



DISCUSSION GUIDE

THIS WEEK: We are the Church—"Gathered to be Scattered"

GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together.

How have your expectations of the church changed and shifted since you were younger?

QUICK REACTIONS

- How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?
- What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?
- Did you disagree with something said, or what do you think should have been added or expanded on?

QUESTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

Dave highlighted in Acts that it begins with the mission of Jesus (1:8), the believers gathering together in Acts 2:42, but, the church doesn't begin to move outside the confines of Jerusalem and into the complete mission of Jesus until the death of Stephen.

- In what ways can we lose sight of the fullness of God's mission?
- How can we mistake the point of the church only as Acts 2:42 without Acts 8 and 12?
- In what way do you expect more from the church, than Jesus even expected the church to deliver?
- What does it mean to you to declare "We Are the Church?"

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Acts 12:1-19]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.)

Why was King Herod so cold-hearted toward the church? (12:1-3)

Whom did King Herod arrest? (12:1, 3-4)

Whom did the king have put to death? (12:2)

What did Herod do with Peter? Why? (12:3-4)

*What did the king plan to do with Peter after the Passover? Why? (12:3-4)

What did the church do while Peter was in prison? (12:5)

While in jail, why didn't Peter seem to fear for his life? (12:6)

*What happened on the night before Peter's trial? (12:6-11)

Who enabled Peter to escape? (12:7-10)

How did Peter escape from prison? (12:7-10)

*When did Peter know that what he had experienced was real? (12:11)

Where did Peter go once he realized what had happened? (12:12)

What happened when Peter appeared at Mary's door? (12:13-16)

Once inside the house, what did Peter say? (12:17)

How did the soldiers react when they discovered Peter was gone? (12:18)
What did Herod do? (12:19)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

James, the brother of John is killed in verse 1. This is the same James in Mark 10, who with John asks Jesus to be on his right and left and Jesus responds, "can you drink the cup I drink"? In what way is it easy just to pass up this important event in a story like Peter's escape?

In what way does Peter and the gathered church deal with a difficult ruler? How may this inform how we ought to follow Jesus in opposition and hardship? What ways do you see Christians deal with this poorly?

In what ways are our complaints about the church, or what is wrong with the church out of sync with passages like Acts 12? What ought we be asking of ourselves in light of passages like this?

Dave asked us to consider three different ways God may be asking something different of us...

Begin... Consider how what you expect of church may be different from how God calls you to be the church? In what way am I looking for a church to give to me, versus sharing what I have for the benefit of others? Be honest

Build... In what way is God asking you to shift your mindset from consuming religious services to investing yourself for the sake of the Kingdom of God? In what way am I serving (investing time, talent or finances) for the sake of someone else in Christ's name that actually costs me something?

Battle... In what way do you need to die to yourself; to wage a battle against your desires, selfishness in order to advance the Kingdom of God for the sake of others?

WHAT APPLIES TO YOU MOST? WHY?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

What may God be asking you to change, do differently, repent of, pray about as a result of engaging with this passage?

How can we pray for each other?