

Life . . . Light . . . Joy!

Introduction

Jumping Back In

- A. Today we jump back into our sermon series through Acts. And we now come to [Acts 5:17](#).
- B. Remember, just prior to this, in [Acts 5:1- 11](#), we dealt with that frightening and infamous incident with Ananias and Sapphira—where they're struck dead by the Spirit in the presence of Peter for their deception and sin.
 - 1. But, surprisingly, the judgement of God against them, while it made all who heard of it tremble, it only led to further growth in the church. Because it was yet another indication that this God is the real deal; that he's moving through Jesus and these apostles; that he's holy and not to be trifled with.
 - a. Isn't it true that one of the things that turns people off from the church is the hypocrisy of so-called "Christians", living in sin, seemingly permitted to fester in the church?
 - i. Counterintuitively, sometimes what is needed to help the church grow is kicking people out, removing them, excommunicating them—because they're unrepentant sin is dishonoring the name of Christ and threatening to compromise the purity of other members and the integrity of their witness to those outside.
 - 2. But, of course, while God is holy and awesome, dreadful and beyond us, he's also merciful and kind, charitable and tender. That hasn't changed. That doesn't change . . .
- C. And that's what we saw in [Acts 5:12-17](#). God is bringing judgment upon those who are counterfeit and ingenuine, but he's also healing and caring for those who are honestly seeking him.
 - 1. And so, again, in all of this, the church is growing. As Luke tells us in [v. 14](#): "[M]ore than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women." And the people were gathering even "from the towns around Jerusalem" ([v. 16](#)).
- D. And all of this, bear in mind, was happening in spite of the Jewish leaders' opposition and clear admonition that the apostles "[not . . . speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus](#)" ([Acts 4:18](#)).
 - 1. Remember, they'd already gotten in trouble for stirring things up. They'd already been told to knock it off at threat of more severe punishments.

- a. But the apostles didn't care. They kept up with it anyways. They have a conviction deep in their guts, as we'll soon see in our text: "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29; cf. 4:19).

2. But here come those same bothersome "men", attempting to stand in their way once more.

The Text

¹⁷ But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy ¹⁸ they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. ¹⁹ But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

²¹ And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach. Now when the high priest came, and those who were with him, they called together the council, all the senate of the people of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. ²² But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported, ²³ "We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them we found no one inside." ²⁴ Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to. ²⁵ And someone came and told them, "Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people." ²⁶ Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

²⁷ And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

³³ When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. ³⁴ But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. ³⁵ And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. ³⁶ For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. ³⁷ After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸ So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; ³⁹ but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!" So they took his advice, ⁴⁰ and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. ⁴² And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus. (Acts 5:17–42)

Three Themes

- A. Because, in many ways, this story is similar to that in Acts 4 with Peter and John's previous arrest, I opted to move a little quicker through this. We'll deal with it in broader strokes.

1. And, as such, I just want to highlight three key themes for us this morning, as I see them here: (1) Life; (2) Light; and (3) Joy.
 - a. I know I won't be able to do full justice to that last theme. I intend to circle back next time and devote a whole sermon to it. But, nevertheless, life, light, and joy—let's go!

(1) Life

We're All Going to Die

- A. I was sitting in traffic the other day. And that's always a little dangerous. I tend to get existential in those moments. My thoughts can turn a bit more introspective, even morbid.
 1. I was looking around at all the cars and the restless people in the cars, going nowhere fast.
 - a. And I found myself wondering: What's the point of all this? Where are we all going? Why do we even care? This guy's honking on his horn. That guy's flipping the bird.
 - i. But why? Why do we get so worked up? Why does this even matter?
- B. Because, you see, (here's where I'm going with this) just to cut straight to the point: we're all going to die.
 1. I wonder how many of us have really squared with this brutal and unapologetic fact?
 - a. You can do some good while you're here. You can experience some good while you're here.
 - b. But, regardless of it all, in the end, you're just going to be lowered into the dirt along with everyone else.
 - i. And a new set of cars will pile up on the 87 at rush hour, filled with a new set of people, who are all anxiously going here and there and everywhere . . . and nowhere.
 - (1) Because they too, in but a few decades at most, will die.
- C. We don't like to talk about it. We speak of such things in whispered tones. We call our funerals now "Celebrations of Life."
 1. The glass is half full.
 2. We don't want to talk about the other half. We don't want to talk about death. We don't want to mourn and grieve and face up to the darker side of our existence. But it's true.
- D. This life is lived as a man fighting to keep his head above the waves. And we all know: in the end, the waves win. We can't escape it.

1. Oh sure, we can try to deny it or distract ourselves away from it.
2. But we can't escape it.

a. We're all going to die.

The Bible Is Not Shy about It

A. The Bible is not shy about this fact.

B. In fact, it's very interesting, you could say that the Bible presents all of life as really just playing out in the context of death. Death is our setting. It is our backdrop. It is the unavoidable shadow that is cast over our every move.

1. So in [Ps. 78:39](#), we're told that human beings are like "a wind that passes and comes not again."
2. And then, in [Isa. 40](#), the Lord himself declares: " ⁶All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it (vv. 6–7).
3. And, similarly, James later writes in [James 4:14](#): "What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes."

C. Beyond all of this, the Bible makes plain that death is our context, not because it's just natural, and that's the way it is, as if it were always supposed to be as such. It's just a part of life.

1. That's how the unbelieving culture around us would like to characterize it, right?

- a. It's just natural. It's just an ordinary part of a species' evolutionary process.
- b. But everything in our bones objects—when you're having to lower your loved one into the ground; when you're the one putting flowers on the gravestone of your child or your spouse or whoever it may be.

i. It's wrong. It shouldn't be this way. We weren't made for goodbyes.

(1) That's the visceral response in the human heart.

(2) And it bears witness to the fact that we all live in the world as the Bible presents it, whether we would say we believe the Bible to be true or not . . .

2. Because you see, in the Scriptures, death is not presented as natural. Oh no! Death is described as an unwelcome intruder into the human story.

a. Death is our context, not because God created it to be as such, but because of our sin, because of the curse of God against our sin.

i. As he told Adam and Eve in [Gen. 2:17](#): "[B]ut of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

(1) It's because of his wrath settled on a rebellious and fallen humanity.

D. In other words, bringing all this together, what we must see here is that our lives play out not only in the context of death, they play out in the context of God's wrath. His anger is the soundtrack that runs behind the rolling film of our days. It sounds brutal, but it's biblical.

1. So the prayer of Moses goes in Ps. 90: "³You return man to dust and say, 'Return, O children of man!' . . . ⁵You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning: ⁶in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers. ⁷For we are brought to an end by your anger; by your wrath we are dismayed. ⁸You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. ⁹For all our days pass away under your wrath; we bring our years to an end like a sigh. ¹⁰The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. ¹¹Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you? ¹²So teach us to number our days . . ." (vv. 3, 5–12).
 - a. We blame death on many things: old age, bad luck, cancer, too much sun, too much loneliness, too much red meat, failing health, and all this.
 - b. But how many of us are prepared to trace it down to the root and finally admit: we die ultimately because of the anger and wrath of God against our sin!
 - i. Why are our days numbered? Because our God is holy . . . and we are not.

"All the Words of This Life"

A. Now, I say all of this, as depressing as it may be, to set up that most amazing directive given by the angel there to these apostles in Acts 5:20. Did you notice it? Read back up from v. 19: "¹⁹But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰'Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.'"

1. And you may wonder: What are "all the words of this Life" to which this angel refers?
 - a. Well, I think it's quite obvious: It's the words of the gospel, of course—the good news of Jesus Christ (cf. v. 42: "And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.").
- B. All throughout the NT, Jesus and life are attached at the hip, they're a package deal, in many ways they are conceived of as one and the same. This is made especially plain for us in the Gospel of John. Let me just rattle off some texts for you to consider:
1. John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
 2. John 3:36: "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."
 3. John 4:14: "[W]hoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

4. John 5:24: "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."
5. John 5:39-40: " ³⁹You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, ⁴⁰yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life."
6. John 6:35: "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."
7. John 6:40: "[T]his is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."
8. John 10:10: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."
9. John 10:27-28: " ²⁷My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."
10. John 11:25-26: " ²⁵I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die."
11. John 14:6: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."
12. And then finally, in John 20:31, near the very end of this gospel, John's identifying his purpose and intent in recording all these things for us. And he says all of this is "written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

C. So, broadly speaking then, we know that "all the words of this Life" are words concerning Jesus.

1. They give hope to the existential me sitting in a traffic jam on the 87 wondering how we ever get out from under the shadow of death and the wrath of God.
2. They give hope to the person at the graveside of a loved one.
3. They give hope . . .

D. But, more specifically, don't we still have to ask how? How is it that Jesus brings life? What exactly does he do?

1. Are there any clues in our text? Well, I think there are . . .

A Two Part Message

A. These apostles are there in the temple presumably speaking to all the people "all the words of this Life."

1. And when finally the Jewish leaders realize as much, they quickly corral them and bring them back to stand before the council. And I don't think these apostles miss a beat. Even here they continue, as always, to herald these "words of life." And what do they say?

B. Look now at vv. 30-31: " ³⁰The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."

1. I see two critical parts to these "words of life" here . . .

Part #1: You Killed Him

- A. First, they bring our attention to the fact of Jesus' death: "[Y]ou killed [him] by hanging him on a tree" (v. 30).
- B. This mention of a "tree" here is very significant—though at first, admittedly, it may be a little confusing.
1. "A tree? Come on guys. Everyone knows Jesus was nailed to a cross, not hung on a tree? Why are you putting it like that?"
 2. Well, for very important biblical-theological reasons. You see, by likening the cross of Christ to a tree, they are forging a clear link back to [Deut. 21:22-23](#) and in so doing they are helping us understand what's actually happening on the cross in the first place.
 - a. You go back and look and this OT text is dealing with capital punishment for criminals and sinners and it comes out at the end in the LXX and says this: "everyone who is hanged on a tree is cursed of God."
- C. What's the point then?
1. When Jesus is nailed to that cross, when he's hung on this tree . . .
 - a. He is taking upon himself the curse of God due our sin.
 - b. He is reeling under the wrath of God that had been to this point reserved for us.
 - c. He is taking my death upon himself.
 2. Paul makes this connection crystal clear in [Gal. 3:13](#) when he writes: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written [quoting Deut. 21:23], 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree . . .'"

Part 2: God Raised Him

- A. But he does more than just die, right? Now we come to the second part of these "words of life" spoken by the apostles here.
1. You killed him.
 2. But "[t]he God of our fathers raised [him]" (v. 30). And, v. 31: "God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."
- B. His death is only half the equation.
1. If he lives, but doesn't die . . . then he is a good example for us to try to follow, but he's not our Savior. He doesn't bear the curse in our stead.
 2. But if he lives and dies, but doesn't rise . . . then, he may have had good intentions, but at the end of the day he didn't have the power to truly defeat death. He too came under its sway and found himself helpless to buck up against it. He may love us. But he can't save us.

3. But if he lived, died, and rose again . . . then we can know, not only has he taken the curse upon himself, he's overturned it! He has defeated death. He holds "the keys of Death and Hades" (Rev. 1:18). He can lead us in a prison break out into freedom and life.
- C. It's interesting, the word translated "Leader" here, it's the Greek *archēgos*.
1. It can refer to "one who has a preeminent position";
 2. it can also refer to "one who begins or originates" something—the "author" (cf. Acts 3:15), the "founder" (cf. Heb. 2:10; 12:2);
 3. and, in a related sense, it can also refer to "one who begins something that is first in a series."
 - a. I think that last one brings out an interesting nuance because it captures the idea that Jesus isn't just placed above us, he also goes before us.
 - i. In other words: His victory isn't just for him, it's for us as well. He is in first place (make no mistake about it) . . . but he is first in a series. He is the "Leader" . . . but we are following after him, we're coming next, by his grace.
- D. That's what Paul is getting at with the majestic sweep of his words in 1 Cor. 15: " ²⁰ Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. [He's the firstfruits of a greater harvest.] ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. . . . ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. . . . ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (vv. 20-23, 26, 54-57).
1. Because of Jesus now, the Christian doesn't have to fear death.
 - a. Yeah sure, in one sense, it is still wise for us to number our days.
 - b. But, in another sense, our days are now innumerable. They go on forever. As we already read: "Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).
- E. So, you see, Jesus is shifting the context of our lives, he's changing the backdrop, he's rewriting the soundtrack . . . because he's lifted the curse, he's removed the wrath, he's defeated death, and he's making us alive!

(2) Light

“At Daybreak”

- A. I’m drawing this theme of light out from that passing remark there at the beginning of v. 21. The angel gives the admonition (v. 20), and then Luke says: “And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.” When? “[A]t daybreak.”
1. In the Greek it refers to dawn, the time of morning’s first light.
 - a. It’s the same word used in Luke 24:1 to identify the time of day when Jesus’ tomb was first discovered to be empty by some of his female disciples: “¹ But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away . . .” (vv. 1-2).
 2. I love that. Jesus was raised up alive forevermore at early dawn. And here these apostles are preaching “all the words of this Life” at early dawn.
- B. You get the imagery don’t you? A new day has arrived. Morning’s light is breaking in.
1. And many are responding to that light, opening to it.
 2. But others, like these religious leaders here, would rather still sit in darkness. They draw the curtains shut. They deadbolt the door. They aren’t welcoming the truth of the gospel. They are threatened by it.
 - a. Rather than asking honest questions about Jesus and following where the facts lead, they’re ready to kill these apostles (v. 33).
 - b. Only the prominent Pharisee Gamaliel is able to talk them back from the ledge, so they would at least let the Christians be for a bit (vv. 34-39).
 - i. Sometimes we can be there, right? We present like we’re on a quest for truth, but we’re really closed to it. We don’t like it. We don’t want it to be true.

Begging the Question

- A. But all of this begs the question: If everyone of us is struggling with life playing out in the shadow of death, and Jesus offers a way out, a way to break free—when the truth of that first “dawns” on us, why don’t we all leap at the chance to let it in? Why don’t we receive it like the gift that it is with great gratitude and joy?
1. Why would we rather nurse our wounds in the darkness than find healing in the light?
- B. Well, for this, I find what the old Puritan theologian Richard Sibbes has to say supremely helpful. It’s a bit dated linguistically, but I’ll try to make sense of it for you. Here’s what he writes: “It were an easy thing to be a Christian, if religion stood only in a few outward works and duties, but to take the soul to task, and to deal roundly with our own hearts, and to let conscience have its full work, and to bring the soul into spiritual subjection unto God, this is not so easy a matter, because the soul out of self-love is loath to enter into itself, lest it should have other thoughts of itself than it would have.”

- C. It's that last part that is so critical to what we are considering at this point. If Jesus offers life, why would we choose death?
1. Well, I think what Sibbes is saying is this: We resist that because in order to get life with him, we have to admit that we deserve death apart from him.
 - a. We'd have to admit that death isn't merely natural, and our bodies and lives aren't falling apart because that's just the ordinary way of things. No!
 - b. It's because the curse of God is upon us, and rightly so, for our sin! It's because, as we read earlier in John, "the wrath of God abides on [us]" (John 3:36 [NASB]).
 2. You have to face up to that, own that, if you are ever to truly receive and benefit from what God is offering to us in Jesus.
 - a. To receive the cross is to say that you need the cross.
 - b. And to say that you need the cross is to say that that should have been you on the cross, under the curse of God, but Jesus took it for you.
 - i. And, O brothers and sisters, admitting such things about ourselves, though it is essential to the healing process, it is not so easy a pill to swallow, because, again, as Sibbes puts it: "the soul out of self-love is loath [or reluctant] to enter into itself, lest it should have other thoughts of itself than it would have."
 - (1) I don't want to see myself in that light. I don't want to need grace and mercy in such a desperate way.
 - (2) I like to think that I'm good enough. Give me a few outward religious "works and duties" and I can get it right on my own, without being lowered to this extent, without fully subjecting myself to the control and mastery of God.

To Expose and to Heal

- A. Isn't it true, on the one hand, we all feel a little better looking in the dark?
1. If I'm on a date, I'd take a dimly lit room any day over some spotlight on my face, accenting all my imperfections: my thinning hair, my abundance of moles, my weird crooked nose, and all this.
 - a. Keep me in the dark, and I'm looking pretty good. Turn the lights all the way off and you might even say I bear a striking resemblance to Brad Pitt. (Of course you can't really see me at all, but that's the point isn't it?)
- B. But, on the other hand, isn't it also true that we all know, if you really want to clean up, if you actually want to look good, and not just limit yourself to dimly lit corners of the room . . . you're going to have to begin by stepping into some light so you can get a clear vision of what you really look like, as humbling as it may be at first.

1. When a girl goes to do her hair and makeup and all this, you want the brightest lights possible, right? My mom had one of those circular mirror-light combination things—where there was this ring of light around the mirror. And it was so bright it felt like your retinas were burning just standing in front of it.
 - a. But if you were going to get right, to where you truly look good, you were going to have to actually see yourself for what you are so you can deal appropriately with the imperfections: the hair that’s out of place, the piece of cabbage in your teeth, and all this.
- C. And so it is with the gospel of Jesus.
1. It hurts to see yourself as you really are at first, to let the light of the gospel shine into the darker places of your heart.
 2. But, at the end of the day, it’s not just shining on you to expose you. It shining on you to heal you.
- D. That’s why, these apostles, they’re not just preaching that you’re a sinner before an angry God; they’re also preaching that you’re loved by God and that you can be forgiven in Christ today!
1. We saw that there at the end of v. 31: [“God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.”](#)
 - a. “I’m not just calling you out, I’m calling you home. I’m not just pointing my finger at your sins, I’m opening my arms for your embrace. I’m not just trying to expose you, I’m trying to heal you.”
 - i. That’s what the cross of Christ is. It’s at one and the same time an indictment and an invitation. “You deserve my wrath, but I’m ready and wanting to pour out my grace!”
- E. This is why David Powlison, commenting on Richard Sibbes’ words quoted above says that, while to some his words seem to be nothing more than a [“depressing insult,”](#) to others they find in them [“a doorway into unexpected joys”](#) (*Speaking Truth in Love*, 37).
1. Because you finally come out of hiding, and you own up to the junk of who you really are . . . and you find, to your great surprise, you’re not rejected for it (as you had feared), but instead you’re welcomed and accepted and forgiven and loved . . . back to life!

(3) Joy

“Rejoicing . . .?!”

- A. And that’s why we see these apostles here marked by unshakeable joy. You can’t touch them.

1. Even though these religious leaders were willing to take Gamaliel’s advice and not go all the way in killing the apostles, they still couldn’t keep themselves from at least inflicting a little pain on them.
 - a. We’re told in v. 40 that they “beat” or scourged or flogged them—by which we are likely meant to understand that they gave them the traditional Jewish penalty of “forty lashes less one” (2 Cor. 11:24; cf. Deut. 25:3;).
 - i. This means, of course, that they were given a severe beating. At times, people were even known to have died from such a thing.
- B. And yet how do they respond? It ought to blow our minds. Look at v. 41: “Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.”
1. Now, I don’t have time to unpack all this. As I said earlier, we’ll wrap back around next time and devote a whole sermon to this verse and this joy, because it’s just so crazy, and I want it!
 2. But, at bottom, it’s actually quite simple isn’t it?
 - a. They have this joy because they have Jesus and he has them. And Jesus has overcome Satan, sin, and death, not just for himself, but for them, for us, for his people.
 - i. Who cares if these foolhardy men dishonor you, if you have the affection and even honor of almighty God?!
 - ii. “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).
 - iii. Nothing can “separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:39).

(1) And, therefore, brothers and sisters, nothing can steal our joy.
- C. So this is the come-to-Jesus moment of the sermon, right? Peter and the apostles say turn and trust.
1. Turn away from the realm of death and darkness and sorrow, whatever counterfeit joys it may promise you at first;
 2. and put your trust in Jesus—for the first time maybe or for the thousandth time, as you fight the good fight of faith.
 - a. He has come that we “may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).
 - b. He is “the light of the world” (John 8:12)—shining not just to expose but to heal.
 - c. And he offers you joy that no one can take from you (John 16:22).
 - i. Come to him this morning!