

February 28, 2021

The Sunday View

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” — John 12:21

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 six 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 at the entrance. Thank You

Schedule

The Lord's Day Assemblies

Three assembly opportunities,
in the building:

9:30 AM / 10:30 AM / 11:30 AM

Livestream at 10:30 at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLEmwy21Yxrl7ZUgTiZTVqA>

Speaking today: Scott Gardner

Young People's Classes Today

High School & Up: 5 PM (Inside)
Contact David Posey for information at
(530) 558-5057

Middle School: 5 PM (Inside)
Contact Dan Stegall for information
(818) 209-9810

Weekly Online Classes

Tuesday 10 AM (“Conformed to Christ”)
Check with David Posey at dpaulposey@mac.com
or text @ 530-558-5057

Wednesday 7 PM (Faith: Hebrews 11)
Check with Jack Horak: jshorak98@gmail.com

Saturday AM Men's Breakfast
7 AM, second Saturday of the month
Contact Tyler Wade @ tyler@ppldev.com

Additional Online Classes

There are some other small online classes.
If you are interested in participating in one of them,
please contact David Posey

Information

Website & Online Presence

Visit our website at www.folsomchurch.com for updates and material on current and past classes, and recorded sermons and classes. You will also find a directory of churches on page one. If you are a member of the church here at Folsom, see one of the deacons or elders to inquire about access to the password-protected members section. Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/folsomchurch>

Classes & Home Studies *(Will resume soon)*

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.

View & Junior View *(Let us know if you don't get a copy)*

Be sure to pick up a copy of the View and Junior View; both are sent out weekly to our member list and hard copies are printed on Sundays and available in the foyer.

Prayer Requests & News Items

Send to David Posey at dpaulposey@mac.com
or text at 530-558-5057

“The truth is in the tension...”

Matthew 5:38-42

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

I don’t know about you, but I find this statement by Jesus to be among the most challenging statement he ever made. It’s not hard to understand — but that’s the problem. It’s too clear for comfort but how, on earth, do we apply these words; are there any exceptions?

Many of you have heard me say “the truth is in the tension.” I honestly don’t know where or when I picked it up but it’s one of those phrases that made sense to me the first time I heard it. The idea is that, often, the truth is found in the tension between two extremes. If you believe something too far to the right or too far to the left you’re probably not thinking straight. In a way, it’s a truism. Common sense tells us things are rarely “*that* bad” or “*that* good.” Think of any extreme statement that comes to mind and often you’ll say to yourself, “that doesn’t ring true,” and you’re probably right.

One reason for this is the most of our judgments are based on experience. A meal at a restaurant may be “terrible” from our perspective. But feed it to someone in Bangladesh and they are likely to think that it’s the best meal they have ever had (we’re spoiled). Recently, one of our youngish men, in his prayer during a recent service, referred to our “trial” of having to meet outside in split services. Then he said this: “help us realize that our most inconvenient, difficult time of worship might be the **best** day of worship for some people in the world.” He said it better than that, but you get the idea. Our appraisals depend on our past experience. The reality often lies somewhere in between.

Of course, sometimes — *many* times — Bible teaching is “black and white.” Hebrews 13:4 is a perfect example: *“Marriage is to be held in honor among all and the marriage bed undefiled. But fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”* There’s no wiggle room there and there are no questions of judgment. It’s just a statement of fact: sex is reserved for marriage. That statement (and others like it) speaks loudly and clearly to the “sexual revolution.” It doesn’t call for lengthy discussion; just repentance if one is guilty of fornication or adultery.

But it’s not always so easy, is it? If the Sermon on the Mount doesn’t convince you of that, nothing will. A statement can be “either/or” or “but/and” or “if, then.” But we’ll leave a discussion of those for another time. Truth in tension means that when you read a passage that seems extreme, you know you have more work to do.

As I said above, there is no question about what Jesus says in Matthew 5:38-42. It’s perfectly plain. The difficulty arises when we try to apply it to every day life. Application may

wind itself toward two extremes: on the one hand, we may be tempted to explain it away until it means nothing. We build in so many exceptions that the teaching evaporates. When we take this approach, we are hard pressed to come up with *any* example of circumstances in which the teaching actually applies.

In an attempt to avoid that obvious, but surprisingly frequent, error, we may take a different approach — just take the teaching at face value, literally, without regard to other biblical principles. Therefore, we would *never* resist one who means to do harm to us or our families. But that leads to conclusions that seem to collide with other biblical principles and examples. Is Jesus teaching really telling us to allow an evildoer to come into our house and assault our family without any resistance from us? A third approach is to replace the “eye for an eye” law with another: once we’ve turned the other cheek, gone the second mile, etc., then, and only then, are we allowed to retaliate. We see the fallacy in that.

What did Jesus mean? Think about it. We’ll talk about it next week, but I’d love to hear your thoughts.

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Additional Notes

F. Scott Fitzgerald once said, “The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function.” Maybe he was on to something. I believe this is similar to “the truth is in the tension.” Another word for it is “paradox” — two ideas that seem to oppose each other but both are true.

There are a lot of paradoxical statements and concepts in the Bible. Here are just a few: We are justified by faith and we are justified by works; grace and law; eternal life is both here and later, “already, but not yet.” Paul said “to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21) yet took measures to preserve his life; Jesus said not to resist an evil person, yet Jesus cleansed the temple, pronounced woes on the Pharisees and rebuked the officer who slapped him (John 18:23).

Perhaps the greatest paradox is Jesus’ command in Mt. 5:48 that we are to be “perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt. 5:48), set against a veritable plethora of passages that tell us that we are sinners who cannot begin to approach the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Think of some additional paradoxical statements and give them some thought. It’s a helpful exercise.

A war against your family!

We must all be concerned about the future of marriage, the future of parenthood, and consequently, the future of the church. There is a cultural war which has been declared against your family and collectively, this conflict will affect local groups of believers. Many wars have been waged in our history, from the American revolution until the present. The war being waged on our home front however, is even more



deadly and costly. The battle sites are our own homes, our schools and our communities. Satan, our adversary, has marshaled his forces to destroy our families, if he can do so. He wants to poison your teenagers, destroy parenthood, wreck marriages and undermine society as we have known it. No one is immune to or safe from these horrifying attacks!

Satan's arsenal is immense, powerful and pervasive. Drugs, alcohol, violence, peer influence, civil unrest, divorce, child abuse, same-sex marriage and lies — all of these weapons are employed in the fight. Satan wants to wipe out your family. Your family — everyone's family — is under siege! Are we aware of this war? Are we preparing for the battle? Are the threats against our families seen as credible to us?

What would we think if a commander over an army sent soldiers into battlefields without properly arming them for their defense? Such negligence or deliberate malfeasance would be considered criminal, for sure. We would not dare send troops into harm's way without giving them a fighting chance with weapons suitable to resist the enemy. If we would expect a nation to use its best skills to defend against intrusion and destruction, then why would Christians not want to arm themselves spiritually to defeat the attacks Satan is making against our families? Our hopes and dreams for our families is to see everyone safely to Heaven. Just as we send our children forth each day into the world, we hope to receive them safely home each night. Why would

Christian parents not want to see their children spiritually armed and protected in the conflict with Satan? We want none of them to be taken captive and lost to the cause of Christ. We want our children to go to Heaven.

"God's word contains the battle plan to win the war being waged against our families. We can deflect Satan's armor-piercing arrows. In a word, Jesus is the solution to family challenges."

God's word contains the battle plan to win the war being waged against our families. We can deflect Satan's armor-piercing arrows. In a word, Jesus is the solution to family challenges. In Galatians 1:3-4, the apostle Paul wrote, "*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age according to the will of our God and Father*" (NASB).

Jesus taught people so that they would know the truth and not fall for lies of the devil. Jesus died on the cross so that there would be a rescue from the grip Satan has over human souls. Will we let Jesus save our families? Will we withstand the attacks of Satan on families by building a close relationship with Jesus at home? If we want our families to make it to Heaven we need an intimate connection with Jesus. We need to get our families into the Word of God and inoculate them with the strong defenses of God's thinking. It is the only hope we have of winning the war. The devil is looking for un-informed people he can capture as prisoners who will not be recovered. Satan has a target drawn on our families. He knows our weaknesses and he is studying our strengths to see if he can infiltrate and get behind our lines. He is subverting entire families and drawing them away from the truth. As families are lost, the churches of which they are a part are weakened as well.

There is a war being waged against us and the battlefield is at your address. Be armed and vigilant.

— MARK W. WHITE

CY-FAIR CHURCH OF CHRIST, CYPRESS, TEXAS