

Title: **Expectance, Entrance, and Embrace (Part 2)**

Text: **Acts 13:26-39**

Date: **February 23, 2025**

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Big Idea

Every other quasi-deliver that came before Jesus in the Old Testament was stained by sin and subject to death. But Jesus is neither. He was sacrificed for sin, but not stained by it. He was put to death, but couldn't be held down by it. And, therefore, the deliverance he works for us is not partial and incomplete, it's total and everlasting!

2b. Entrance (vv. 26-37)

Jesus is fully human, that is true and not to be denied, but he is also fully God. And that means he's not under the same shadow as all the merely human deliverers that came before him. He momentarily goes under the shadow of course, there at Calvary, but it's only so he can then drag us out from it.

Assertion #1: Jesus Is Not Stained by Sin (v. 28)

Though he was punished as a criminal, he perpetrated no crime. Though he was condemned as a sinner, he committed no sin (cf. 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Assertion #2: Jesus Is Not Subject to Death (vv. 30-37)

In some sense, the integrity of the first assertion hangs on the integrity of this second assertion. If Jesus was crucified and buried, but he never rose on the third day—and instead he carried on to rot there in the tomb—you would rightly conclude that he must have just been another fallen sinner like the rest of us. But if, indeed, Jesus has risen from the grave never to die again, well now suddenly you realize you are dealing with something, or someone, else entirely. He isn't ultimately subject to death because he wasn't ultimately stained by sin. He is vindicated by God in his resurrection because he was falsely accused by man at his crucifixion. He was sacrificed for sin, but not stained by it. He was put to death, but couldn't be held down by it. Again, he came under the shadow of sin and death—not because he

belonged there, but because he has come to pull us out and into the sunlight of God's love! The first assertion regarding his perfect righteousness is validated by this second assertion regarding his resurrection.

PHYSICAL-HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

Paul provides us with physical, even historical, evidence there in v. 31.

BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

- Psalm 2:7
- Isaiah 55:3
- Psalm 16:10

3a. Embrace (vv. 38-43)

In vv. 38-39 he really gets to the punchline in all this. What's the point? What does this mean for you and for me?

Benefit #1: Forgiveness

In Jesus, God can now forgive our sin. He can wipe away the mess we've made. He can take what's crimson, run it through the wash cycle of grace, and it comes out white as snow. But how? How can a just and holy God pardon and welcome a sinner like me? It was a bit of a mystery until Jesus, but now we know: God can cast our sin into the depths of the sea, because he put it on Christ and cast him out from his presence. God can remove our transgressions from us, because he put them on Christ and drove him away—like the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement. God can remember our iniquity no more, because he put it on Jesus and drew payment for it all from his account. The sinless was made to be sin, the spotless was covered in blemish, the holy became filthy, the white snow was stained crimson . . . all so you and I could be forgiven!

Benefit #2: Freedom

But we're not just forgiven, we're set free!



Reflection Questions

- Are you fully embracing Jesus today? If not, why not? Where are you still stiff-arming him would you say? And why?

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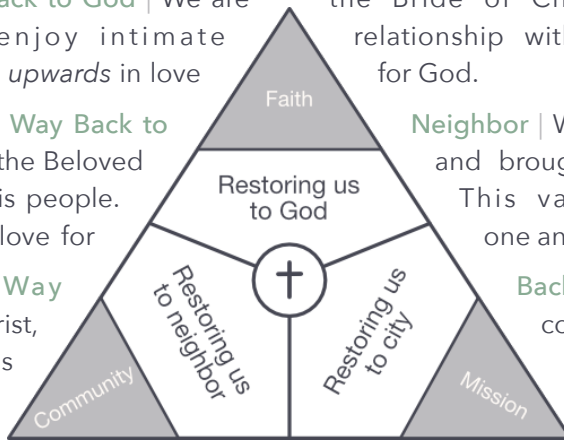
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Your Next Steps

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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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

STM (Short-Term Missions) Applications

Applications are now available for our two trips to Nicaragua (end of June - beginning of July) and the Philippines (end of November), both in partnership with Arms of Love! If you haven't already, we invite you to prayerfully consider the possibility of going. If interested, please complete the application by the trip application due date(s). The deadline for the Nicaragua application is the end of this month (February 24th).

Scan the QR code below to find a link to the application.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Bob Durstenfeld (bdurstenfeld@gmail.com) or Joey Wang (joeywang@mercyhillchurch.org).

Sunday Prayer Walk - Today!

All Church Hangout - Next Sunday!

All Church Campout - Save the Date!

Men's DNA Group - Frontline Men!

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