

Title: **"And the Disciples Were Filled with Joy"**  
Text: **Acts 13:44-52**  
Date: **April 6, 2025**

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## Big Idea

In this text we see how necessary it is that we respond to the gospel when it is presented to us. But we also see that the only way we'll respond appropriately is if God first changes our hearts by grace. When we get that our salvation, and even our faith, is something that God begins and completes in us, it is first humbling, but it soon fills us with an untouchable joy!

### 1. Shaken Dust

Often our overvaluing of good things keeps us from the best thing. And that is a terrible thing, a devastating thing, because it leads to our neglect of the word of God and ultimately marks us off, with these Jewish folks in our text, as people "unworthy of eternal life . . ." (v. 46). We turn down God's offer of a great banquet with him (cf. Luke 14:16-24) because we'd rather not lose track of our stuff right here. Beware of choosing this world over the One who made it!

### 2. Gleaming Light

We aren't the source of the light. He is. We don't produce the light, he does. He emanates it, we reflect it. We are, then, "gleaming" lights. We aren't the sun. We are the moon. The moon is just a rock. It has no light-producing capability in itself. It just reflects what the sun gives it. Why is it that some Christians seem to radiate Christ's light and others are so dim? Well, it's this. The world has gotten in the way. Things here have become too important, they don't see the sun anymore. Jesus has been overshadowed, as it were, by worldly concern. This isn't just an issue at the beginning of our Christian life and then we graduate beyond it. We are always tempted to drift back into worldliness.

### 3. Eternal Appointment

In Acts 13:48, Luke gives us the doctrine of predestination in capsule form. So let's make sure we're clear on his logic. There's a sequence

to it. Notice, he does not say: "as many as believed were appointed to eternal life." No. It's the other way around: "as many as were appointed to eternal life believed." Don't you see the difference? In the first case, it is your faith that stands as the ground for your eternal appointment. He appoints me *because I've believed*. In the latter case, it is your eternal appointment (by God!) that stands as the ground for your faith. I believe *because he's appointed me* (cf. John 15:16).

#### Objection #1: This Is Not Fair (cf. Rom. 9:14-16)

Election isn't about what is fair or just or equitable. That's not the category. The category we're dealing with here is mercy. If you want what's fair, you get hell. If you want justice, you get wrath. Because that's what we rightly deserve for our sin. This isn't about equity. You don't want equity. You want mercy. And, by definition, mercy isn't owed to anyone. God has a right to give mercy to whom he wills because no one deserves it. If you want to talk about what's unfair, it would be that God saves any at all.

#### Objection #2: This Is Not Love (cf. Eph. 2:1-9)

We like to think that we're just sick in our sin, and God brings us a little medicine in Jesus. And we have to choose whether to take him in or not. Some of us are smart enough to do so, others not so much. But the Bible says we're not just sick in our sin and in need of a little medicine. No. We're dead in our sin and in need of a resurrection. God has to operate on you from the outside, or there will be no life on the inside.

### 4. Untouchable Joy

If God stands on either side of my salvation and my faith, if he is both the Alpha and Omega points of it, then what have I to fear? God has put steel in my spine and stone under my feet. And so there's this untouchable joy in my heart!



## Reflection Questions

- How might the things of this world be getting in between you and the light of Jesus? What needs to change?
- Have you ever heard of the doctrine of predestination before? What do you think of it (be honest, it's okay)? How do you understand what Luke says in Acts 13:48? What implications might this have for your own faith and life and joy?

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*Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.*

**FAITH:** The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate presses our church *upwards* in love

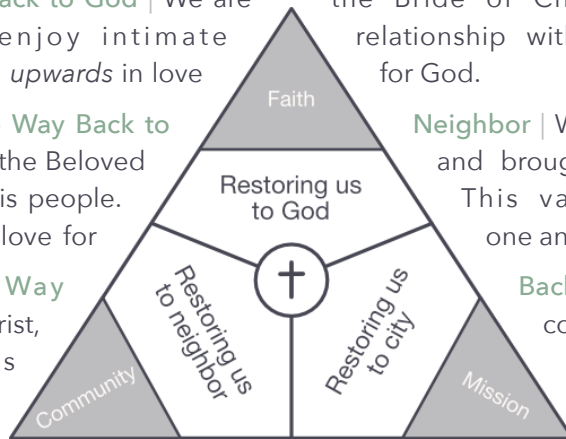
the Bride of Christ, created and relationship with him. This value for God.

**COMMUNITY:** The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. church *inwards* in love for

**Neighbor** | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal This value presses our one another.

**MISSION:** The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our in love for the

**Back to City** | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* unbelieving.



## Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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## Announcement Spotlight

### Easter @ Mercy Hill!

Easter is coming soon and we have some exciting things planned!

- GOOD FRIDAY SUNSET SERVICE (FRIDAY 4/18) - RSVP TODAY!
- EASTER EGG HUNT & FAMILY FUN (SATURDAY 4/19) - RSVP TODAY!
- EASTER SERVICE (SUNDAY 4/20)
- EVER WONDERED? SPECIAL SERVICE (SUNDAY 4/27)

For more details on the items above, please scan the QR code below.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at [info@mercyhillchurch.org](mailto:info@mercyhillchurch.org).

All Church Hangout - Today!

All Church Prayer - Tonight!

Volunteer Opportunities for Mercy Hill's Easter Egg Outreach!

Post-Missions Emphasis Week - What's Next?

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