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SUMMIT
Welcome Class
of '25 and '26



Prayer Points

GLOBALLY

- 1 billion souls to come to Christ
- Peace of Jerusalem and a revival in the Middle East.
- The end of the Russian-Ukrainian war

NATIONALLY

- The next president God allows into office
- A national awakening

LOCALLY

- A Revival in NYC—for a powerful outpouring of God to be felt in companies, schools, and on the streets

INDIVIDUALLY

- Resistant family members to be touched by the Holy Spirit and return to Christ

I CAST MY VOTE

by Pastor Tim Dilena, *Senior Pastor*



Christian writer Ian Thomas wrote, "Make sure it is God's trumpet you are blowing, if it's only yours it won't wake the dead; it will simply disturb the neighbors."

As I write these words with a national election approaching, I'm concerned about the trumpets that are blowing around this country. God's trumpet is always God's Word. God's Word has the story of a man who changed his vote because his life was changed by Jesus.

The phrase, "I cast my vote," is found in the Bible. It is found in a man's mouth that eventually changed his vote and his party affiliation. For so long he cast his vote for the wrong thing. That man was the apostle Paul.

Christianity is growth.

Real Christians grow and can grow out of voting the wrong way. Don't be mistaken.

I am in no way intimating which candidate is right or wrong, or who to vote for. It's deeper than "If you are a Christian you will vote for _____."

Real conversion touches every part of our lives, including our voting and politics.

Listen to what Paul says in Acts 26:9-10 (NASB) to King Agrippa about his voting: "So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority

I Cast My Vote (continued)

from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.”

Paul is speaking about his voting record before becoming a Christian. His vote was for the death of Christians.

He said, “I cast my vote against them.”

Without question, it was the wrong vote. So when Jesus changed Paul on the road to Damascus (verses 12–15), he was also about to change Paul’s voting record as well. That is what Jesus does. If Jesus is truly Lord, then He controls party affiliations. And in Paul’s case, Jesus changed his affiliation with the Pharisee party—and his history of straight-ticket voting for this one party.

Real conversion touches every part of our lives, including our voting and politics.

Can you imagine Paul saying, “I’m a Christian but my family has always voted the Pharisee party line so I need to.”

Well, part of that ballot was the murdering

of the Christians. Surrendering to Christ is the surrender of everything. It doesn’t matter what your parents were. It doesn’t matter what others vote. It doesn’t matter what your race votes. All that matters is what Jesus says.

He does tell me that “I am His own,” and He also tells me how to vote.

Contemplate this before you “cast your vote” this year: How does Jesus want you to vote—not your pastor, not your deacon, not your denomination, not your friends, not your parents—Jesus. Most are afraid to do this because of what Jesus might say.

The old hymn “In the Garden” is really true:

“I come to the garden alone
While the dew is still on the roses
And the voice I hear falling on my ear
The Son of God discloses.

“And He walks with me,
and He talks with me,

And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.”

Jesus still talks to us because Jesus is alive!

He does tell me that “I am His own,” and He also tells me how to vote.

Thank you, apostle Paul that you changed your vote.

Thank you that your Christianity was stronger than your ties to your political party.

C.S. Lewis once said in the book *Weight of Glory*, “He who surrenders himself without reservation to the temporal claims of a nation, or a party, or a class, is rendering to Caesar that which, of all things, most emphatically belongs to God, Himself.”

Make no mistake about it, we belong to God, first and foremost. We have been bought with a price—the precious blood of Jesus. ■

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TIMES SQUARE ■ CHURCH

Lewis Miller's Story

Sometimes we think we have it all figured out, and then, the unexpected happens. Lewis can attest to that. Here's his story:

I was born into a strong Christian family and was baptized when I was 14 years old. When I turned 18, I moved away to college and started living a homosexual lifestyle which lasted for 30 years. In the beginning, I struggled with my faith as I felt like Christianity was not meant for me. To cope with this, I created my own version of Christianity, which I call "loophole Christianity." I interpreted Scripture in ways that suited me. I justified my actions and used excuses like "this doesn't apply to me" or "Paul didn't really mean that when he said it in Romans." Over time, I replaced God with worldly gods, chiefly the gods of career, success, and beauty.

I had a business motto of pursuing beauty, including beautiful travel, people, homes, and interiors. I felt that if I couldn't have God, I could have beauty, and the two ran parallel in my mind. However, after a while, the beauty stopped being beautiful, and I began to feel the God-shaped void in my life.

As the years progressed, I went from Christianity to agnosticism to stoicism, which I liked for a while because it had all the common sense of Christianity without the annoying emotions. Eventually, I became a full-on atheist, which gave me a sense of freedom. I was free to marry a man and live my life the way I wanted to, without feeling like there was someone in the sky watching my every move who was ready to punish me for my mistakes later on.

Athiesm gave me a sense of freedom in the beginning, but the problem was I missed God because God never let me go. He remembered my commitment to Him when I was 14 years old getting baptized in that river in Modesto, California. And He grew this discontent more and more in me. Suddenly the gods of hedonism and epicurianism and the pursuit of beauty became meaningless.

Fast forward to 2020, life was great. I was engaged to be married to a man. I had a beautiful home. I had great dogs. Business was booming. My life had become about pleasing myself and I had plenty of income to

satisfy my every whim. What cocktail party are we going to? What amazing trip are we going to take next? What more can we buy or shop or wear?

It got to the point I was like, I couldn't do it anymore. I couldn't do another brunch. Then COVID hit, and it really made me stop flat in my tracks and reevaluate everything. It was a scary time for business. But you know what? It made me go in deep and examine what my morals were and what my principles were. Did I have them? Did I actually have principles, per se? I had to review all the issues and was shocked that my worldview aligned with a biblical worldview. That set me back a little bit.



I then proceeded to be in a bad mood for about two years. I was stuck in New York. One Sunday morning in June of 2022, my partner with whom I was living was away on business in L.A. I decided to go to church. I was so hungry for truth. I rationalized that I could go to church. Nobody would know about it. My partner was out of town, so I wouldn't have to explain anything.

My parents had told me about Times Square Church years before when they had attended. I knew I could enter anonymously and exit quickly if it got too uncomfortable for me. So I decided to check it out. The funny thing is that throughout the years and decades, I had no taste for progressive Christianity or gay-affirming churches. It didn't ring true to me. Honestly, I might have even checked the TSC website to ensure there wasn't a rainbow flag because it had been years since my parents had attended, and many things could have changed.

I can recall it vividly in my mind as if it happened yesterday. It was Father's Day in June 2022. As I entered the auditorium, not knowing what to expect, I was amazed to see the people of New York all in one place

with the sole purpose of praising God. It was a surreal experience. I hadn't seen so much joy before, and it was unique to see people leaving behind the debauchery and hedonism that New York is known for in the month of June.

The atmosphere inside the room was electric. The preacher came out and started speaking truth bomb after truth bomb, and I was soaking it all in. Finally, I made my way down to the altar in response to the altar call.

At one point, the preacher looked at me and said, "There are those of you in this room who the only thing between you and the gates of hell is a praying mother and a praying father."

It felt like he was talking directly to me, and it was a life-changing moment. But then, I didn't go back for a year. I was scared of what would happen if I went back. I knew I would be convicted and have to make a change, and I wasn't ready for that. I wanted to forget the experience and move on with my life.

However, God knew what I did that day, and the next 12 months were uncomfortable for me. The God-shaped hole in my heart got bigger and bigger. A year later, I found myself back in the same room. This time, I was single; my relationship had dissolved. That was when I gave my sexuality to Christ. I knew I couldn't do it alone, and I had to lay it all at the foot of the cross.

It was a difficult decision, and I wasn't sure how I was going to make it happen. But then, it was like a switch flipped, and I knew that I had to trust God to take care of it from there. And he did. It was immediate. It was insane! It was like decades of addiction to pornography, chain—broken, using sex as some weird form of validation and power, chain—broken.

But the most amazing change was my identity. My identity as a gay man was, chain—broken! I'm now a child of the King. I am not a gay man. I am a child of the King. God is so good. I no longer search, and I'm not in constant pursuit of beauty anymore. I'm in constant pursuit of holiness because Beauty already found me. Beauty was in constant pursuit of me, and He never let me go. Beauty that is Jesus.



Eight Days of Hope Leads to New Campus: Safe Harbor

Thank you, Times Square Church, for partnering with Eight Days of Hope. Your support allows us to respond and serve quickly when needed. This past year alone, we've been to Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Nebraska. Most notably, we just completed a new campus, Safe Harbor, which opened this past summer. This campus is dedicated to providing hope and healing for girls rescued from sex trafficking.

Sex trafficking is a horrific crime, and it's the fastest growing crime in the world. The new campus offers a safe haven for girls aged 14 to 18, where they can receive the emotional, physical, and spiritual help they desperately need—all at no cost. The construction of this \$7.5 million campus in Ohio was made possible by the tireless efforts of our volunteers and the generous donations from supporters like you.

When a young lady arrives at Safe Harbor, her first stop is the administration building. Here, she is warmly greeted by a team of advocates who will support her throughout her journey of recovery. This building also houses a comprehensive medical wing, ensuring that the physical care she needs is available on-site.

Each girl will live in a cozy cottage on the campus, shared with three other girls and a house mom. These cottages provide a safe and nurturing environment where each girl has her own room and bathroom, offering privacy and a sense of normalcy. The living room, kitchen, and other communal spaces create a home-like atmosphere, allowing the girls to relax and feel at ease.

Education is a critical component of the recovery process. The creative arts building on campus offers opportunities for the girls to continue their education with the help of a certified

school. Personalized programs are developed to meet the goals of each girl. The building also includes spaces for dance therapy, art therapy, and other creative outlets that help the girls express themselves and heal.

At the heart of the campus is a serene chapel with a peaceful view of the countryside. This tranquil setting is designed to provide a place for spiritual healing when the girls are ready for it. Our hope is that every girl who comes to Safe Harbor will experience not only physical and emotional healing but also spiritual renewal.



Our work is made possible by the collective efforts of our supporters. If you've been praying for Safe Harbor or Eight Days of Hope, thank you. Your prayers are invaluable. If you've volunteered your time and skills, we couldn't do this without you. And if you've made a financial donation to Eight Days of Hope or Safe Harbor, your generosity has directly contributed to making this campus a reality.

We love you and appreciate your support. We hope to see you on a future trip with Eight Days of Hope, continuing this vital work together. Let's keep offering freedom and hope to those who have been held captive. Thank you for being a part of this mission. ■

Strengthening Our Marriage Through God's Covenant

At first glance, many would make assumptions about us, but it's unlikely anyone would guess we're newlyweds. Yet it's true—we've only been married for two months!

As seniors, we thought we had learned everything we needed about having a strong relationship with God. After all, we had been blessed to understand the tenets of faith through our church leadership. Between us, we've been members of TSC for 27 years (Savines) and 18 years (Louise), respectively. We assumed that if we knew how to relate to God, we would naturally know how to relate to each



other. But we soon realized that while a relationship with God is the foundation of marriage, there are other building blocks essential for a God-honoring union.

Although we had been dating for two years and were previously married many years ago, we still enrolled in the required premarital classes. And we are so thankful that we did. In those sessions, we gained a new perspective on marriage. We learned that marriage is not a human concept but a covenant established by God. We were taught to keep Christ at the center of our marriage, to love according to the Bible's definition, and to understand what to expect in marriage. We also learned principles of the covenant, how to communicate effectively, the importance of intimacy, and how to maintain healthy relationships with in-laws and relatives.

Most importantly, we discovered that these lessons aren't just ideas to be learned once and forgotten—they must be continuously practiced. We strive every day to apply what we learned in our premarital class.

It is our hope and prayer that everyone who participates in these classes does so with an open mind and heart, receptive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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Welcome Class of '25 and '26!

The start of the academic year at Summit is always a time of renewed energy and excitement, but this fall, there's an extra buzz in the air. We've just welcomed the largest incoming freshman class in our history, making the arrival day for the Classes of '25 and '26 truly one for the books!

Enthusiasm was palpable as new and returning students began arriving on campus, carrying suitcases and boxes to their dorms. Music played in the background as laughter filled the air, with students and their loved ones mingling around campus. There were plenty of smiles (and a few tears) as families helped their students settle into their new campus homes. Some of our returning students couldn't contain their excitement, jumping out of their cars to reunite with friends they hadn't seen all summer. The joy on their faces made the day even more special.

The fall semester is off to a fantastic start. Worship nights and chapels have quickly become highlights of the week. Students are settling in, starting classes, and diving into both scripture and coursework. The energy of Arrival Day was just the beginning. As the Classes of '25 and '26 embark on their Summit journey, we're confident that their time here will be filled with lifelong friendships and deep spiritual growth.

Welcome to a new chapter, Summit family! Here's to a fantastic year ahead!



TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of "The Cross and the Switchblade." It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

CONTACT

212.541.6300
info@tsc.nyc

CHURCH LOCATION

237 West 51st Street
Between Broadway & 8th Avenue

OUR SERVICES

Sunday | 10AM & 1PM
In Person and Online

Tuesdays | 7PM
In Person

Wednesday | 7 pm
Worldwide Prayer Meeting
at TSC Summit Campus
In Person and Online

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Looking Back, Moving Forward

As we look back on stories of God moving through our lives, we can move forward with encouragement and anticipation of what He will do next.

by Anna Ivanishchuk

SHERI'S STORY

Sheri, an online congregant of TSC, tunes in from Idaho. Though she was born again during the Jesus movement, her walk with Christ truly deepened when she answered the Lord's call to spend time with Him each morning.

Over two years ago, Sheri began leading a Connect Group to help others start their days with Jesus as well. Group members are encouraged to study the devotional on their own each morning. Once a week, they come together to share insights and pray. Initially, the prayer meeting was added because they felt the need for more prayer time, but it has since grown into a two-hour session of prayer and fasting. Sheri began with the "God is Faithful" devotional and has since completed three or four others. Some group members have been with her since the beginning, while each session also welcomes newcomers.

During the week of the Pastor's conference, Fire in Our Bones, this summer, both current and former members of the Connect Group gathered to meet in person. Some attended the conference, while others joined for the weekend and Sunday service. They took a boat ride on the Hudson, with one member who couldn't attend generously covering the cost for those who needed it. Later, they enjoyed a meal of soul food in Harlem, where one of the group members lives, capping off a wonderful weekend together.

To read more stories or to submit your testimony, check out **tsc.nyc/stories**.

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