

# SMALL GROUP STUDY

## NOTES

SET FREE ACTS 12 1-19

*The church in Jerusalem has been causing a stir with the Jewish authorities' right from the beginning, since the day of Pentecost Peter has been the spokesperson for the new believers and has often found himself in trouble for the things he has been saying about Jesus. (Please do pick and choose which questions you want to use, there may be too many to get through!)*

Q How often is being mocked or made fun of or worse something you have experienced when talking about your faith?

Q If it was something you have experienced how did you deal with it?

*Peter is delivered from a life threatening situation in this story.*

Q Have you ever experienced God delivering you or someone you know from a difficult or dangerous situation? How did he do that?

*Read the Passage from Acts 12 1-19*

Q What are the things that stand out to you from the story? What things stand out as odd or unusual or strange, maybe even unbelievable?

Q If you could ask the author any questions about this passage what would they be?

*Read again verses 1-5 and try to put yourself in the position of the people who are in the church.*

Q How do you think they are feeling after they hear that James has been put to death and now Peter has been arrested. ? What do you think they are praying for, what influences their prayers do you think?

Q Look at how Peter is in the prison –fast asleep, what do you think enables him to sleep considering the situation he is in?

Q What role does the Holy Spirit play in both situations do you think? Can you talk about any times that God has given you peace in situations that you didn't expect?

*Read Acts 4 13-31 when the believers in this passage are commanded never to speak about Jesus again they pray to God*

Q Do they pray as you would have expected them to pray- why or why not?

Q What does God do in response to their prayers?

Q What do you conclude is the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer from this passage?

*In the sermon there was a map of the World watch list from the charity Open Doors, (it might be of interest to look this up on their website)*

Q Can you recall any recent stories from around the world of Christian's being persecuted?

Q What if anything could your group do to find out more about the suffering our brothers and sisters are facing around the world? What do you think God wants us to do in response to this?

*Quote from a group of pastors in Eritrea recently*

*“As some Christians are released from prison others are going in for the sake of the gospel. We accept and understand that this is how the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be preached, and we thank God for that “!!*

Q How can we pray for fellow Christians who are finding that persecution is part and parcel of the normal Christian life?

*Read again Acts 12 11-17*

*The church are praying for Peter when he turns up at the door*

Q Are you shocked or surprised by their response? Why do you think they react as they do?

Q What does this whole story tell you about prayer?

*Prayer time suggestions*

If there is a large group it might help to split into two's and three's and pray for any difficult questions this passage in Acts brings up for you and for any help you need from the Holy Spirit to be more bold in sharing your faith or for God's peace and intervention in any difficult situations you may be facing.

Or Look at the list in Galatians 5 22-23 of the fruit of the Spirit and pray for each other to grow in these things.

Look up some stories from the Open Doors website and pray for situations you see there.