

Courageous Faith: Playing Your Part in God's Kingdom
Ben Boyd | April 29, 2026

Session 12 Summary: This session concludes a semester-long series on courageous faith by shifting focus from biblical heroes to the courageous faith of everyday believers. Using Acts 12 as the foundation, the pastor demonstrates how James, Peter, and Herod each played their part in God's kingdom plan—through martyrdom, miraculous rescue, and divine judgment respectively. The central message emphasizes that modern believers possess the same courageous faith as biblical figures when they take God at His word, trust in His protection, and fulfill their unique calling. The session challenges listeners to recognize their own acts of courageous faith—whether standing boldly for Christ, praying persistently, believing God in hopeless situations, or repenting and finishing strong. True courageous faith means taking up your cross daily, facing one direction, never turning back, and surrendering your own plans to follow Jesus.

Key Points:

- The people of the Bible were regular people like us who listened to God's call and took Him at His word
- Acts 12 demonstrates three roles in God's kingdom plan: James (martyrdom), Peter (miraculous deliverance), and Herod (divine judgment)
- Peter could sleep peacefully in chains because he took Jesus at His word about how he would die (by crucifixion, not beheading)
- The power of prayer and God's revelation enables believers to remain confident and peaceful in impossible circumstances
- God will orchestrate the successful advancement of the gospel if everybody plays their part
- Every believer has demonstrated courageous faith when they've spoken boldly for Christ, stood in the gap through prayer, believed God's Word in hopeless situations, or repented and returned to God
- Taking up your cross daily means facing one direction, never turning back, and having no plans of your own

- Talent is a gift, but character is a choice—our character determines whether we'll use our gifts to glorify God
- Through death, persecution, and all circumstances, God's Word will increase and multiply

Scripture Reference:

- Acts 12:1-11, 18-24 (primary passage)
- John 21:18-19 (Jesus foretelling Peter's death by crucifixion)
- Mark 10:35-39 (James and John asking to sit at Jesus' right and left)
- Philippians 4:6-7 (do not be anxious, the peace of God)
- Psalm 4:8 (in peace I will lie down and sleep)
- Psalm 23 (walking through the valley of the shadow of death)

Stories:

- The movie "300" and the Spartan phalanx position—illustrating how each person must play their part in the battle, with Ephialtes' betrayal showing the consequences of not fulfilling one's role
- The pastor's personal story of buying the movie "300" as an excuse to visit his future wife at the store next door
- Historical context of the Herod family line: Herod the Great (ordered Bethlehem children killed), Herod Antipas (beheaded John the Baptist), and Herod Agrippa (persecuted the early church)
- James becoming the first apostle martyred, likely by beheading, fulfilling his promise to Jesus that he was "able" to drink from the cup of suffering
- Peter's miraculous prison escape while sleeping peacefully between two guards, bound in chains
- Herod Agrippa's death by being struck down by an angel and eaten by worms for accepting worship as a god
- A.W. Tozer's three marks of a crucified person: facing one direction, never turning back, having no plans of your own