

*"...having the eyes of your heart enlightened..." Ephesians 1:18*

**VBS this week. No Bible classes on Sunday and Wednesday except children's 5th grade and down & the young mens' training class. All others will meet in the auditorium.**

## 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 AM – Classes

**Auditorium: How Jesus Teaches Us (The Gospel of Mark)**

**No ladies training class today: meet in the auditorium.**

**Young mens' training class will meet as usual.**

10:30 AM– Assembly

Speaking today: David Posey

*Ecclesiastes: What a Life!*

2 PM class at the Building

Room 13/14

**Minor Prophets**

5 PM class at the building

**Fruit of the Spirit**

**Weekly Young Adults Class**

**5 PM at the Posey's**

**{Tuesday Class}**

*This class will resume in the fall*

**Wednesday, 7 PM**

**No classes: everyone will meet in the auditorium**

**No ladies training class today: meet in the auditorium.**

**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 and available in the foyer.

## Disclaimer

*The opinions, interpretations and views that appear in the View are those of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the view of the elders or other members of the church of Christ at Folsom.*

# Offending Others

BY DAVID POSEY

“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?”  
And they took *offense* at him.”

*Mark 6:3*

Jesus offended people, and was crucified. Stephen offended people, and was stoned to death. Paul offended people and suffered all kinds of abuse because of it (see II Cor. 11:23-29). None of these men offended people to be offensive. People were offended because these men were exposing their sins and their hypocrisy.

In a prophecy about the Christ, Isaiah says, “And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem” (Isaiah 8:14).

In our classes, whenever the discussion turns to suffering, we talk about how we don’t suffer like first century Christians did. I have often said that there is an advantage to suffering for Christ, and many agree with that sentiment. After all, if you suffer *physically* for the cause of Christ, there is a kind of affirmation that you were truly a disciple of Christ. When we quote I Peter 4:16 — “Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name” — there’s a hint of nostalgia in our voice. Well, that dream-like ache to suffer for Christ may become a reality before long. The gospel seems to be getting more offensive to more Americans as time goes on. And that means, we are likely to offend others if we stand up for it.

Before we go too far down this road, let me clarify what I mean by “offending others.” I do *not* mean carrying offensive signs, yelling at people, putting our fingers in their chests or making fun of them. That’s not the way Jesus offended people. We need to go to school with Jesus to learn how to do it right. But one thing’s for sure: Christians today are being called on to take the baton from those who suffered in the past and speak up when the culture wages moral war on our families and friends.

And a war it is. Today, we live in a culture where certain topics have been declared “off the table” by the liberal ruling class. The LGBTQ movement is a glaring example of this. I go into more detail on page 3, but note this:

“...the genius of ‘LGBTQ’ politics — and the principal reason for its speedy success — is that its branding has shielded it from criticism, mainly by convincing critics to stay silent.”

“*Convincing critics to stay silent.*” This movement has been wildly successful, even though most people in America still identify themselves as “Christian.” True Christians cannot possibly endorse homosexuality or any of the LGBTQ movement goals. But...the “genius” of their movement is that they have made anything that *sounds* like offending gay people off limits.

How did they get by with that? One way they have accomplished this is to declare themselves “victims” and then assert that you can never say anything that might offend victims. Have homosexuals been physically targeted in the past? Yes, and no one denies it. But today, gay people cannot claim to be a victim of physical abuse any more than a Christian can claim to be a victim.

But note this about the culture of victimhood: they want to extend the victimhood net as far and as wide as possible so they can continue to benefit from their status as victims. Since true Christians refuse to play the “victim” card, they are fair game — and there are plenty of people in our society who relish offending Christians.

Regardless of what we may suffer because of it, we cannot afford to keep silent about sin. And sin is sin, regardless of who is committing it. Homosexuality is a sin, just as torturing a gay person is sin. But heterosexual couples living together outside of marriage is also a sin, just as serious as homosexuality. Every divorce is a sin committed by at least one of the parties; and that is just as serious as the sin of homosexuality.

The effort of the gay pride movement is to normalize homosexuality. But these sins can never be normalized in the mind of a Christian; these sins are condemning people to an eternal hell (I Cor. 6:9-10). Undoubtedly, there are people in our culture who do not know that. If we do not speak out, perhaps they never will. But if you do, you will suffer for it. You can count on being ostracized, criticized, and verbally mugged if you speak up against this new “normal.”

I’m not an alarmist or conspiracy theorist or even particularly pessimistic. But it doesn’t look good right now and it’s not likely to get better. Each of us is compelled to do some serious soul-searching; we have to be prepared to lose our jobs or be branded as “outliers” in our community. There may come a time when preachers will be arrested, just for quoting and applying scripture. But what are we to do? Be silent?

“...the genius of ‘LGBTQ’ politics — and the principal reason for its speedy success — is that its branding has shielded it from criticism, mainly by convincing critics to stay silent.”

You will offend people; but take note:

“Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up.”

*Matthew 15:12-13*

And Matthew 11:6:

“...blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

If Jesus and the apostles allowed the ruling class of their day to shut them up, we would not be here today and we would be people without hope in the world.

So, we may want to share Paul’s petition,

...that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. *Ephesians 6:19-20*

## LGBTQ Overreach

Unless you just fell off the proverbial turnip truck, you know that the homosexual movement has changed our nation dramatically. June was proclaimed “Pride Month” by who-knows-who, and many individuals and corporations robotically fell in line with it. Some retailers sported rainbow logos on their social media sites and others offered special “Pride” versions of their product.

Nabisco celebrated the month by producing a LGBTQ edition of its Oreo cookie, complete with lectures about how to use transgender pronouns on the package. This is not the first food company to celebrate the gay lifestyle. After the Supreme Court decision allowing same-sex marriage, Frito-Lay, Chipotle, and Ben & Jerry’s celebrated it with special ad campaigns and product descriptions.

Many young people, including some young Christians, wonder how to deal with all of this. My approach has been to distinguish between the LGBTQ *movement* and individuals who are struggling with the sin. And, lest we forget, all sexual relations outside a lawful marriage are sinful. And Paul specifically calls out homosexuality in Romans

1:26-27, and says that those who practice homosexuality “will not inherit the kingdom of God” (I Corinthians 6:9-10). That settles the issue for disciples of

Christ. There is not one argument *for* the practice. If someone is struggling with it, we need to remind them of what God says about it.

The LGBTQ movement presents other problems. In an [article](#) in The National Review published just this last Friday, July 5, 2019 (*The Overreach of LGBTQ Activism*), the writer, Madeleine Kearns, wrote this:

In his *History of Sexuality*, (Michael) Foucault noted that it was only in the 19th century that we began to define people by their desires. That’s when “homosexual became a personage,” “a type of life,” a “morphology.” Foucault — yes, *that* Foucault — thought this reductive and distracting. What would he say now, I wonder?

Consider all the additional “personages” that have appeared in the last few decades. By no means an exhaustive list, these include transgender, pansexual, bisexual, asexual, demisexual, neutrois, agender, non-binary, polysexual, polyamorous, genderqueer, and genderfluid. Many have their own flags — an interesting trend in itself. And all identities, we are told, belong to non-geographical and quasi-mystical “communities.”

Many Americans, especially young ones, find such frenzied categorization troubling, as recent figures indicate: The annual GLAAD Accelerating Acceptance report shows a noticeable drop in the number of 18- to 34-year-olds who feel comfortable interacting with LGBTQ people, from 63 percent in 2016, to 53 percent in 2017, to 45 percent in 2018. But the genius of “LGBTQ” politics — and the principal reason for its speedy success — is that its branding has

shielded it from criticism, mainly by convincing critics to stay silent. (Because who would want to die on *that* hill?) The idea is that challenging the ontological assumptions of LGBTQ etc., — even à la Foucault — is to deny the right of millions, not only to live and love as they please, but to *exist*.

I was especially struck by a couple of the author’s points. First, that there’s been a significant drop in the number of 18-34 year olds that feel comfortable interacting with LGBTQ people and, second, that LGBTQ branding *has shielded it from criticism*. There’s a reluctance by some of our brethren to approach this topic for fear of offending gay people. But, if we teach what the Bible says, offense is inevitable, not just on this subject, but many others as well (divorce, fornication, etc.). There are more “offended people” per square foot today than ever, in my lifetime.

Remember: Jesus offended people all the time — *he was the rock of offense*. The cross itself was an “offense” (Gal. 5:11; the Greek word is the word we use for “scandal”).

The author of the article outlines some huge flaws in the LGBTQ movement. I found the support of Big Pharma particularly interesting; think about how much money the drug companies can rake in if there are

more transgender prospects needing drugs to sustain their change.

I recommend you read the article. Meanwhile, talk to your children about this issue. You can be sure that they are confronted with it, perhaps even attacked if

they express their view on it. Help them learn to distinguish between a friend who is personally struggling with his “identity” and the movement itself — the economies of it, the politics of it and its revisionist history they utilize to their victimhood status alive.

The author concluded her article with this hopeful note:

My prediction is that as LGBTQ overreach continues, it will backfire, and the culture will reorient. My hope, then, is that the obsession with identity will die down. And a day will come when people are finally judged by the content of their character — not by the object of their desires. I hope. But I don’t hold my breath.

We need to remind ourselves that the culture we live in does not define our ethics: God does. If we allow anyone or any group in our culture to silence us, we ought to be ashamed. Much, if not all, “political correctness” is the devil’s tool and he is laughing in his sleeve when those of us who call ourselves disciples of Christ clam up when we’re told to, by people who could not possibly care less about what God says.

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