

Mark 10:51 “Lord, I want to see.”

Have you become blind to the beauty and blessings of life around you? Life is difficult. The difficulties of life have a way of blinding us to our blessings. We lose perspective. When you are going through hard days and all you can see is the dark, the bad, the ugly, the pain, and we become blind to the beauty around us and the blessings of God in our life. When it is dark, often all you can see is the darkness. It is overwhelming. My prayer would be, “Lord, I want to be able to see. Help me to see life through the eyes of Jesus, for He was able to see the good in the bad, the best in the worst, the purpose in the pain, the beauty in the ugly.” The truth is there is far more beauty than ugly in your life. Over your lifetime there is far more good than bad, more blessings than burdens. In the midst of the difficulties a simple prayer is, “Lord, I want to be able to see. Lord, help me to see like Jesus, to see purpose in the pain, the good in the bad, the best in the worst and the beauty that exists beyond the ugly. Lord, I just want to be able to see.” Let that be your prayer today.

- Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

John 8:31-32 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

In South Alabama, throughout Florida and all along the Gulf Coast, Spring, usually in April and May, brings with it a strange insect manifestation. These bugs are called love bugs because you usually find two of them together. They appear in clouds by the millions. I always believed the story that these bugs were an experiment done at the University of Florida that went awry. The insects were created by DNA manipulation to create a bug that could control mosquito populations. They escaped during hurricane Andrew and now they have no natural predators to control them. I heard this story from what I thought was a reliable source, an exterminator. As it turns out, this story is not true. Love bugs, also called honeymoon flies, kissing bugs and double-headed bugs, are native to Central America. They migrated here, and now they range throughout the Gulf States and as far north as Georgia and South Carolina. Finding out the truth about these bugs reminded me of the importance of our knowing the truth and sharing the truth about God and salvation. Many believe that God is just out there waiting to zap them when they step out of line, but we know our God is loving and merciful. Many believe that they can be saved by going to church, reading their Bible and being good, but we know that we saved by grace through faith. Are you seeking after the truth? Are you sharing the truth about our loving God and the salvation He offers to all? The truth will always set us free!

Neil Epler, Congregational Care Pastor

I Corinthians 15:54-55, 57 “...Death has been swallowed up in victory.⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”...⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

There is no greater victory story than the story of Easter morning. Jesus conquered death. I love the phrase that ‘...death has been swallowed up in victory.’ Isn’t that cool? Easter doesn’t say that people don’t die. It does not deny the reality of death. We all know that people die. We will die. Death is inescapable. Death has a mean grab. There is no mistaking that. Death snatches our senior citizens, destroys people in their prime, and sometimes it grabs our children. Death is a bully. It has a mean grab. But Easter sends a message to death. While it may have a mean grab, it has a weak grip. It cannot hold what it grabs. Jesus conquered death. He was victorious over the grave. Death could cruelly come on a cross, but it could not hold Him down. When our lives are connected to Jesus Christ, we get that victory, too. He gives us the victory through Christ. Death can’t hold us. We get life. We get heaven, and we get forever with God and those we love. Don’t waste Easter. Invite Jesus Christ to be the Savior of your life, and you will be able to say, “Thanks be to God. He gives me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

Matthew 28:5-6 “⁵The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.⁶ He is not here; He has risen, just as He said. Come and see the place where He lay.”

Mary came to the graveyard on Easter morning to cry, to grieve, to say her goodbyes. As far as she was concerned the bad guys had won. They had crucified and killed this wonderful and innocent man named Jesus. She thought death and evil had the upper hand, the last word, a good life that ended in tragedy. She was so surprised to find the grave empty. She figured someone had moved his body. Then she heard a voice and it said, “Do not be afraid, you are looking for Jesus and He is not here. He is raised.” The Gospel of John reminds us that she also heard another voice, a familiar voice, the voice of Jesus, and He called her by name, “Mary.” In that moment, she discovered that sin and death and evil do not have the last word or the last move. God has the last move. On Easter you either get it or you don’t. You can’t explain Easter. You don’t explain miracles. Easter is something you experience. Easter is something that you believe. God always has the last word, the final move, and it is a good move. To believe in Easter is to know that God will not allow His purpose for your life to wind up in tragedy. Nor will He allow you to live in despair and hopelessness. No matter what you are facing today, no matter how hard, painful, hurtful, stressful or horrible, remember, it is Easter, and God has a future for you. Your future will be more glorious than your past.

- Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

WESLEY HALL - March 20, 2016

WORSHIP GUIDE & DAILY DEVOTIONS

NEXT WEEK: EASTER SUNDAY

Come Home. Come Hope.



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Choose Forgiveness
Luke 23:33-35, 44-46

How do you forgive others?

Matthew 6:14-15
Colossians 3:13

How do you forgive yourself?

1 John 1:9
2 Corinthians 5:17-18

How do you choose forgiveness?

1 John 4:10
2 Corinthians 5:21

CRUX Takeaway: To Forgive Is To Live!

— Dr. Patrick Quinn

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

Holy Week

2 Corinthians 5:18 “All this newness of life is from God,
who brought us back to himself through what Christ did.
And God has given us the task of reconciling people to him.”

Yesterday we celebrated Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. During these next few days, we will share the emotional journey of Jesus’ last week. We will feel the excitement and jubilation as Jesus rides into Jerusalem while the people wave palm branches and shout, “Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord!” We will feel the tension as Jesus washes His disciples’ feet and serves the bread and wine. We will feel the agony of Jesus as He prays in the garden of Gethsemane. We will feel sorrow when He is beaten and crucified. Lastly, we will experience relief and joy when Christ rises from the grave! He has conquered sin and death and His victory is our victory! By the end of this week, we will realize that these few days have changed everything. Everything is new. From now on, whenever we break the bread and drink the wine, we will know that we are not alone. Whenever we pray, we will be certain that our requests are heard. The risen Christ is with us, among us, and for us. Resurrection has begun. We are part of something rare, something precious, and something utterly revolutionary.

- Rev. Brandon Dasinger, Teaching Pastor and Director of Missions
TUESDAY MARCH 22, 2016

“Do you believe this?”

Corinthians 15:54-57 “Death is swallowed up in victory.
O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? ...
How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death
through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

There is a beautiful story found in the gospel of John. It is a story of death, loss, and hurt. But it is also a story of victory and resurrection. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus are all good friends of Jesus. Lazarus gets very sick quickly. Mary and Martha send someone to get Jesus. Jesus is several towns over and does not get there in time. Lazarus has died. Once Jesus gets there, Martha comes out to greet Him and says, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” You can hear the hurt and disappointment in her words. Jesus sees her and many others crying. He goes to the tomb of Lazarus. And then we have the shortest verse in the entire Bible and perhaps the most powerful. Verse 35 simply states, “Jesus wept.” We see in this text that Christ is not removed or distant from our life. When you hurt, He hurts. He cares deeply about each of us. The story concludes by Jesus telling the people to roll the stone away. He then shouts, “Lazarus come out.” Immediately Lazarus comes walking out. Earlier in the story when Martha said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” Jesus gives her an interesting reply: He says, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish. Do you believe this?” Ultimately, this is a question each of us has to answer. Easter Sunday reminds us that the answer is YES! Easter reminds us that death and sin do not have the last word. Yes, we will still have times of sorrow and sadness. Yet, in the midst of our grief, we can have hope and faith because we believe in a God who brings us victory.

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