Field Guide and Leader Guide 11.15.26

The Book of Acts

Synopsis

James is killed. Peter is rescued. Herod takes the stage, accepts the glory, and falls. Acts 12 holds the miraculous and the heartbreaking in the same chapter without answering every question those moments raise. Why does one person experience rescue while another suffers? We ask those questions too. But in the middle of everything we cannot explain, Luke gives us something we can hold on to: “But the word of God increased and multiplied” (Acts 12:24). The circumstances were painful. God was still at work.

Pastor Chadwick reminds us that following Jesus means participating in his kingdom right now. Jesus is King, and his resurrection has begun something that will be fully realized when he returns. That gives weight to ordinary moments. Loving someone who is difficult to love. Providing for your family. Sitting with someone who is hurting. Sharing the hope of Jesus. These things matter because they reflect the heart of our King. We may not see everything God is accomplishing, but we can trust that our labor in the Lord is not in vain. The story continues through people willing to follow him today.

Questions

1. Acts 12 puts James’s death and Peter’s rescue side by side. When have you struggled to understand why God seemed to intervene in one situation but not another? How has that affected your trust in him?
    - What has helped you bring your disappointment or unanswered questions to God honestly?
    - How can we walk alongside someone who is still waiting for an answer without feeling the need to explain their suffering?
2. If Jesus is King over your life right now, what does that change about the way you approach your work, relationships, time, or money? Where do your priorities need to come under his leadership?
    - Where do you find yourself asking Jesus to bless your plans rather than allowing him to direct them?
    - What is one ordinary part of your day that could look different this week if you approached it as an opportunity to serve your King?
3. First Corinthians 15:58 reminds us that our labor in the Lord is not in vain. Where are you growing tired of doing good, or hesitating to do something Jesus has put in front of you? What would faithfulness look like this week?

- When have you seen God use an act of faithfulness that seemed small or unnoticed at the time?
- What specific step will you take this week, and how can this group encourage you to follow through?

Scripture References: Acts 12:1–24; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 21:1–4; Romans 11:33–36.

Conclusion

Some of us are celebrating an answered prayer. Others are still carrying a question that hurts. Acts 12 makes room for both. We can thank God for his rescue and bring him our grief without pretending we understand it all. James's death does not mean God loved him less. Peter's rescue does not mean following Jesus would always be easy. Our hope rests in the character of our King, even when we cannot make sense of our circumstances.

And that hope calls us to live. The person who needs your attention matters. The act of obedience you keep putting off matters. The love you offer when you are tired matters. God is at work in this world, and he invites us to participate in what he is doing. We do not have to know how every part of the story unfolds to take the next faithful step. Jesus is King today. Let's live like we believe it.