

Famine and Persecution
Acts 11:27-12:11

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I. Christian charity. Acts 11:27-30

Besides the famine, there was also _____ happening in Judea, which mainly came from the Jewish religious authorities against Christians within their reach.

- The _____ of prophecy described in **Ephesians 4** was a gift given by Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to proclaim a message from the Lord to the early believers.

2 Timothy 3:17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly _____ for every good work. NKJV

- “No wonder they were first called _____ at Antioch.” (Boice)

II. Government persecution. Acts 12:1-4

The LORD is sovereign over human events, even if we don't recognize Him moving or _____ what is happening. **Daniel 2:20-21**

- Most of the persecution the Church in Jerusalem was facing came from the Jewish religious leaders, but here we see the persecution comes from the civil leaders of the _____.

I wonder if, while Peter was in Prison during this holiday, he remembered how Jesus was taken into custody during the same time many years earlier, and so, it made prison _____ to handle. **Philippians 1:29-30**

III. The Lord was there. Acts 12:5-11

I want to point out yet another proof of Peter's transformation in Christ. Notice **vs. 6** says **Peter was** _____.

- After he had the Holy Spirit, Peter was no longer scared to die, and he was so _____ in the promise of Jesus Christ that he could sleep in the middle of a potential death sentence.

There were barriers of soldiers, chains, guard posts, and an iron gate, but none of these things are _____ than our God!

IV. Practical Application.

The Lord is sovereign, and He has been working in our lives for a very long time, but a lot of us fail to _____ it.

- Our heavenly Father has perfect love, and He wants us to experience perfect joy. That kind of joy comes from a clear conscience, knowing our sins have been _____.

Small Group Discussion

*Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon,
was there anything that caught your attention,
challenged, or confused you?*

1. Read **Acts 11:27-28**. What is the significance of prophets being sent from Jerusalem to Antioch. How does this illustrate the role and authority of prophets in the early church? How can we discern and respond to prophetic messages today?
1 Thessalonians 5:20-21, 1 John 4:1, Matthew 24:11, 2 Timothy 3:16-17
2. Read **Acts 11:29-30**. How did the Church at Antioch respond to the prophecy that a famine was going to happen in Judea? What are some things we can learn about helping fellow Christians?
Galatians 6:2, Galatians 6:10, Matthew 20:27-28, Proverbs 19:17, 1 John 3:17
3. Read **Acts 12:1-4**. What was the church's immediate response after James's death? What does this response teach us about the power of prayer?
James 5:16, Ephesians 6:18, 1 John 5:14, James 1:6
4. Discuss the statement from the sermon notes: *I wonder if, while Peter was in Prison during this holiday, he remembered how Jesus was taken into custody during the same time many years earlier, and so, it made prison easier to handle.*
Philippians 1:29-30, John 15:18-20, Mark 13:9
5. Read **Acts 12:5-11**. How does Peter's miraculous escape demonstrate God's sovereignty and power?
Daniel 2:20-21, Romans 8:28, Matthew 10:29-31, Colossians 1:16-17
6. What does Peter's being asleep in jail tell us about his relationship with Christ?
Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6-8, John 14:1-6, John 14:27
7. Discuss the Practical Application of the Sermon.
Matthew 5:48, 2 Corinthians 5:21