

Family Portraits

(Acts 12:1-19)

- Introduction:
1. I am thankful that God has preserved events in the life of our spiritual ancestors.
 2. These people were real, just like us, and we get a glimpse into how they dealt with various obstacles.
 3. As we consider how they managed, we will see their shortcomings as well as be challenged by their faith.
 4. Let's examine one such "day in the life" of our early brothers and sisters.

I. Background

- A. (Acts 12:1-19).
- B. James had been killed; Peter was arrested.
- C. The church gathered to pray.
- D. While they prayed, God answered their prayers and released Peter.
- E. Peter goes to where the church was meeting, and they didn't believe he had been released.

II. Lessons Learned

- A. Christianity Demands Sacrifice
 1. Herod was harassing the church.
 2. Had beheaded James and was about to do the same to Peter.
 3. What would you do if you were a member of that church?
 4. It's easy to say we would die for Jesus, but I don't believe it unless we're willing to live for Jesus.
 5. Think of the petty things that have overthrown the faithfulness of some.
 6. (Matthew 10:22; 24:9; 1 Corinthians 15:30).
- B. They Believed In Prayer
 1. (Acts 12:12).
 2. (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
 3. (James 5:16).
 4. (Ephesians 3:20).
 5. Do we pray as we should?
- C. They Struggled With Faith
 1. (Acts 12:15).
 2. What do we do when we can't see evidence of God's working in our lives?
 3. Abraham had to wait 25 years to have his promise fulfilled.
 4. (Mark 9:24).

- Conclusion:
1. Let's learn from our early brothers and sisters in Christ.
 2. Let's be willing to sacrifice, make prayer an ever present reality in our lives, and learn to trust God.