

Genesis 3:6,8 “...So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate it too....When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees.”

I love thin mint Girl Scout cookies. Virginia knows that I will eat the whole box if they are within reach, so she hides them from me and doles them out 2 measly cookies at a time. So I hunt for them, and most years I am able to find them. This year I searched outside, inside, the garage, the car and never did find the Girl Scout cookies. Finally I badgered Virginia so much she finally told me. She hid them in the bag of dead frozen snakes in the freezer. Who does that? That is just wrong to hide thin mint cookies or anything else in a bag of dead snakes. It is just wrong. There are some things you just shouldn't try to hide. When we sin and do wrong our first instinct is to try to hide what we have done, to cover it up. We inherited that trait from Adam and Eve. Hiding only makes things worse. How wonderful it is to know that when we sin we don't need to run away and hide. Rather, we need to run toward the Lord who says if we confess your sins, He will be faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. The next time you sin, don't run away and hide. Just be honest. Your honesty will draw you close to God, and He will forgive you. I think that is good news.

- Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

Ephesians 3:17-18 “¹⁷ Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. ¹⁸ And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.”

There’s a new trend in skyscrapers: skinnyscrapers, super tall buildings that are much thinner than past buildings. One new tower in New York City is almost 1,400 feet tall but only 93 feet wide. These slender structures are made possible in part by recent innovations to make stronger steel and concrete. However, just as important are improvements in weights, springs, pendulums, and computer software used to counterbalance these buildings so they don’t sway too much in the wind. I don’t want to be a skinnycraper. I want to be made complete with all the fullness and life and power that comes from God. (Ephesians 3:19) The Bible says that God wants us to grow deep roots in the truth of His word, so that we can reach our full spiritual height. Then we won’t be blown around by the changing winds of the latest philosophies and ideas of our culture. Only by being grounded in Jesus Christ and rooted in the truth of God’s love can we stand tall and reach the skies.

- Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

Romans 5:5 “Hope will not lead to disappointment.”

Last week Justice Antonin Scalia passed away. His son spoke some powerful words in the eulogy for his dad. He said, “We are gathered here because of one man. A man known personally to many of us, known only by reputation to even more. A man loved by many, scorned by others. A man known for great controversy and for great compassion. That man, of course, is Jesus of Nazareth. It is He whom we proclaim, Jesus Christ, son of the Father, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified, buried, risen, seated at the right hand of the Father. It is because of Him, because of His life, death, and resurrection that we do not mourn as those who have no hope, but in confidence we commend Antonin Scalia to the mercy of God.” I love those words. As Christians we do not grieve as people who have no hope. When you belong to Christ, you know that you always have a future and that your future will be more glorious than your past. Death has been swallowed up in victory. For Christ followers, this earth is not our home. It is just a temporary stop on the way to our eternal home in heaven. There is so much peace that comes in our living and in our dying when we have that hope. As the Bible says in Romans 5:5, “That hope will not disappoint you.”

- Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

Romans 12:9-10 “Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other.”

At Salisbury Cathedral outside London, a giant statue called *The Kiss* has been moved because it posed a “texting danger.” The massive statue depicts two hands holding on to one another, and it was built across a walking path so people could walk through the hands. But instead, people were so intent on looking at their smart phones that they kept hitting their heads on the statue, so it had to be moved off the path. What an ironic picture of our modern condition. Technology is supposed to bring us closer together, and sometimes it does. But too often we allow meaningless distractions to cause us to miss out on the opportunity to just reach out and hold the hand of someone we love. How different it is today than when people used to sit around a dinner table where they would actually be talking and sharing with each other. But now I watch people sitting around dinner tables when we go out to eat, and every member of the family have their faces buried in their smart phone. I hope you will take a moment to look around, and make sure that you are fully present with the people in your life. Don’t hit your head on *The Kiss*. The Bible is right when it says, “Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other.” I think that simply means when you are together with someone you love, truly be with him or her and not on your smart phone because that is not very smart.

- Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

WESLEY HALL - FEBRUARY 28, 2016

WORSHIP GUIDE & DAILY DEVOTIONS

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Week 1– Choose Grace

Week 2 – Choose Humility

Week 3 – Choose Truth

Week 4 – Choose Trust

Week 5 – Choose Sacrifice

Week 6 – Choose Forgiveness



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Choose Truth
Matthew 23

Jesus called out the religious leaders for:

- **Lacking in compassion and mercy.**

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them.” Matthew 23:1-4 NRSV

Application–Biblical truth should impact the head and the heart.

- **Becoming a stumbling block for others.**

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.” Matthew 23:13-15 NRSV

Application–Biblical truth should enhance our witness for Christ.

- **Missing what is most important.**

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe, but have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others.” Matthew 23:23 NRSV

Application–Biblical truth should include the whole of scripture.

- **Focusing on image and outward popularity.**

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may become clean. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.” Matthew 23:25-28 NRSV

Application–Biblical truth should guide and challenge our entire lives.

How will we respond?

“Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

Matthew 10:39 NRSV

— **Rev. Brandon Dasinger**

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Watch today's sermon on WFRZ-TV or online at frazer.church/.
You may also order a CD of today's service at the Connection Point desk.

The Victory of Christ

Luke 23:46 “And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit.” Having said this, He breathed his last.”

It's interesting to note that none of the gospel writers say that Jesus died. He yielded up his spirit. Sin destroyed His temple. On the human level He was dead—the temple was dissolved. But on the divine level He finished the work He came to do. He committed His spirit to the hands of the father—this act was both voluntary and free. No one took Jesus' life. He laid it down. While the crucifixion is sad and difficult to think about, we must remember that the cross was not a tragedy but a victory. This is why we call Good Friday “good.” Let us not be mistaken, the crucifixion was not a moment where evil defeated God and then Easter Sunday was a moment when God beat evil. This is not true. God won on both days. Jesus' crucifixion did happen at the hands of sinful men, however; we must keep in mind that ultimately God was in control here, not men. The cross was His plan, not theirs. Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday intentionally. Jesus allowed Himself to be arrested. Jesus allowed Himself to be crucified. This was not simply a sacrifice...it was a self-sacrifice. The Jewish leaders and the Roman soldiers did not take His life from Him; He was laying it down of His own accord. And when He had accomplished salvation—Jesus of his own volition gave up his spirit.

- Rev. Brandon Dasinger/Teaching Pastor and Director of Missions

People, Places, and Grace

Ephesians 2:10 “We are God’s accomplishment, created in Christ Jesus to do good things.”

“Whenever I think of my faith journey, three words immediately jump to my mind: **people, places, and grace**. I immediately think of people, because neither our callings nor our ministries happen in isolation. God has constantly surrounded me with people who have mentored me, encouraged me, and supported me. I think about my youth ministers and pastors who saw gifts in me that I didn't see in myself. I think about professors and fellow students who have both inspired and challenged me. I think about my wife and kids who have taught me so much about God's love and goodness. Second, when I reflect on my calling I think about places. In the Old Testament, God's people made a practice of piling large rocks as monuments to the Lord's provision. These monuments were to be reminders of God's faithfulness. While I've never piled rocks onto each other, there are certain locations and places that remind me of God's goodness. I think about the churches I've served, the schools I've attended, and the mission trip locations... places where God has shaped my faith and ministry. Like the stone monuments of the Israelites, these locations remind me that there is a God who never fails, never leaves, and never forgets his promises. The third word that comes to my mind in my faith journey is grace. Paul says in 1 Corinthians, “By the grace of God, I am who I am.” I share that same sentiment. As I look back on my past and the direction I was heading, it is truly amazing that I am here right now. My life simply does not make sense apart from his presence and spirit. It is his grace that has saved me, guided me, and equipped me.

-- Rev. Brandon Dasinger/Teaching Pastor and Director of Missions