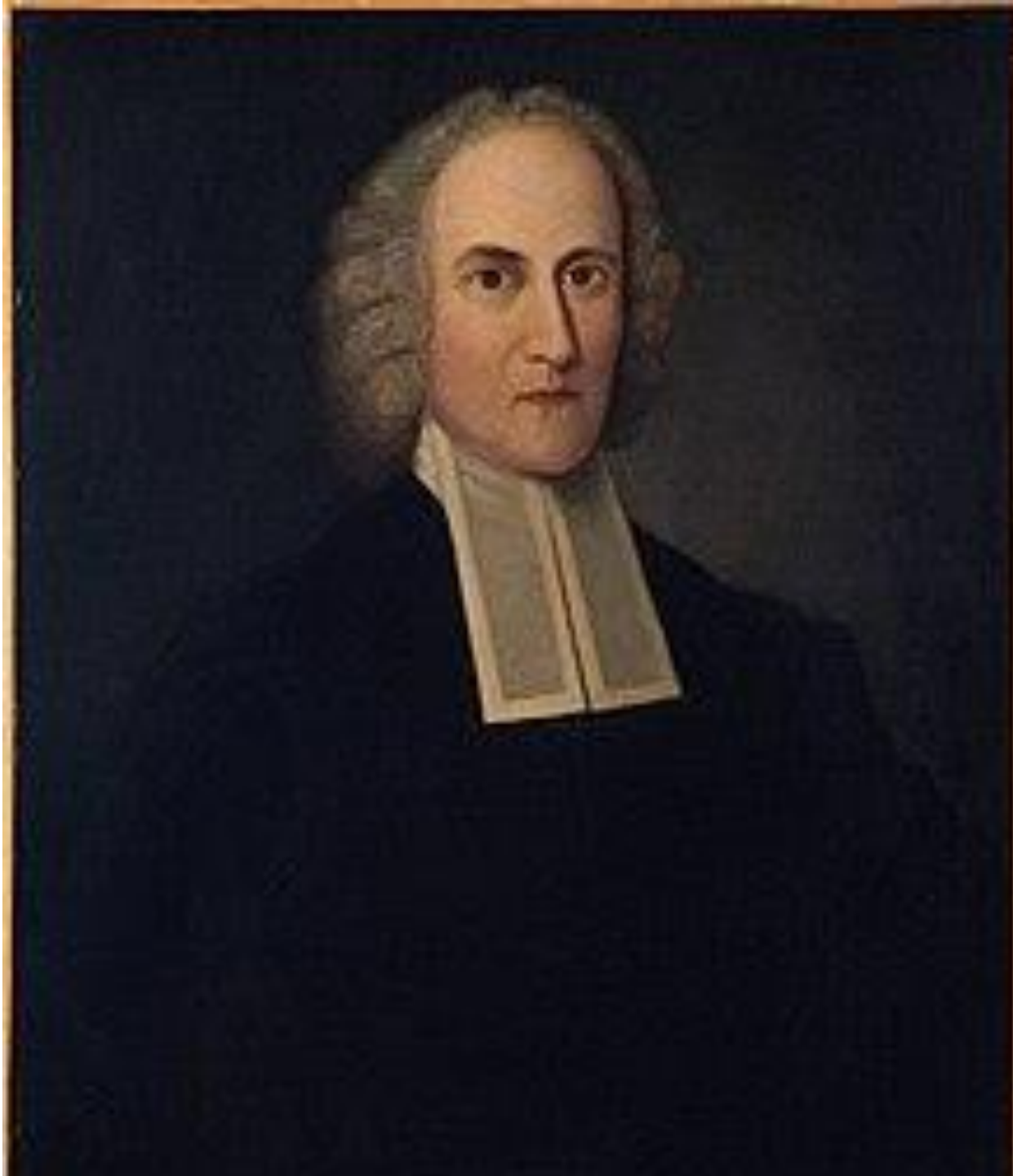




**Death Came
Unexpectedly**



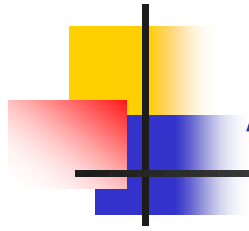
Jonathan
Edwards
1703-1758

Sinners in
the Hands of
an Angry
God - 1741



Becoming A Disciple

A disciple is someone who keeps the Great commandment of John 13:34 – to love like Jesus loves, and live like Jesus lived, through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and fruit of the Holy Spirit, starting with the the love of Jesus – main fruit – this is our design and our destiny



And Then, This Week

**DEATH CAME
UNEXPECTEDLY**

SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS

Duccio Di Buoninsegna - 1308





Welcome to the Danger Zone

- **MATTHEW 2:16** Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi. **17** Then what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:



They Didn't Make It

- **18** "A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH,
WEEPING AND GREAT MOURNING,
RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN;
AND SHE REFUSED TO BE COMFORTED,
BECAUSE THEY WERE NO MORE."
- Reference to Jeremiah 31:15 – in the midst of a wonderful prophecy about God's people returning to Jerusalem from Babylon, mourning for those who didn't make it.



So, Just to Be Clear

- Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior of the world, took on flesh, came into the world as a baby, a momentous event celebrated by angels and shepherds, and priests and a temple prophetess and mysterious kings
- Almost immediately followed by the massacre of hundreds of children
- Wait, WHAT???? WHAT IS GOING ON??
- The world is the world; not a safe place; it never was intended to be, not even for believers, not even for the most innocent



GoodNewsBadNewsGoodNews

- 33 These things I have spoken to you, so that **in Me** you may have peace. In the **world** you have tribulation, but take courage; **I have overcome the world.**"
- Thlipsin - Persecution, affliction, distress, tribulation. From thlibo; pressure
- He **didn't** say I have overcome the world, so you **won't** have tribulation
- He said I am stronger than the spirit in this world so in spite of the pain and chaos, it will still be okay and you will have peace



So At Times Like This ???

- Grieve, and understand that it is a process that can get a little crazy
- Stages include SHOCK, DENIAL, ANGER, DEPRESSION, BARGAINING, MAGICAL THINKING AND EVENTUALLY SADNESS, ACCEPTANCE AND GOING ON WITH YOUR NEW LIFE
- What you are seeing in the media right now is a very public version of that process



Focused on Anger/Bargaining

- Grief includes attempts to explain and discover meaning so we can control the loss, people want to blame and find and fix the problem, so that somehow it doesn't feel so bad or hopeless
- BUT it devolves into political grandstanding and finger pointing on all sides, and this has been going on for years, and it seems to be getting worse



How is That Working?

- Nothing seems to be helping. Am I horrified. Yes, and so are you. Am I praying for a breakthrough solution. Yes, and I hope you are, too. Do I have a solution, no, and **neither do you**. All we have are our emotions and opinions and accusations as we are cycling through grief.
- But I can tell you this – I am now sure that the solution will not be based in politics or changes in public health/safety policies – Let me tell you why



The World is What It IS

- Broken and wracked by sin
- Life is Loss – we can/should do our best – with God's help – to make it as safe as we can, BUT WE CAN'T MAKE THE BADNESS AND BROKENNESS GO AWAY
- That will not be accomplished until Jesus returns, and then there will be no more sorrow and no more crying or pain, because there will be no more DEATH (Rev. 21)



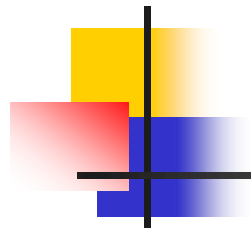
Don't Take My Word For It

- **1 John 5:19** We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one. (rocked, just like babes)
- **20** And we know that the Son of God has come, and has **given us understanding** so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.



Comfort One Another

- Don't get sucked into anger and bargaining and magical thinking
- Don't get fooled into thinking politicians – representatives of the world's system – can really fix anything
- Comfort one another, pray for one another, seek the LORD for HIS solutions
- Let yourself feel the pain of the loss, so the peace of Christ can carry you



Jesus + Nothing = EVERYTHING

- deeply loved by God,
- fully accepted by God,
- completely and permanently forgiven by God,
- lavishly blessed by God,
- and eternally, perfectly embraced by God as his child; a child who brings Him unspeakable JOY