

## Friends of the Chapel Weekly Scripture Study

### Second Sunday of Easter

April 12, 2026

#### First New Testament Reading

##### Acts 5:29–42

##### English Standard Version Scripture Text

<sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. <sup>30</sup> The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. <sup>31</sup> God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. <sup>32</sup> And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

<sup>33</sup> When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. <sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. <sup>36</sup> 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. <sup>37</sup> 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. <sup>38</sup> 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; <sup>39</sup> 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, <sup>40</sup> 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. <sup>41</sup> Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. <sup>42</sup> And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

##### Historical Context

Acts 5 takes place during the earliest days of the Christian movement in Jerusalem. The apostles proclaim the resurrection of Jesus despite opposition from the Jewish religious authorities. Their bold testimony leads to arrest and interrogation before the Sanhedrin.

## Verse-by-Verse Exegetical Commentary

Verse 29 – Peter and the apostles declare the principle of obedience to God over human authority.

Verses 30–31 – The resurrection of Jesus is proclaimed along with His exaltation as Savior and Lord.

Verse 32 – The apostles testify alongside the Holy Spirit, emphasizing divine confirmation of their message.

Verses 33–39 – Gamaliel advises caution, suggesting that if the movement is from God it cannot be overthrown.

Verses 40–42 – After suffering flogging, the apostles rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus and continue teaching daily.

## Theological Themes

- Faithful witness in the face of opposition
- Obedience to God above human authority
- The unstoppable advance of the gospel
- Joy in suffering for Christ

## Epistle Reading

### 1 Peter 1:3–9

#### English Standard Version Scripture Text

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, <sup>9</sup> obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

## Historical Context

First Peter was written to Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor who were experiencing social pressure and suffering for their faith. Peter encourages believers by reminding them of the living hope made possible through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## Verse-by-Verse Exegetical Commentary

Verse 3 – Believers are born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Verse 4 – The inheritance of believers is imperishable, undefiled, and kept in heaven.

Verse 5 – God’s power guards believers through faith until the final salvation is revealed.

Verses 6–7 – Trials refine faith just as fire refines gold, producing genuine trust.

Verses 8–9 – Even without seeing Christ physically, believers love Him and rejoice in the salvation of their souls.

## Theological Themes

- Living hope through the resurrection
- Perseverance in suffering
- The promise of eternal inheritance
- Faith grounded in unseen reality

## Concluding Reflection

The weeks following Easter remind the Church that the resurrection changes how believers live in the world. The apostles in Acts demonstrate courageous witness even under persecution. Peter reminds Christians that their hope is anchored in the living Christ and the inheritance prepared for them. Because Christ is risen, believers can endure hardship with confidence and joy.

## Thoughts to Consider - 04/12/26

1. The apostles say, 'We must obey God rather than men.' What situations today might challenge believers to choose obedience to God over social pressure?
2. The apostles rejoiced after suffering for their faith. Why do you think they were able to respond with joy instead of resentment?

3. Gamaliel suggests that if a movement is from God it cannot be stopped. How does this statement encourage confidence in God's work today?

4. Peter describes Christian hope as a 'living hope' through the resurrection. What makes this hope different from ordinary optimism?

5. Peter explains that trials refine faith like fire refines gold. How can difficulties strengthen rather than weaken faith?