

sermon notes

Aug 31, 2025 | Pastor Tony Caffey | No Other Name

“Tragedy & Triumph: God’s Plans are Never Thwarted” | **Acts 12:1–25**

1) When _____, God is in control and his plans are never thwarted (12:1–5)

2) When _____ are _____, God is in control and his plans are never thwarted (12:6–11)

3) When _____ are _____, God is in control and his plans are never thwarted (12:12–17)

4) When _____ are _____, God is in control and his plans are never thwarted (12:18–25)

Questions for further application of God’s Word:

GO DEEPER

Read Acts 12:1–25. How is God’s sovereignty demonstrated in this passage? When tragedy strikes in your life, are you tempted to doubt God’s sovereignty? What does Acts 12 teach us about God’s activity in our world? What passages encourage you when you experience trials and suffering?

Why does God allow James to die while Peter goes free? Was Peter more faithful to God than James? Was Peter more deserving of God’s rescue?

How is King Herod presented in this passage? What lessons should we learn from King Herod? What kind of leader was he, and how did he view himself? What kind of relationship does God have with the political powers of this world (see Prov 21:1; Rom 13:1–7; 1 Tim 2:1–2; Titus 3:1–2; 1 Pet 2:13–17)? What does God expect of us as far as our governing authorities are concerned?

GET PERSONAL

What does Acts 12 teach us about prayer? What lessons do we learn from James and Peter? What lessons do we learn from the disciples praying at Mary’s house? Why do you think the disciples in Mary’s house doubted that Peter was at the door? Does God sometimes answer prayer in spite of our lack of faith?

How would you respond if you heard for the first time that the Creator of the universe listens to and answers your prayers? Have you allowed familiarity to breed contempt? How can you recover a sense of wonder and awe in prayer?

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Evaluate your commitment to both personal and corporate prayer. Do you pray alone every day (without distractions)? Do you pray with a group of believers every week? Why should we (or shouldn’t we?) be committed to this as Christians? What are some ways that you can grow in these commitments?

ADVANCED QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER STUDY

How do we reconcile God’s sovereignty with God’s command for us to pray? Do prayers actually change God’s mind? Do prayers accomplish anything in this world, since God is sovereign? Read the following article by John Piper to help you think through this issue: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-sovereignty-of-god-and-prayer>