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# Application Guide: Acts 12

## 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever been targeted by a bully at school? How did it feel to have to watch your back all the time, wondering what the bully would try next?

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- b. How do you think it would feel to be a soldier at war? Do you think you could ever rest knowing that there are people sneaking around trying to kill you, even while trying to sleep at night?

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## 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

**Background:** In this chapter the persecution of Christians is going from the Jewish religious leaders, who had limited ability to put people to death, to the local government that could execute people at will. So, Christians are now being “officially” targeted for extermination because Herod had found that by killing James he made the religious leaders happy—so he thought he’d try killing a few more to make even more friends.

Do you think it would be easier or harder to be a Christian if you knew it could mean you would be arrested and killed for your faith?

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Throughout history, the Christian church has always grown during times it has been targeted for persecution. Why do you think people take their faith more seriously when they are being persecuted?

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Do you know of anyone who is being persecuted for his or her faith today?

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When persecution came, Peter still stood for his faith. Do you think he was scared when he was in jail, chained up between two soldiers?

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Why do you suppose he thought it was a dream when the angel came to rescue him?

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How do you think you would feel in Peter's place? What do you think it would be like to be woken up from your sleep on a cold stone floor, with chains on your wrists, to mysteriously watch the chains fall off as you then seemingly float past your captors, who appear to be in a Holy Spirit-induced sleep? Do you think there is anything the Holy Spirit cannot do?

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### 3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

**Choose one or both:**

- a. Think of a miracle that you need in your life right now. Not for material wants or for someone of the opposite sex to like you, but for real "needs" in your life. Do you think the Holy Spirit has the power to handle your situation? Think through everything we have studied so far in the book of Acts. How can you engage the Holy Spirit and successfully make your requests known to God?
- b. The Apostles knew what to ask for in prayer because they knew what God wanted them to have before they asked. They knew what God wanted for them because they knew what was in harmony with the teachings of the Bible. How can you bring your life more in harmony with the things God tells us He wants for us in the Bible?

### 4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Think of a specific situation in your life that needs God's help. Then ask God for two miracles: First, ask for the miracle of peace in your heart, knowing that He will handle the situation for you. Then, ask God to intercede and deal with the situation the way He sees fit. Pray this prayer faithfully at least three times per day until you feel God has answered your prayer.
- b. Think of a specific situation in someone else's life that needs God's help, then do the same as above in part "a."