



Small Group Study Guide
Series: NOT ANOTHER RELIGION
SERMON 13: PROVEN FAITH
When Choices Bring Chains
September 13, 2026 | CrossPointe Church
Josh Carter, Pastor

Introduction

Life really boils down to the choices we make every day, and every single one of them brings consequences. In Acts 12, we get a front-row seat to this reality through the lives of three different men and how their decisions shaped their fates. It forces us to ask some tough questions: What do we actually do when it feels like our faith puts us in chains? And what does it look like to prove our faith, no matter how things turn out?

Scriptures

- **Acts 12:1-4** = James is executed by Herod Agrippa I
- **Acts 12:5-17** = Peter is arrested by Herod and then miraculously set free from prison by an Angel and goes to tell those praying for him.
- **Acts 12:20-25** = Herod is praised like a god and then killed for not giving God the glory.

Scripture to Remember

²⁴ But the word of God increased and multiplied. (Acts 12:24 ESV)

Discussion Questions

1. **On Choices:** When you look back at your week, what's one small choice you made that had a bigger impact than you expected?
2. **On "Chains":** Acts 12 talks about faith leading to chains. Have you ever felt like following Jesus actually made your life harder or more restricted? What did that look like?
3. **On Outcomes:** It's easy to have faith when things go well. How do we keep our faith strong when the outcome isn't what we prayed for?
4. **Reach Acts 12:5.** Notice that while Peter was chained up, the church didn't panic or plot a prison break—they earnestly prayed. When hardship hits your life, do you usually try to solve it on your own first, or do you immediately invite your community to pray with you?

- What keeps us from sharing our "chains" with others?
- 5. **Read Acts 12:11.** Peter was so dazed that he initially thought he was dreaming. It wasn't until he was out on the street that he realized God had actually delivered him. Have you ever gone through a trial and only realized *after* the fact how God was working behind the scenes? How can we better recognize His presence while we are still in the middle of the hardship?
- 6. **Trusting the Outcome:** In Acts 12, James is killed but Peter is miraculously rescued—two completely different outcomes for two faithful men. How do we hold onto our trust in God when someone else gets the miracle we've been praying for in our own hardship?

CLOSING PRAYER:

- Lord, thank You for the insight we can gain from Peter, James and John's experiences in Scripture. Please help us to maintain our faith in You and not fixate on our own outcomes. May we have the unwavering and proven faith to trust You and Your outcome. And Lord, please break the chains of our choices that have held us captive. May we receive the freedom through Your sacrifice and share it with those around us to help them discover, develop and do life with You! Amen!

**PLEASE TAKE A GROUP PICTURE AND TAG PT
(Franklin Tracy Pounders) and Tabatha Pankey ON FACEBOOK !!!**