Power Unleashed: Prayer and the Gospel

I. Opposition
   A. Background
      1. Herod Agrippa in power
      2. 44 A.D., during the Feast of Unleavened Bread/Passover
   B. James arrested and killed
      1. Jesus told him: “you will drink the cup I drink”—participate in his sufferings
      2. First apostle to be martyred
   C. Peter imprisoned
      1. Herod goes to great lengths to make sure Peter can’t escape
      2. Peter is asleep—complete trust in God

II. The Lord sets Peter free
   A. The church is in prayer for Peter
      Ektenos: urgent pleading to God
   B. Peter’s miraculous escape
      Entire event emphasizes the intervention of God and the passivity of Peter—God alone is at work

Application: Prayer is the natural response of a heart that’s dependent on God. Do you believe in the power of intercessory prayer? Does your prayer life reflect that?

Application: Whatever God allows in your life, do you trust Him? Even when he doesn’t answer your prayers in the ways you want, do you still trust in His sovereign plan for your life? Are you able to rest in Him like Peter did in prison?

III. Herod’s death

IV. First Missionary Journey
   A. Barnabas and Saul are sent out from Antioch church
      1. Holy Spirit told them to set apart Barnabas and Saul
      2. Church leaders placed hands on them—recognized God had called them, symbolized identification with them
B. Barnabus and Paul on the island of Cyprus
   1. Salamis
   2. Paphos
      a. Bar-Jesus/Elymas—falsely claimed to be a prophet of God. Physical blindness reflects his spiritual condition
      b. Proconsul believed what he heard and saw
      c. Saul now referred to as Paul

C. Paul and Barnabus in Pisidian Antioch
   1. The sermon’s introduction: Old Testament preparation
      a. God’s grace—God chose, God made, God led, God overthrew, God gave, God gave, God made

   2. The sermon’s focus: the death and resurrection of Jesus
      a. Both these events fulfilled what God foretold in Scripture
      b. There were witnesses to this—based on fact

   3. The sermon’s conclusion: the choice between life and death
      a. Forgiveness of sins through Jesus (grace) vs.
      b. the law (trying to earn your way to God is never going to work)

   4. The sermon’s consequences: a mixed reaction

Application: When you consider the heart of the gospel—Jesus’ death and resurrection, how does this impact your life? Would you be willing to share this with others?

References:
Prayer. AL NAML 27.3 Those who establish regular prayers and give in regular charity, and also have (full) assurance of the hereafter. AL NUR 24.56 So establish regular Prayer and give regular Charity; and obey the Messenger; that ye may receive mercy. AL MU'A.MINUN 23.1 The believers must (eventually) win through,- AL MU'A.MINUN 23.2 Those who humble themselves in their prayers; AL MU'A.MINUN 23.8 Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants

Matthew 6:13: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. Didache 8:2-3 Neither pray as the hypocrites, but as the Lord commanded in his gospel: *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.*