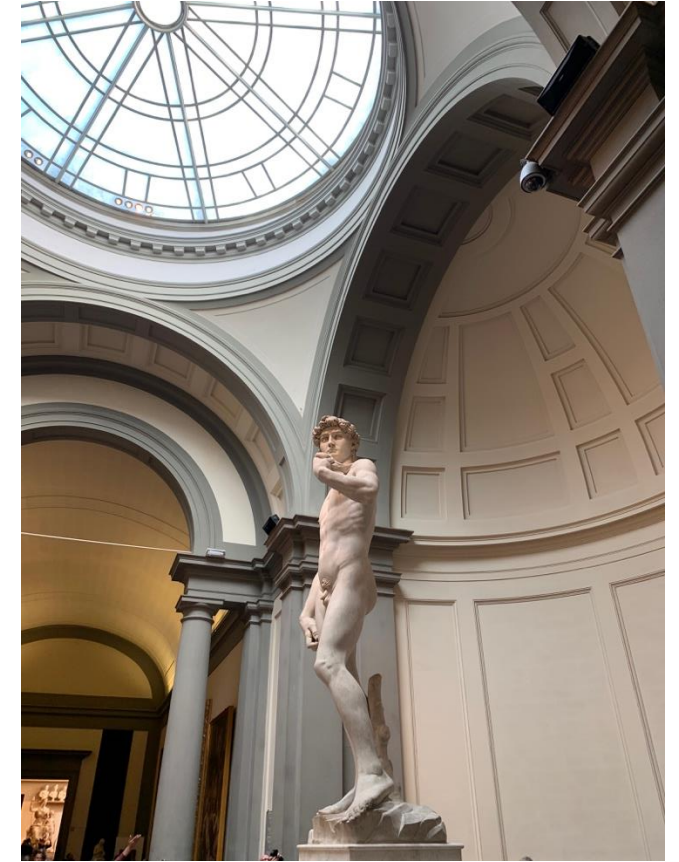
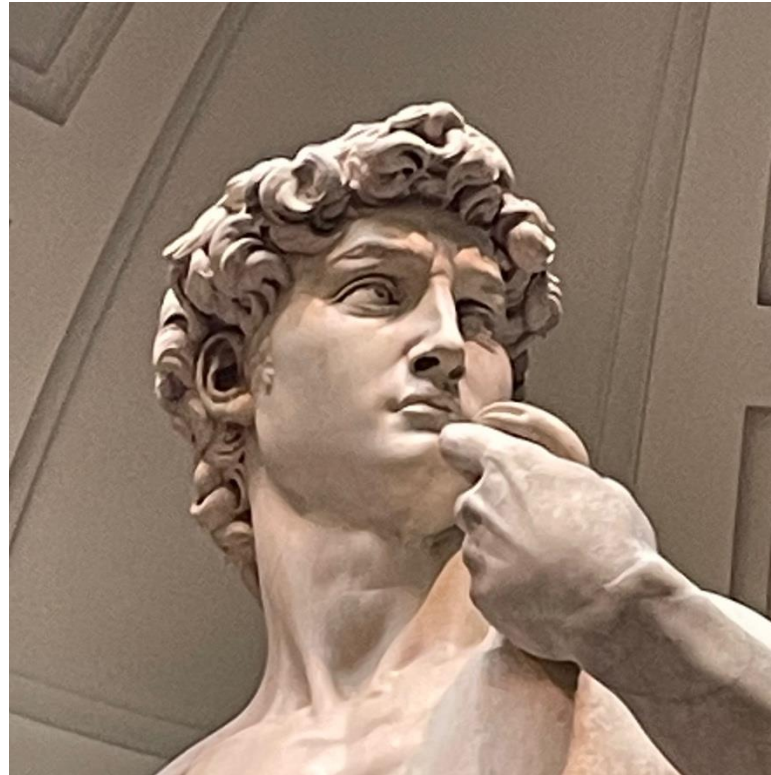


Goals

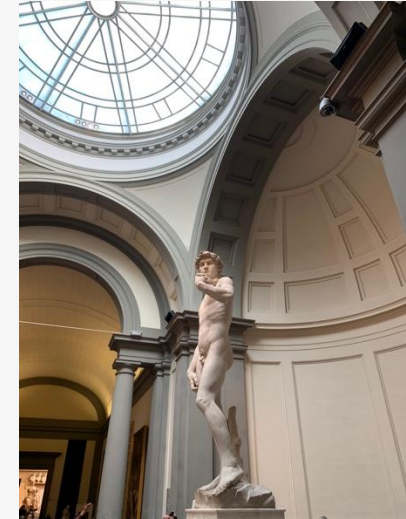
- Prepare for our trip to Florence
- Introduce you to some important art we will see
- Suggest what this art says about hope
- Suggest what this means for preaching



***To Hope is to Choose:
Homiletic Lessons from the David***

To hope is to choose.

“This means at least two things. The most obvious one is that the world changes when we change. The pilgrimage has been made for this reason. It is a choice. Crossing the Holy Door means entering new time.” –Pope Leo XIV



To Hope is to Choose

“A second, deeper meaning is that to hope is to choose, because those who do not choose despair. One of the most common consequences of spiritual sadness, that is, sloth, is not choosing anything. Those who experience it are seized by an inner laziness that is worse than death. Hope, on the other hand, is to choose.” –Pope Leo XIV



What does the David tell us about hope?

We choose hope,

but not conditions for it.

- Agostino Di Duccio chose the marble when he received the commission for a colossus on August 18, 1464.
- The authorities instructed that the colossus be 20 feet tall and carved from 4 blocks of marble, sitting expense and required skill.
- Desiring to make a name for himself by carving the largest statue since the classical period, Di Duccio quarried a stone at Fantiscritti near Carrara. It was said to be the largest stone quarried since the Roman period.



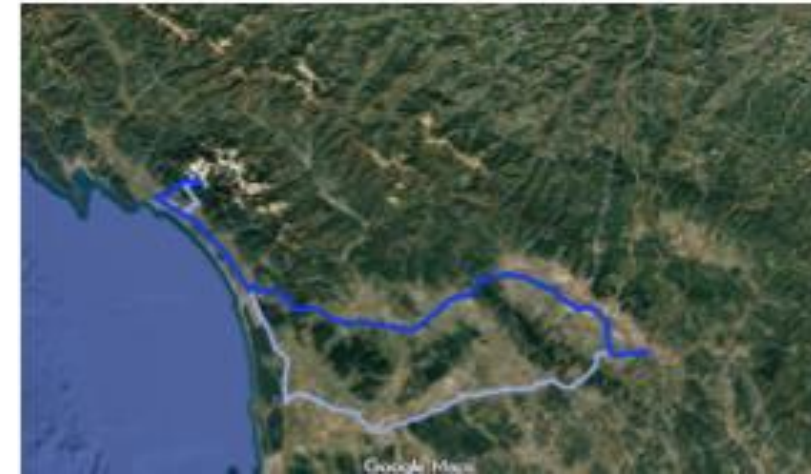
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Google Maps

Miseglia Fantiscritti, 54033 Carrara MS a Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore, Piazza del Duomo, 50122 Firenze FI



What does the David tell us about hope?

We choose hope,

but not conditions for it.

- Agostino Di Duccio instructed a piece of marble to be split from the cave which would be the shape of his vision for the statue. It was described as “tall and thin.”
- The marble chosen had small pits and cavities distributed unevenly, imperfections for which marble from Fantiscritti was known.
- The stone is not uniform in color.



We choose hope, but not the conditions for it.

Giorgio Vassari

“ One Maestro Simone da Fiesole (actually, Agostino di Duccio) had begun a giant and he had managed to work so ill, that he had hacked a hole between the legs and it was altogether misshapen and reduced to ruin.”

Ascanio Condivi

“In order to transport it more conveniently and with less effort, (Agostino di Duccio) had roughed it out right at the quarry, but in such a way that neither he nor anyone else ever had the courage to lay a hand to it to carve a statue, not of that size or even much smaller.”

The block
arrived in
Florence in
December
1466, after a
year long trek
from
Fantiscritti

Because of the expense,
breaking terms of the
contract and extracting one
large stone rather than four
smaller ones and the death
of Donatello, his patron,
Agostino Duccio was relieved
of the commission on
December 30, 1466.

The stone sat behind the
Cathedral for 10 years, until
May 1476, when Antonio
Rossellino was paid a
considerable sum to
continue the project.
However, little seems to
have been accomplished
and when he died in 1478,
the stone again waited in
the storage warehouse of
the Cathedral.

Hope is to Choose

The said Michelangelo began to work and carve the said giant September. 13, 1501 in the morning; although previously, on the 9th, he had given it one or two blows with his hammer to strike off a certain nodum (node or knot) that it had in its breast. But on the said day, the morning of the 13th, he began to work with determination and strength.--Michelangelo's contract with the Opera del Duomo.

On June 8, 1504, thirty-seven years after Agostino di Duccio originally began work, Michelangelo's David was placed in front of the Palazzo della Signoria.

What does the David tell us about preaching hope?

We don't choose the environments in which we preach.

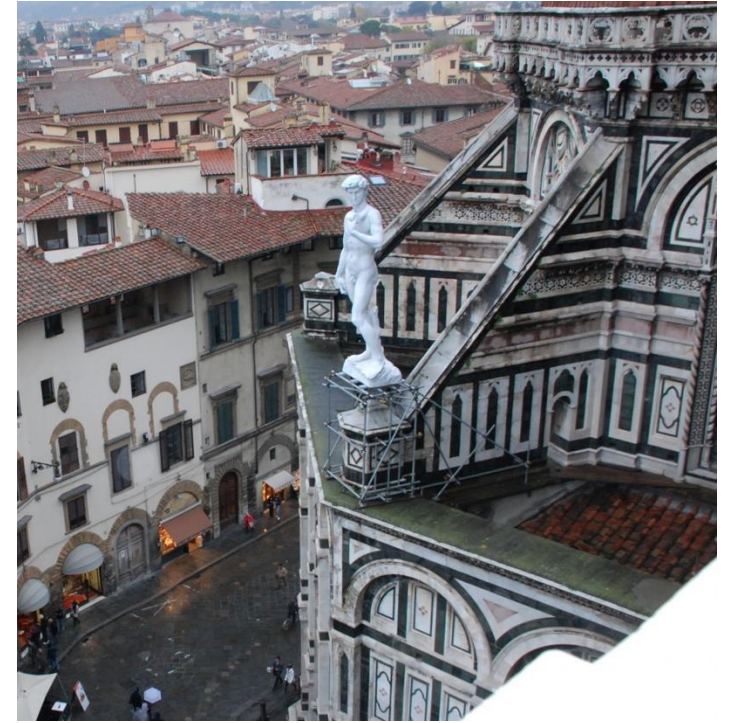
We don't choose the people to whom we preach!

Indeed, the conditions in which we preach are given to us by God!

Hope is steadfast; it is the long vision; it takes its time.

Hope chooses to believe in God's promise despite appearances.





Original idea

Originally, 12 prophets were to be placed around the dome of the Cathedral.

What does the David tell us about hope?

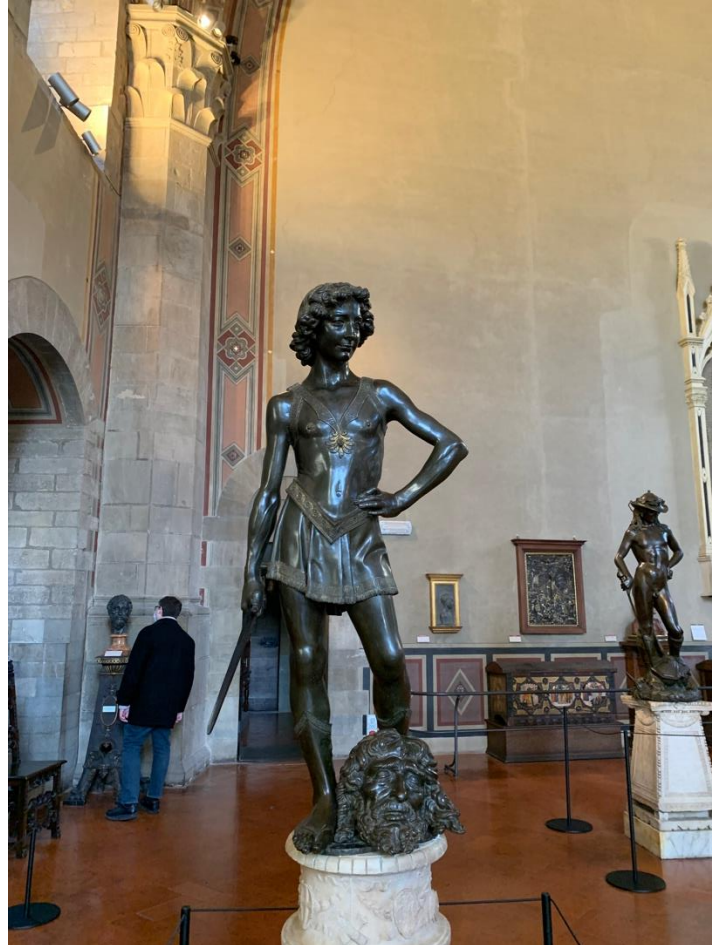
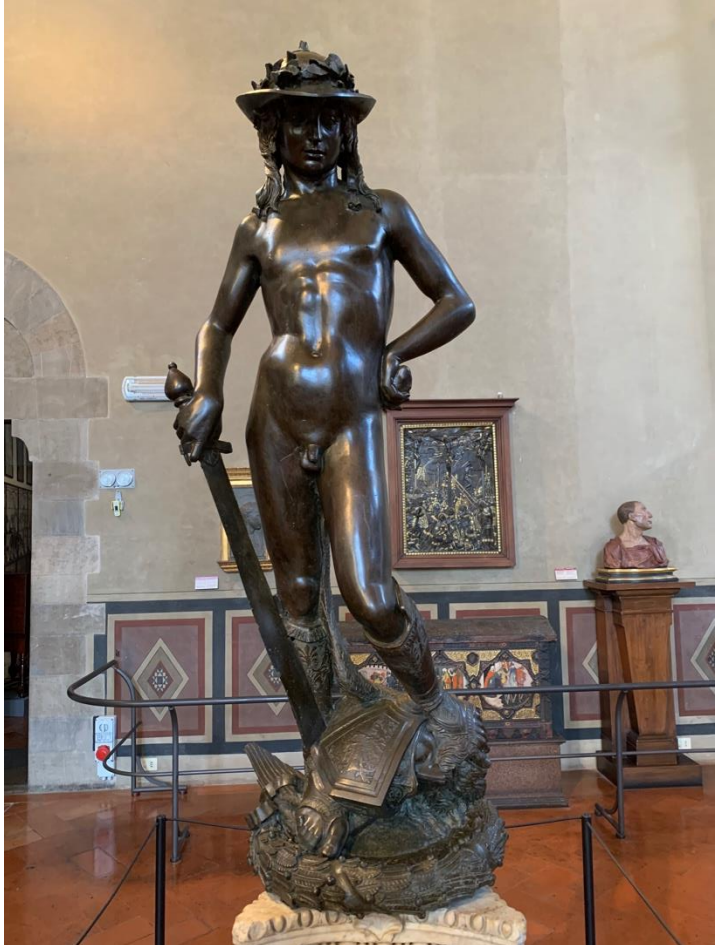
When we choose hope,

we choose to try to see as God sees.

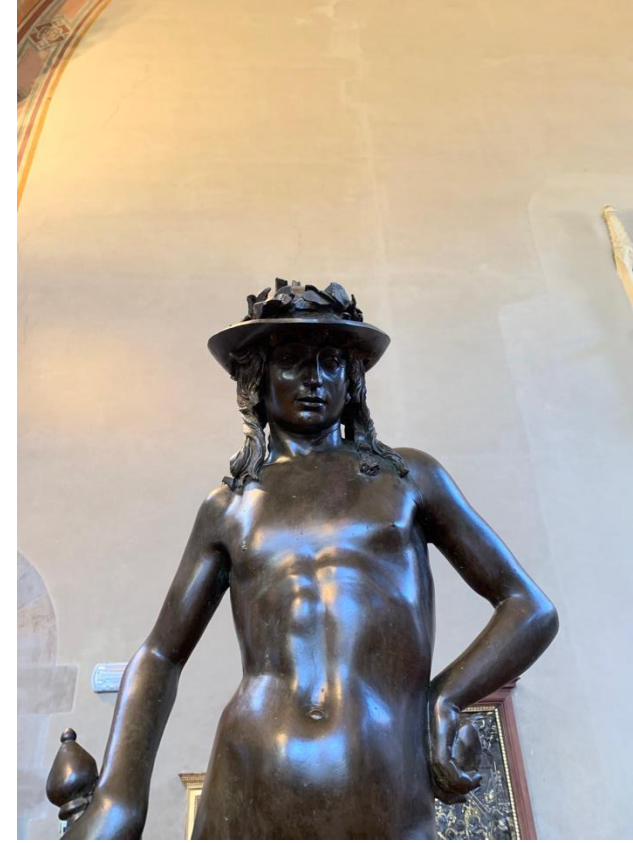
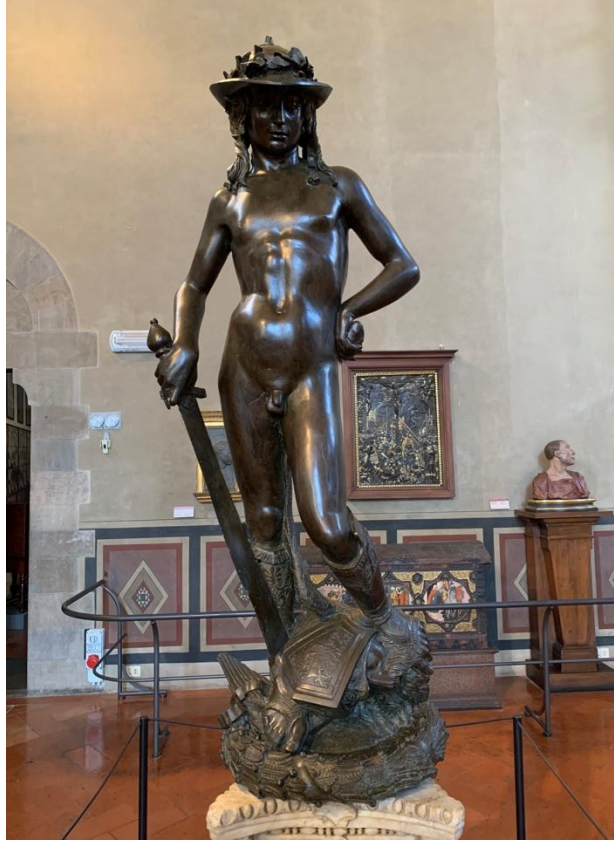
- For the preacher who has stood speechless under David and overcome by its beauty, it serves as a handbook highlighting the importance of preaching hopefully.
- Through his David, Michelangelo proposes a revolutionary way of seeing, which is instructive for preachers.



Davids in Conversation

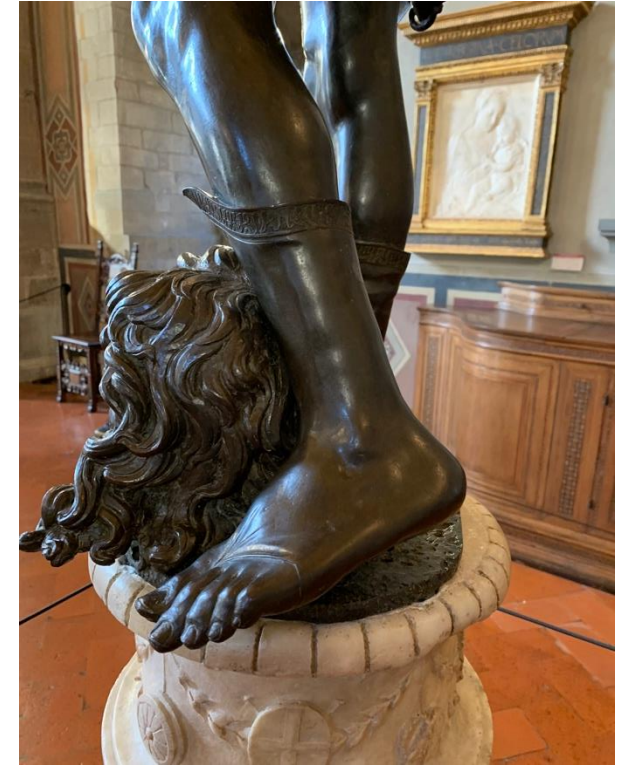


- Michelangelo's sculpture is not the only statue of David in Florence.
- Donato di Niccolò di Betto Bardi, known simply as Donatello, completed his David in the 1440s, some 60 years before Michelangelo.
- Around 1475, Andrea del Verrocchio was commissioned by the Medici to complete a bronze statue of King David.
- Michelangelo knew both statues, which present David as what the Greeks called an ephebe — that is, a youth ready to begin military training. However, neither presents David as having yet begun



Donatello
1386-1466

Donatello's statue holds the fallen Goliath's sword, which is nearly taller than he is, and we are left wondering, "How did this kid manage to pick it up?"



Verrocchio

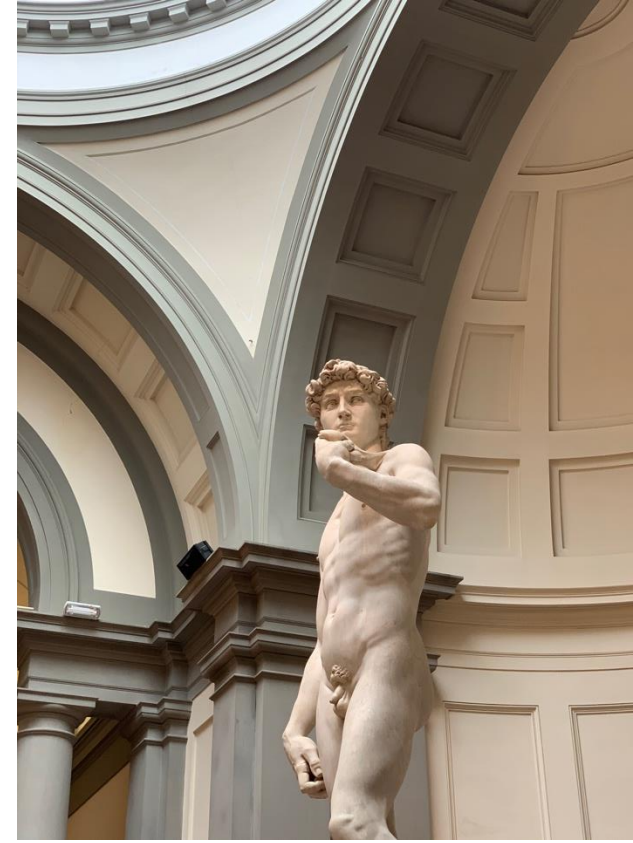
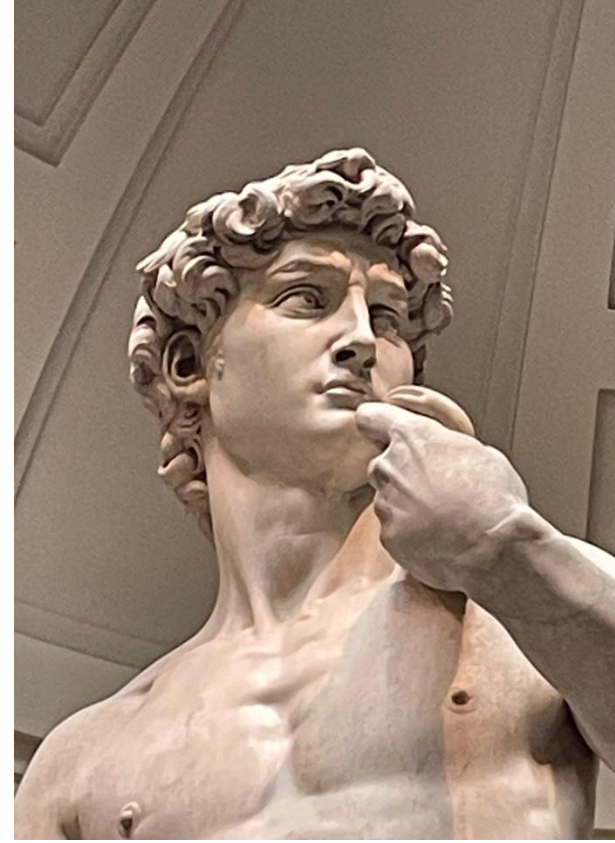
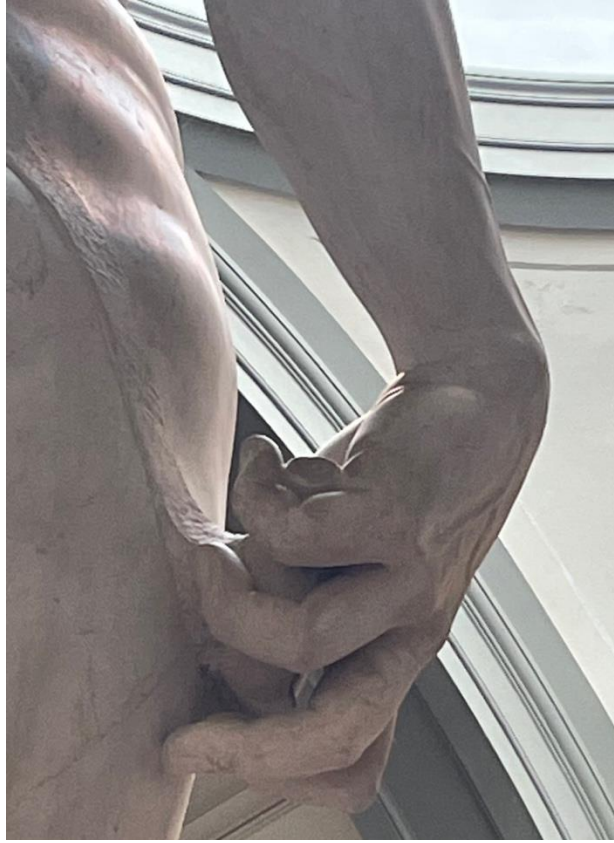
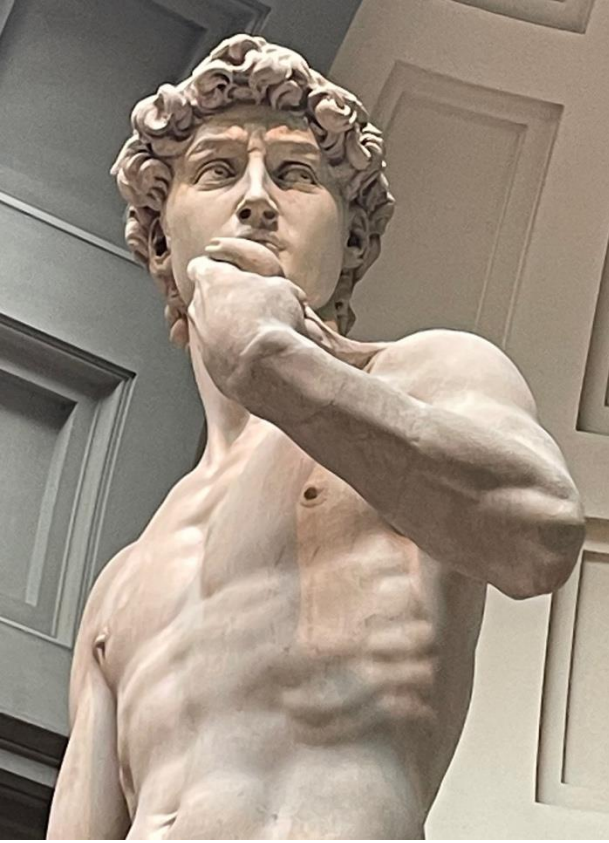
1435-1488

Verrocchio presents David's body as spindly; his ribs even show. His arms are scrawny. His legs are skinny.

Michelangelo's Predecessors

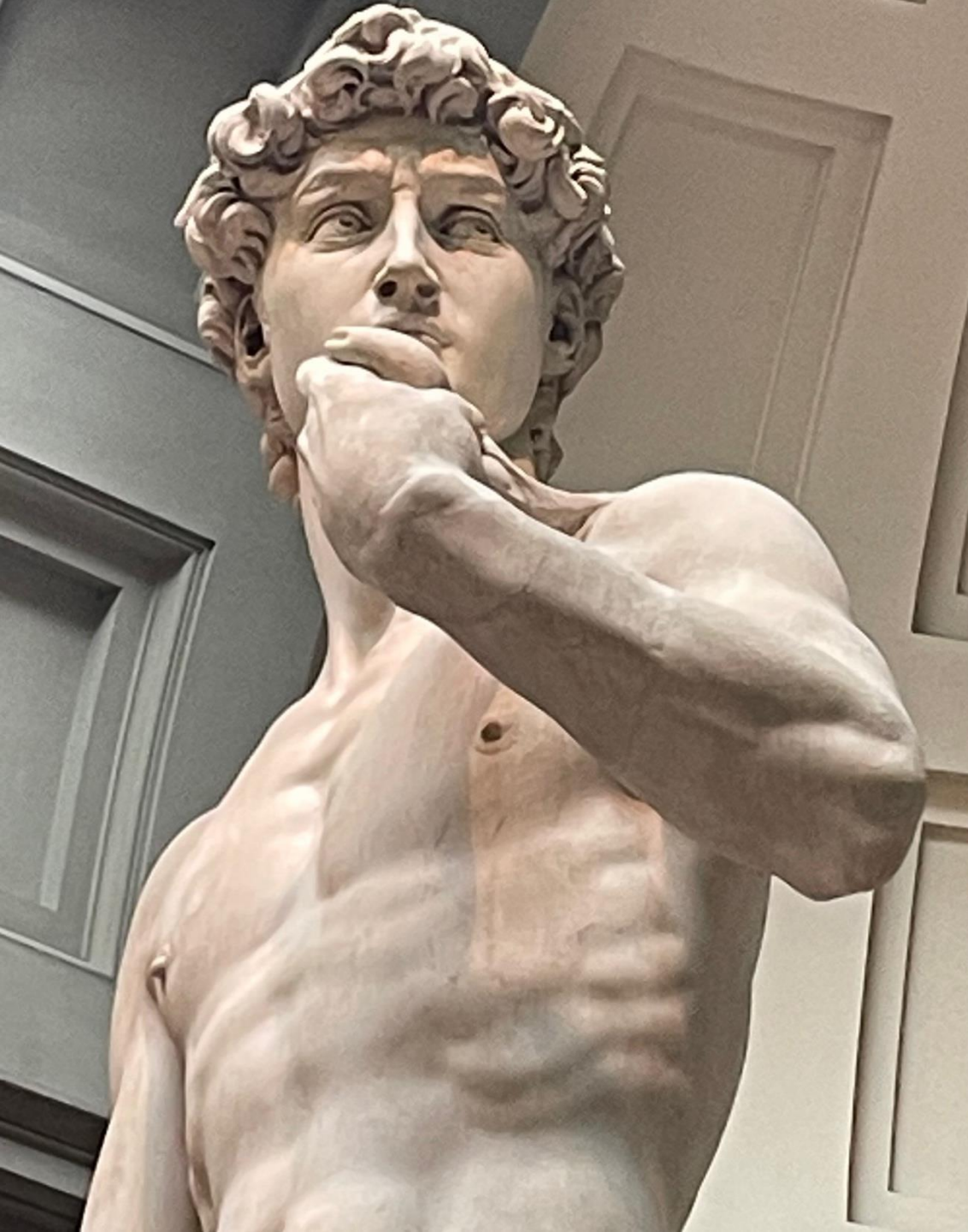


- These portraits are certainly faithful to Scripture. After all, “when Goliath sized David up and saw that he was youthful, ruddy, and handsome in appearance, he began to deride him” (1 Sm 17:42).
- Saul is, indeed, hesitant to allow him to face Goliath because of his lack of military training: “You are only a youth, while he has been a warrior from his youth” (1 Sm 17:33).
- Both artists emphasized David’s youth to declare that despite David’s unprepared body, it was God who saved the people. Neither Donatello nor Verrocchio present David as God saw him. Purposefully, they present David as humans saw him, so as to present God as the unseen hero working through David’s unprepared body.
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To See as God Sees

- Michelangelo does not present David as a boy unprepared for battle, as Saul, his brothers and everyone else in the story saw him. Rather, David is presented as a fit and confident young man. Michelangelo presents David as God saw him.
- David is so confident in the God who saves that he stands completely nude and vulnerable in the face of Goliath. He is as unashamed in his confidence in God as he is in the body he displays.
- Gazing at David's beauty, it is possible to see beyond appearances and to see something of what God saw when Samuel went to the house of Jesse, his father. "God does not see as a mortal, who sees the appearance. The Lord looks into the heart" (1 Sm 16:7), Scripture says.



- Today, especially, preachers are needed who see as God sees.
- Pope Francis credited this way of seeing to Jesus' success as a preacher, since he "looked at people, seeing beyond their weaknesses and failings" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, No. 141).
- Evangelization is served by preachers who look beyond appearances, even appearances of sin, to see the Body of Christ manifest in the congregation, as well as in the bread and in the wine.

What does the David tell us about hope?

When we choose hope,

we choose to try to see as God sees.

- To see as God sees requires us to resist lingering over the ugly consequences of human nature in our preaching and, instead, to describe the best impulses.
- Hopeful Preaching is about shining a light on God's presence, even in our human nature. It is about helping listeners identify this presence in themselves. Yes, sin exists in the world and affects all of us. But it does not have the last word, and it is not even the most important word since God's Son be- came one of us and we are his body.
- Hopeful preaching in an age of polarization describes the beautiful body that God sees, not the ugly one that we so easily recognize.



What does the David tell us about hope?

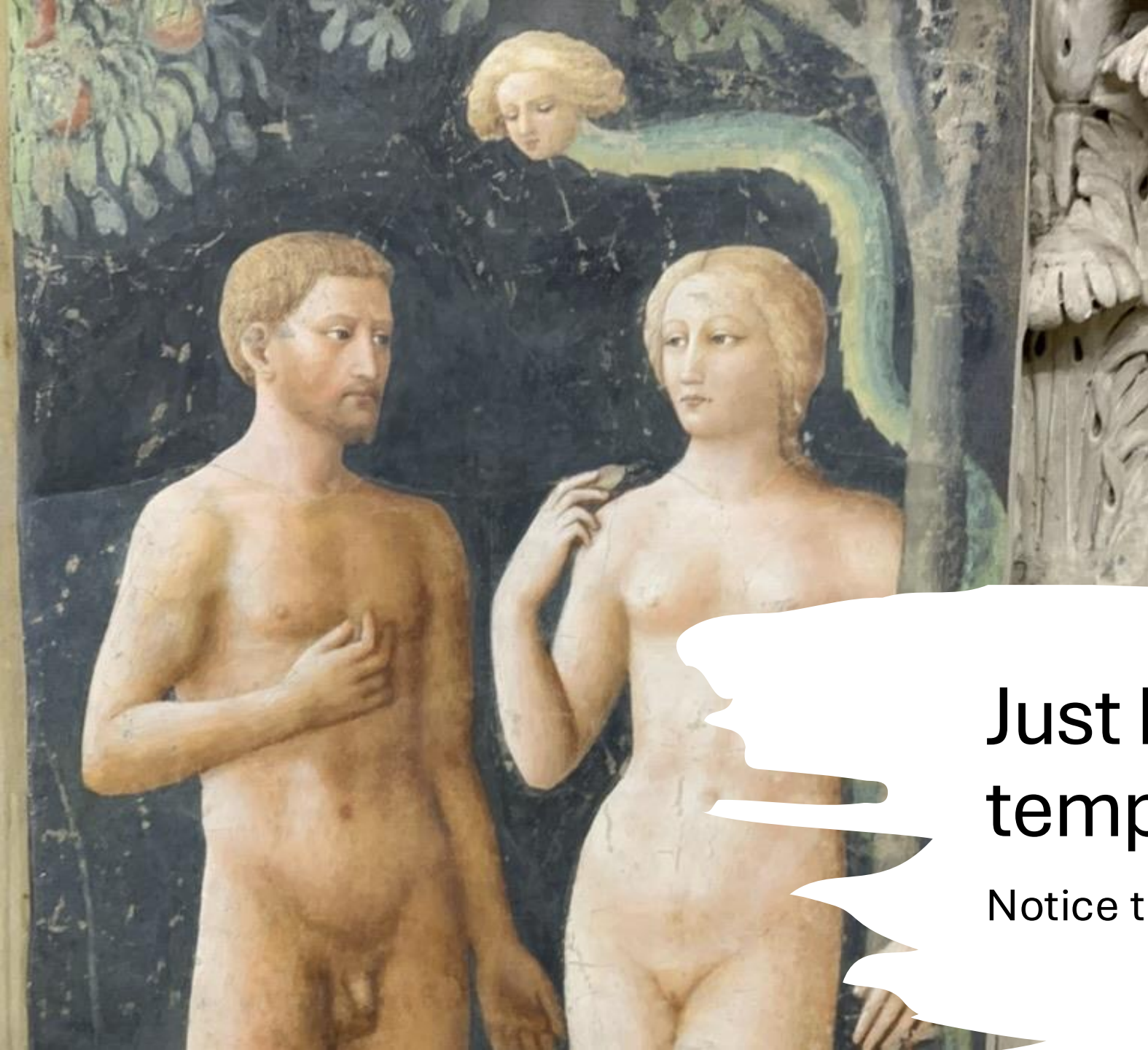
We choose hope, but not the conditions for it.

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The Brancacci Chapel

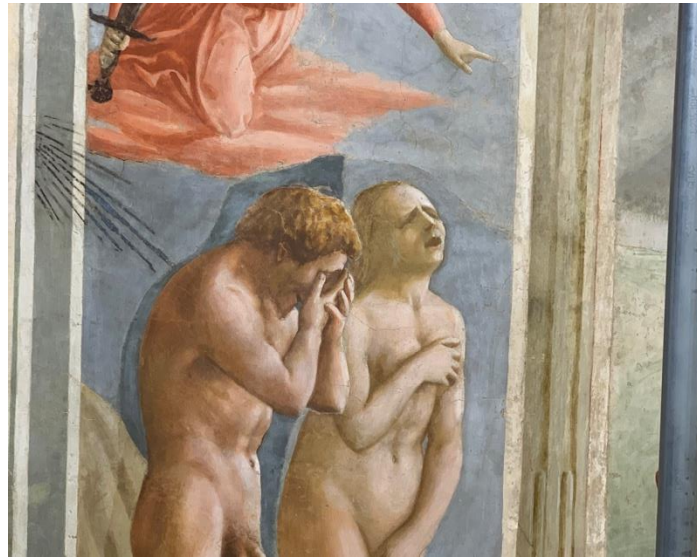
What does it tell us about hope?





Just before the temptation

Notice the bodies of Adam and Eve



Expelled from Eden

What do you notice about their bodies?

Jesus harmonizes



- His gesture cuts across the disputed territory between the tax collector demanding payment to his left and the angry Peter to his right, neutralizing the violently charged space between them
- He points toward the sea where Peter will find a fish with the coin to pay the tax.
- He also points toward the banished Adam and Eve
- Peter and tax collector brought closer, though, still not touching

Peter Preaches

Unlike Christ, Peter does not take the central position (as in the Tribute Money scene).

- The listeners form the familiar arc in front of him, which the viewer completes into a circle. The apparently “empty” central space is explained by the significance of the scene, which lies in the words spoken, rather than their speaker. Since these are not depicted or inscribed, the space is the words. These are both message and messenger
- the listeners are the ground on which the preached words fall and where they may or may not take root. Spiritual transformation here is potential rather than actual.



Peter Baptizes

- The central figure, kneeling as Peter pours water over him, is the spiritual locus. Peter marginalizes himself as the agent, allowing the physical symbol of the water and the spiritual transformation effected in the neophyte to take center stage in a highly physical expression of spiritual rebirth.
- From the neophyte trembling with cold, to the beautiful figure in the water, to Peter's own magisterial presence, flesh is visibly being redeemed.





Curing of the cripple and raising of Tabitha

Curing of Cripple

- On the left Peter tells the cripple reaching out for alms that he has nothing to give him but Christ, and orders him to walk.
- The central space between Peter and the cripple, across which their hands reach, is, like the preaching scene, physically empty, but spiritually full. Peter gives the cripple Christ, and in so doing restores his health.
- The “empty” space here is filled with Christ and pregnant with the miraculous healing about to occur.



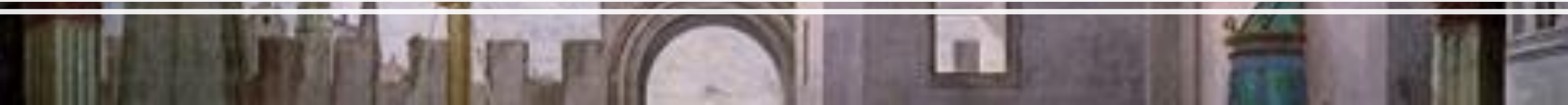
Raising of Tabitha

- The compositional, and theological, structure of the curing scene is mirrored in the resurrection of Tabitha on the right.
- Again, there is an empty but active space between the upright Tabitha, radiant in white and surrounded by amazed onlookers, and Peter, standing outside the loggia.
- The space between them emphasizes that it is not Peter himself but the power of Christ that effects the resurrection.





Notice the Florentines going about their daily life while all these miracles happen around them.

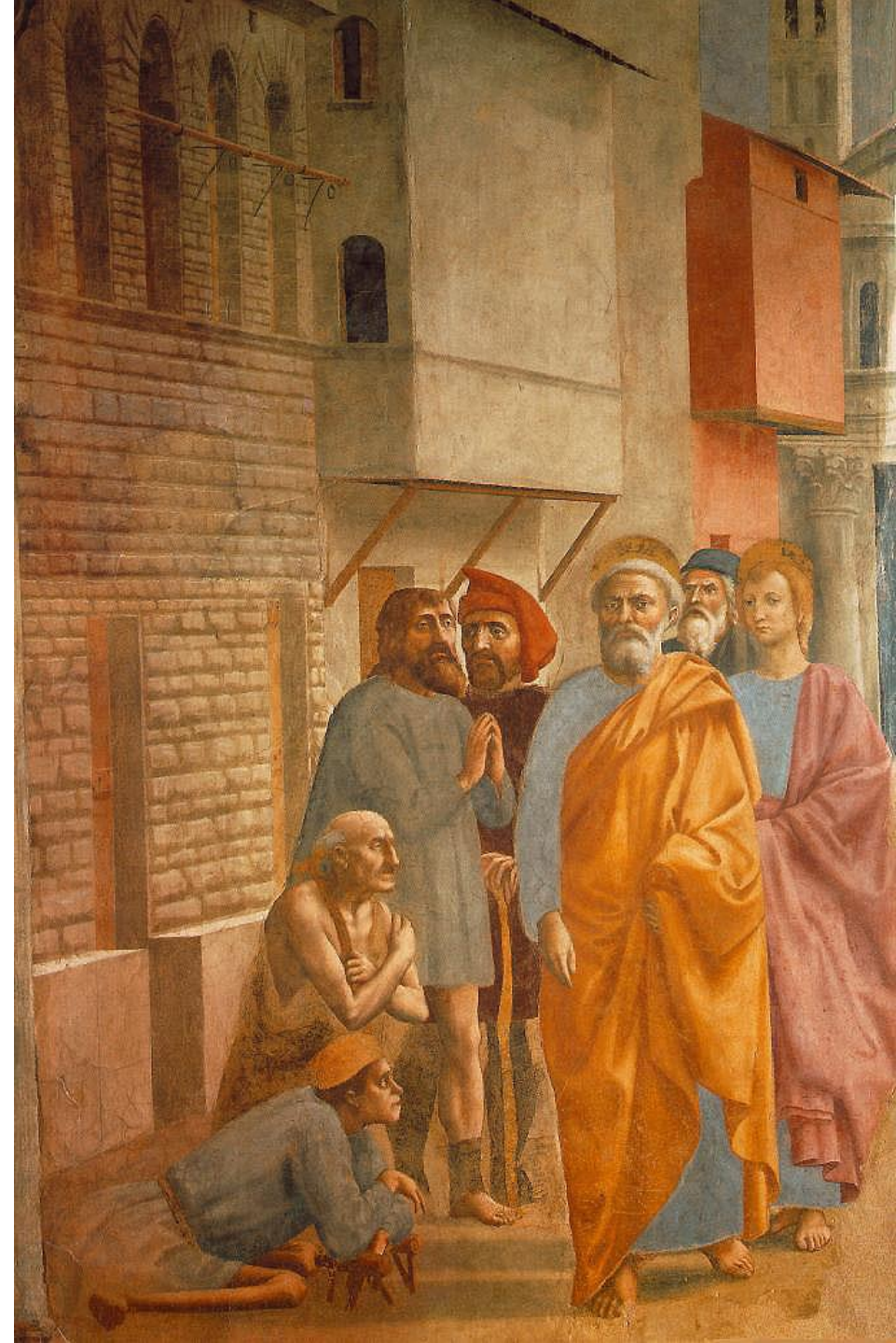


The proper response to Jesus: recognition



Peter heals by his shadow

- There is nothing particularly physical in the curing, the shadow itself is not prominent and Peter makes no gesture. The cripples have seen his redeemed humanity and that is transformative.
- Their eyes, and that of the viewer, are progressively opened, developing from the glazed expression of the cripple on the ground to the clear sight of the standing man, so that they represent three stages of being cured. Their physical change represents a spiritual change as the deformed human being is made whole again.
- The focal point and spiritual center is the gaze of the standing, cured, cripple with his hands in prayer looking at Peter. Touched simply by Peter's shadow he has seen salvation and been healed.



Peter distributing alms and death of Ananias

- Peter stands to the side of a circle of figures and again his physical agency, giving out coins, is downplayed.
- The spiritual activity is the charitable nature of the act, not the physical nature of the coins, and the virtue of charity itself occupies the center of the scene.
- Beneath the hands giving and receiving, the dead body of Ananias who would not give alms freely is a clear contrast to the mother and child receiving charity and, therefore, life in Christ.





Disputation with Simon Magus and the Crucifixion,

- On the right, Nero points angrily at Peter who has been duelling with the magician. In the center an idol lies broken on the floor, horizontally aligned with the resurrected Tabitha above.
- Nero does not comprehend the difference between the false magic of Simon Magus and the true miracles of Peter. This should be a moment of conversion, but in Nero that possibility is as dead as the idol is broken.

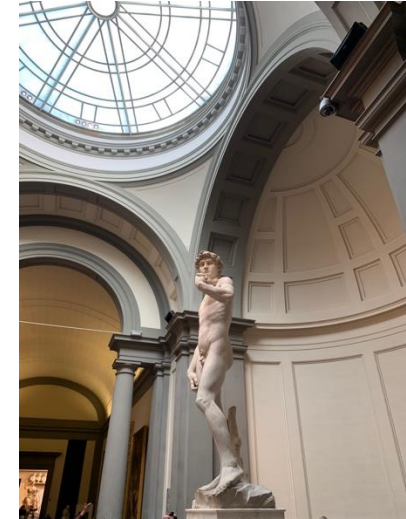
Peter Freed from Prison

- an angel leads Peter out of prison while the guard sleeps, reminding the viewer that, just as the angel easily enters the prison, rendering its physicality meaningless, so the physical death of the disciple is not the final thing it seems.



To hope is to choose.

“This means at least two things. The most obvious one is that the world changes when we change. The pilgrimage has been made for this reason. It is a choice. Crossing the Holy Door means entering new time.” –Pope Leo XIV



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