



Key References:

Acts 12:1–17 (NLT)

³ When Herod saw how much this pleased the Jewish people, he also arrested Peter. ⁴ Then he imprisoned him, placing him under the guard of four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring Peter out for public trial after the Passover. ⁵ But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him. ⁶ The night before Peter was to be placed on trial, he was asleep, fastened with two chains between two soldiers. Others stood guard at the prison gate. ⁷ Suddenly, there was a bright light in the cell, and an angel of the Lord stood before Peter. The angel struck him on the side to awaken him and said, “Quick! Get up!” And the chains fell off his wrists. ⁸ Then the angel told him, “Get dressed and put on your sandals.” And he did. “Now put on your coat and follow me,” the angel ordered. ⁹ So Peter left the cell, following the angel. But all the time he thought it was a vision. He didn’t realize it was actually happening. ¹⁰ They passed the first and second guard posts and came to the iron gate leading to the city, and this opened for them all by itself. So they passed through and started walking down the street, and then the angel suddenly left him. ¹¹ Peter finally came to his senses. “It’s really true!” he said. “The Lord has sent his angel and saved me from Herod and from what the Jewish leaders had planned to do to me!” ¹² When he realized this, he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many were gathered for prayer. ¹³ He knocked at the door in the gate, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to open it. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed that, instead of opening the door, she ran back inside and told everyone, “Peter is standing at the door!”

¹⁵ “You’re out of your mind!” they said. When she insisted, they decided, “It must be his angel.”

¹⁶ Meanwhile, Peter continued knocking. When they finally opened the door and saw him, they were amazed.

1 – PERSISTENCE

Thinking of the word “persistence” what thing in your life have you been most persistent with and what has been the fruit of that persistence?

Read Acts 12:1-5. In verse 5 it says they were praying “very earnestly” for Peter. **Does anyone have a testimony of a time where they were in earnest prayer for something? What happened afterwards?**

Read Acts 12:6-11. **What stands out to you most about the angel rescuing Peter here? Have you ever had a prayer answered that was so miraculous that you were almost in physical disbelief like Peter?**

2 – UNEXPECTED ANSWERS

Read Acts 12:12-17. **Do you think it was right that the community was in shock and disbelief that Peter was actually standing at the door? Why did God answer their prayers if they seemed not to have total faith for it to be answered? How can your answer to this help us pray?**

Alternatively, off of this Nathan said: “Sometimes we can get so locked into our prayers that we’re not open to receiving the very thing that God is releasing.” **What do you think he meant by this?**

Read Isaiah 55:8–9. **Has God ever given you an answer to a prayer in a way that was unexpected? How should we be opened handed with outcomes but also earnest, persistent, and expectant when we pray in faith.**

3 – BECOMING PERSISTENT

On Sunday Nathan said; “We could miss out on breakthrough because of the absence of fervent persistent prayer.” **What do you think about this?**

Sometimes we pray earnestly in response to a crisis like in Acts 12. **But how can we build discipline into our day-to-day lives to practice persistent prayer routinely? Do you remember a time in your life where you did this well? What worked for you?**

How does the Spirit help us with our prayer life? How can we be more in-tune with the Spirit when we pray?