

Daily View

“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’” Hebrews 3:13

June 6, 2020



2015, Waimea Bay, near Haleiwa, North Shore, Hawaii*

Photography: A Matter of Perspective

“...having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints...” *Ephesians 1:18*

For the last 20 years, Christie and I have had the special privilege of photographing many of the children, families, and weddings of our spiritual family here at Folsom. We were flattered to be asked to do that, and we thoroughly enjoyed it.

It also gave me a sense of security. I think I might have said to myself, at one time or another (and secretly) “if they don’t like my preaching, maybe they’ll keep me around to take pictures.” I was kidding... or *was* I? We got older and decided a few years ago to “retire” from that — and, I’m still here! We still do a few for friends.

A famous photographer once said, when asked how one becomes a better photographer, “stand in front of more interesting things.” We had the opportunity to stand in front of a lot of interesting people and things. We gained insights into other cultures, by documenting their weddings. — I’ll talk about that at another time.

My love for photography goes back to 1970, while Christie and I were still in Hawaii. I convinced Christie to let me buy a camera that cost \$70. That doesn’t sound like much, but our total household income was about \$500, after taxes, and rent was \$215 per month. So, \$70 was a lot of money. But, Christie was nice enough to let me pursue my dream even though we had to eat a lot of canned soup and Hamburger Helper.

When we got back from Hawaii, I was able to attend the Academy of Art in San Francisco, using GI Bill money to finance it. Unfortunately, after the first year, gas became scarce and prices skyrocketed, so I could no longer afford the two hour commute. However my friend, Mike Zugnoni, loved photography, too, so we would wander around the San Joaquin Valley, looking for interesting things to stand in front of. It was fun and educational.

One thing you learn quickly: the camera doesn’t lie. When you look at a photo you are viewing reality, at least within the

scope of the frame. There is no “your truth,” or “my truth” in photography (that only happens in Photoshop).

In the last couple of weeks, a series of moving photographs (a “video”) records reality and is likely to cost a Minneapolis police officer the rest of his life in jail — or worse — and rightly so. Those moving pictures don’t lie. They are real. (Interestingly, a lot of people are suddenly pro-death penalty right now).

What you see in a photograph depends first on where the photographer was standing. To get the surfing photo,* I had to crawl through some bushes and climb some rocks. If I had been somewhere else, the photo would be different — maybe better, maybe not. It’s a matter of perspective. Likewise, while in Paris, I took over 100 photos of the Eiffel Tower. Many of them look very different from the others.

Perspective is important. For those of us who are Bible students, our perspective is defined and always subject to adjustment by what we read and study. Our “*ah ha*” turns into real-life change in our perspective and practice. If it doesn’t, then we are just students, not Christians. Ephesians 1:18 speaks about “the eyes of our hearts,” a rather strange expression until you realize that what our eyes actually “see” depends on our point of view, our worldview, our perspective. There are a lot of other passages that speak to that. Check out Colossians 3:2, I Corinthians 15:58 and II Corinthians 4:18, for example.

Every photographer knows that if he wants to take better pictures he needs to stand in front of something more interesting. But he also knows that *where* he stands will make a big difference in how it is perceived. Likewise, mature Christians are always reevaluating where they stand, making sure it is in the light of God’s word.

*FYI – Unfortunately, to send these essays through email requires that I reduce the file size which degrades the quality of the photograph.