shining brightly. So many people in Scripture fall on their faces when facing the glory of God in an angel. Peter stays asleep.
- B. The angel strikes Peter on his side. Hard strike, not poke- word used for when Peter struck the servant of the priest in Matthew 26 or when Stephen describes Moses killing an Egyptian in Acts 7.
- C. Peter is commanded to get up and is freed from his chains.
- D. Peter is commanded to dress himself and put on his shoes.
 1. Step-by-step command because he is still so tired. V. 9 tells us that he thinks he is receiving another vision.
- E. They pass by the guards, and the iron gate miraculously opens.
 1. It's interesting that Peter is taken through these steps instead of transported immediately like Philip in Acts 8.
- F. The angel then leaves him.

- G. Peter comes to himself and sees that he has been rescued.
- H. Lessons learned from Peter's miraculous rescue:
 1. He is rescued on the eve of his trial and execution. It's the last hour.
 2. He didn't realize he was being rescued until the end.
 3. This has to be weighed together with James' execution.

IV. The Report (vv. 12-19)

- A. He goes to the house of Mary, John Mark's mom. Big house.
 1. Early church in Jerusalem met in wealthy homes.
 2. They are still praying.
- B. He knocks at the door, and Rhoda (Rose) comes to answer, but she doesn't open the gate out of joy.
- C. She reports it to the people.
- D. "You are out of your mind." "It is his angel."
 1. They have been praying for days, and they cannot believe the news of his rescue/escape. Don't we do that as well?
- E. V. 16- Peter continues to knock, and they are amazed. Then, he reports what has happened and tells them to tell the disciples and church leaders.
- F. Soldiers are greatly disturbed over what happened. Herod searches for Peter and orders the soldiers to be put to death (by law). He goes to Caesarea (maybe out of embarrassment).

V. The Ultimate Rescue and Rest

- A. This story is just pointing us toward the ultimate rescue and rest.
- B. The ultimate rescue is from the bondage of sin, and Christ is the One who breaks our chains by being arrested and nailed to the cross for us. He rescues us from the penalty of sin, and one day He will rescue us from the presence of sin.
- C. The ultimate rest comes from resting in Christ, our Good Shepherd, who took on every restlessness and anxiety on the cross, so that we can have peace.