

“...Having the eyes of your heart enlightened...” *Ephesians 1:18*

## Welcome Visitors!

You are our honored guests and we are pleased that you have chosen to visit us today. Our goal is to do everything according to God's word, including respecting its silence. This is a church of Christ; we are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church and we have no earthly "headquarters." The five elders oversee this work and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily aimed at our own members, as we examine Scripture and seek to be built up in our faith in Christ. If you don't understand something, please do not hesitate to ask one of the elders. We welcome and appreciate your comments and questions on any issue and especially if you see or hear anything that you feel does not correspond to God's word. We are here to serve; please help us do that.

***Please fill out a visitor's card and put it in the collection plate. Thank You***

### Schedule

#### The Lord's Day

9:30 – Classes

Auditorium: Deuteronomy

Room 13/14: Ruth

10:30 – Assembly

Speaking today: Scott Gardner

2 PM Class at the Building

Room 13/14

Minor Prophets

5 PM (building)

"Gospel Preaching in the Early Church"

Weekly Young Adults Class

5 PM @ the Posey's

Tuesday, 10 AM

Resumes on January 8th

Wednesday, 7 PM

Auditorium: Deuteronomy

Room 13/14: Ruth

Singing at the Folsom Care Center

3rd Sunday each month at 3:15 PM (see Grant Mulligan)

Men's Saturday Morning Meeting

7 AM, second Saturday of the month (see Tyler Wade)

### Information

#### Children's Classes

We have classes for children from 18 months and up. Please see the map in the hallway or ask any of the members which room is appropriate for you and/or your child. There are several Bible studies in progress on Sunday afternoon and evening. Check with David Posey if you have questions.

#### Restrooms

There are two sets of restrooms: one off the first hallway to the right of the lobby and another at the end of the first hallway to the left. Ask anyone and they'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

#### For Small Children

There is a special room for nursing mothers and a separate "cry room" at the rear of the auditorium. You enter them from the first hallway to the right, across from the restrooms.

#### Online

You can find copies of class material and archives of previous editions of the View and listen to sermons online at [www.folsomchurch.com](http://www.folsomchurch.com). Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/folsomchurch>

#### View & Junior View

Be sure to pick up a copy of the View and Junior View; both are sent out weekly, plus there are some hard copies printed on Sundays.

### This Year's Forecast

REPUTATIONS will continue to be made by many acts and be lost by one. GO-GIVERS will continue to be the best go-getters. The EXTRA MILE will have no traffic jams. PERFORMANCE will continue to be more important than promises. ENTHUSIASM will be as contagious as ever. KNOW-HOW will surpass guess-how. TRUTH will outgun falsehood. A church will only be as strong as the FAMILIES that populate it. Christians will value AUTHENTICITY more than personality and INTEGRITY more than talent. And, if Christ does not return in 2019, he will still be on his heavenly throne come 2020 with "all authority in heaven and in earth."

# "Gaslighting"

BY DAVID POSEY

No one likes to be manipulated, once they realize what has happened to them. To *manipulate*, when referring to one-on-one relationships, means to influence using clever, sly or even unscrupulous means. A benign example is when it's used as a device in movies or television programs to attempt to pull your heartstrings with the use of banal, "tear-jerking" scenes. Some eat that stuff up; others say, "wait, are they trying to get me to *feel* something here?"

It is much worse, of course, when a young man tries to manipulate a girl to gain control over her for sexual reasons. Or, when a woman says to a man, "if you *really* loved me, you would do \_\_\_\_\_ for me." Politicians do it with promises they don't intend to keep; preachers do it with platitudes — urging you to do something that they won't do, even while warning of the consequences. And we are all aware of the many cases of preachers on TV manipulating audiences for money.

Manipulation is a way to control others. The Jews tried to manipulate Jesus on many occasions. They tried to trap him into saying something that would discredit him. Here are some famous manipulative questions:

- "In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? (Matthew 22:23-28)
- "What is the greatest commandment in the Law?" (Matthew 22:36)
- "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29)
- "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" (Luke 5:30)
- "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders?" (Matthew 15:2)
- Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" (Matthew 22:17)

Of course, these tactics failed because Jesus knew what they were doing. But many people are caught off guard and become victims of this tactic. Those who are trusting by nature are especially vulnerable and are victimized by control freaks, charlatans and shady politicians (not all politicians are in politics, by the way).

A particularly nefarious form of manipulation is called "gaslighting." Gaslighting is a form of psychological abuse in which false information is presented to the victim, *making them doubt their own memory, perception and, quite often, their sanity*. In psychology, gaslighting is defined as "an increasing frequency of systematically withholding factual information from, and/or providing false information to, the victim, having the gradual effect of making

them anxious, confused, and less able to trust their own memory and perception."

The term is traced back to a 1939 play that became a 1944 movie, "Gas Light," starring Charles Boyer and Ingrid Bergman who play a married couple, Paula and Gregory. The abusive husband Gregory manipulates Paula to make her feel as if she has gone mad. He leads her to believe she's stealing things without realizing it and hearing noises that aren't really there. Paula begins to question her reality, and sanity.

Gregory has manipulated Paula from the beginning, including wooing her and marrying her, all in an effort to cover up a murder of one of her relatives that he committed before they were married. The original title stems from Gregory's dimming of the gas lights in the attic of the house where he was searching for the murder victim's jewels. That caused the lights in the house to flicker. Paula notices the dimming lights and mentions it to Gregory who insists that she merely *imagined* it.

That's the classic example of gaslighting: denying that something happened, then accusing the victim of "imagining things." This is a relationship nightmare and extremely dangerous. A man or woman who practices this takes "control freak" to a completely new and evil level.

If you suspect you are being manipulated in this way, don't hesitate to talk to someone about it. Don't wait. Remember that the goal of the perpetrator is to get the victim to think *they* are the deluded ones, that whatever is happening is *their* fault, or "just their imagination."

Unfortunately, this ploy has been used for centuries by leaders in churches. Undoubtedly, it is a device deployed in the disgusting perversions that have been uncovered lately in the Catholic Church. It is especially effective when the victim is already under the control and influence of someone who wants to take advantage of them. And those who are most trusting are most vulnerable.

Perhaps the Bible is speaking of a man like this when the writer of Proverbs says,

A worthless person, a wicked man, goes about with crooked speech, winks with his eyes, signals with his feet, points with his finger, with perverted heart devises evil, continually sowing discord... *Proverbs 6:12-14*

Proverbs also warns us to "keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." (4:23). Be very careful who you let into your life; be careful who you choose to confide in, who you share your deepest secrets with.

And above all, *entrust your heart to God*.

"Those who are trusting by nature are especially vulnerable and are victimized by control freaks, charlatans and shady politicians (not all politicians are in politics, by the way)."

# THE CULTURE COLUMN *(from Culture Translator)*

## 2018: A Year in Review

Pop culture may not imitate life, but it certainly reveals it. If you want to know what our society thinks about sex, race, gender, politics, violence, or relationships, look at pop culture. The movies, songs, advertisements, movements, social media apps, and video games function like a mirror into our collective souls, revealing us to ourselves. And while pop culture is made by human beings, it in a very special way makes us into its own image. If true, 2018 reminds us that as a society, we're a strange mix of hope and anxiety, tolerance and bigotry, empowerment and slavery. Here's our list of the top 10 cultural moments from the past year *[I trimmed the list to 7 due to space, dp]*. As you read through them, ask yourself and your teen what each one says about the health or toxicity of our culture. How should Christ-followers engage, join, transform, or redeem these cultural artifacts as we seek to live out our faith in a consumer society?

**1. This is America:** Donald Glover, aka Childish Gambino, released a disturbing music video in May that became an overnight cultural phenomenon. The song and the video especially are a social commentary on racism, violence, and entertainment as a form of escapism. In the video, Gambino embodies his understanding of America, personifying a violent culture that uses entertainment as an opiate for the masses. Beyond the hidden meanings and symbolism, the song expresses a millennial mindset that demands social responsibility." Art forces us to talk about taboo subjects we'd often just rather ignore, and although the video is shocking and violent, it does represent a version of normalcy that many people experience daily in our country. What was Glover trying to communicate? What was convicting about the video? What does the video say about the state of race relations and violence in America? Is it accurate?

**2. 13 Reasons Why 2:** Also in May, Netflix released season two of the controversial hit teen show about bullying, sexual assault, and suicide. Several studies found that teens and adults alike felt the show helped them understand and talk about suicide in helpful ways while many teens believed the graphic nature of the show was necessary to depict just how painful suicide is. Do you agree? Did you allow your teen to watch it? If so, what critical conversations did you have this year because of the show that you may not have had if it wasn't produced?

**3. Fortnite:** Far and away the biggest game of the year, Fortnite became a social sensation in February topping 3.4 million concurrent players. The game really took off when Drake jumped on a Twitch stream to face off against Ninja. Fortnite made its iPhone debut in April and the game became a new social media platform in the process. By July the game had made over \$1 billion

through its 125 million users. As we mentioned last week, Fortnite became Gen Z's "third space," their main place to hang out between work and school.

**4. Black Panther:** Less than a month after its release, Marvel's latest hit topped the \$1 billion mark at the box office. But what made the movie impactful wasn't the revenue it generated, but the story it told. In a major plot twist, the movie's main characters were powerful Africans who represent "the most intelligent and powerful country in the world." For the first time in their lives, many young minority children saw a representation of themselves on screen. And whether that public representation is a fictional character or the President, when you see someone who looks like you achieving incredible things, it fosters the belief that you can achieve great things too! The movie started a wonderful cultural conversation about the impact Africans and African-Americans have had on the continual development of culture, the arts, and civilization.

**5. Suicide:** Mark Salling, Avicii, Anthony Bourdain, and Kate Spade highlighted a growing list of celebrity suicides in 2018. As heartbreaking as it is, use these stories to start a conversation with your kids about depression, anxiety, hopelessness, and suicide.

**6. Parkland Shooting:** In February a gunman opened fire at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School killing 17 students and staff members. The school shooting was just another in a long line of public shootings that led to the March For Our Lives protest and mass student protests that led to thousands of teens walking out of class to challenge gun violence. *[Talk to your kids about the real problems — gratuitous violence in movies and video games; mental health issues; lack of socialization of some kids, lack of a moral center, etc. dp]*

**7. The Fall of Facebook:** The one-time invincible, social media giant now has 4 billion less monthly visitors than it had back in 2016 due to a growing distrust in Facebook's privacy policies, growing political discord on the platform, and the flight of Gen Z to other, more boutique style social apps. Ask your teen if they are still on Facebook or if they too have abandoned the declining social media empire.

