

May 30, 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

Back to Bible classes today at 9:30 AM!

Schedule

**The Lord's Day
Bible Classes for All Ages**

9:30 AM

Assembly

10:30 AM

Livestream at 10:30 at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLEmwy2lYxrl7ZUgTiZTVqA>

Speaking today: David Posey
Satan's Plan for the Church III
Revelation 12:15, 17

Young People's Classes Today

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

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

Weekly Classes

Tuesday 10 AM
Class discontinued until the fall

Wednesday 7 PM @ Building
The Attributes of God
Various Speakers

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

Additional Classes

There are some smaller classes in progress.
If you are interested in participating in any of them, please
contact David Posey

Information

Masks Still Required

Even though the CDC has recommended a change on face covering policy, it isn't official until approved by the state of California. Therefore, masks are still required inside the building for everyone, vaccinated or not, until we get clarification from the health department, which we hope will come soon.

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

We have classes for children from 18 months and up on Wednesday night at 7 PM. 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

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

Notes on Revelation

BY DAVID POSEY

In my study of Revelation this time, I've come to a slightly modified conclusion regarding the object of God's wrath. Like many others, I've viewed Rome as the primary target of God's judgment and that makes sense given that Revelation was written near the end of the first century. However, I believe that God's wrath that is pictured in Revelation has a much broader scope and I believe this will help us find Revelation more relevant in our lifetime.

In addition to Rome, I see the judgment of God directed toward any "Empire," a term that commentator Michael Gorman applies to any *nation, government, movement, religion, philosophy, institution or organization that is opposed to God*. These entities may not openly declare their opposition to God, but their words and actions betray their anti- (not just *um*) godliness.

In Revelation, the "Empire" is represented by the term "Babylon," mentioned 6 times, starting in 14:8, and the "prostitute" (or "harlot"; see Revelation 17:1, 5, 15-16). "Babylon," in its 270 occurrences in the Bible, usually refers to the actual capitol of the Babylonian empire, the nation that took God's people captive beginning in 606 and kept them in captivity for 70 years. It is frequently mentioned as the object of God's wrath (see Isaiah 13-14 for one example). We tend to put "Rome" for "Babylon" when reading Revelation, and it fits, but why confine it to Rome? If it is only referring to Rome, then there is little application for us today, other than lessons from history and the application of "principles." Those are valuable methods of teaching but some of the language in Revelation suggests a much more dramatic, rapid end of the "Empire" whereas, in reality, Rome's decline was more gradual.

So, while Rome is in view, it is also apparent that God is lodging a more sweeping indictment against any movement that establishes policies that aim to remove God's influence from the culture. Various means are used to bring this about. In Rome, and in the other nations to which they scattered, Christians were prosecuted and persecuted simply because of what they believed and practiced. Their belief in God collided with the idolatrous practices of that nation. In some cases, they lost their jobs because they refused to recognize the "god" that watched over that particular enterprise. It was "Danielesque"; their refusal to bow down to idols led to their "lion's den" because *"they loved not their lives even unto death"* (Revelation 12:11).

What does this mean to us? Idols are not necessarily physical images nor are they a relic of the past. Idolatry is alive and well in 2021. How is that? Idols can be mental as well as metal, in the heart as well as on a pedestal. God said to Ezekiel, *"Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces"* (14:3). There are countless "heart" idols today in America and

they are growing exponentially, it seems. What are some of these "idols."

Take a look at II Timothy 3:1-5, you'll see a fairly lengthy list of idolatrous actions. There is the god of Greed, the idol of Hate, the god of Self and the all-encompassing idol of Pride. More specifically, there is the idol of "a woman's right to choose" which spits on God's view of the value of life. We can even idolize our nation or political leaders and make it the "Empire" that subtly replaces the "Empire" (the "kingdom") of God. Gorman observes:

It is one thing... to live in an empire or superpower, to live in the shadow of the beast, trying to avoid participating in the evils of idolatry while bearing witness to another empire, the kingdom of God, and thereby working for the good of the world as salt and light. It is quite another to unconditionally endorse that empire—or any culture—or to sacralize it. Yet that is what many Christians and churches have done; they have baptized their country and/or culture into the name of the triune god of political, economic, and military power, wrongly thinking that this is the power of God.

Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil Worship and Witness: Following the Lamb into the New Creation (p. 191)

At the end of Revelation, the verdict on idolators is pronounced and it's not pretty.

But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, **idolaters**, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death." *Revelation 21:8*

Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and **idolaters**, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. *Revelation 22:15*

John unceremoniously ends his first letter with this warning, *"Little children, keep yourself from idols"* (I John 5:21).

"Garbage Time"

Some of us call Jack Horak the "Analogy King" because he consistently comes up with some good ones. Last week, I made the point that God has already won the war of good and evil through Christ but Satan isn't quitting; he is still waging war on the saints. After the sermon, Jack came up to me and said Satan is like a quarterback throwing passes in "garbage time." Garbage time is the point in a game when the game is completely out of reach for the losing team — say 40-0 — so they throw a pass on every play. Of course, that helps the quarterback's statistics but it's deceiving because they are padded during a time when the defense is playing less aggressively. It's "garbage time."

Satan is like that. The game is out of reach but he keeps trying to pad his stats. *Unfortunately, Satan's "stats" are souls.*

Culture Corner

“Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

Romans 12:2

“Culture Corner” Returns

“BC” (before Covid) I ran a regular column in the Sunday *View* by this name. Several mentioned that they appreciated it because it brought to light some of the issues we — especially young people — face today. We resume that column with this edition of the *View*.

From Culture Translator

A Biblical Resurgence

What it is: The annual State of the Bible report, produced in collaboration with the Barna Group and the American Bible Society, shows an uptick in Bible usage for the first time in years.

Why it’s encouraging: As Barna notes, the average American’s viewpoints about the Bible are more in line with orthodox Christian thinking than you might expect. Twenty-nine percent of U.S. adults surveyed said the Bible is the inspired word of God, and that it has no errors. Thirty percent of adults agreed strongly with the statement “the Bible contains everything a person needs to live a meaningful life.” But the survey’s biggest finding was this: Five percent of people who were ambivalent about the Bible in 2020 would take a more Bible-affirming view this year. It may feel like the Bible’s role in public life is receding, but that doesn’t necessarily indicate a more negative view of Scripture on the whole.

The Censorship vs. Accountability Debate

What it is: The Pew Research Center released survey results this week that outline the stark differences between how different age groups and political affiliations interpret “cancel culture.”

Why it frames our current moment: As of last September, 43 percent of younger people surveyed by Pew said that they had heard a lot about cancel culture, while only 15 percent of people between the ages of 50 and 64 said they had heard a lot about it. What’s more, those with more liberal-leaning views were far more likely to see “cancelation” as a person being held accountable for their actions, while people with more conservative views were more likely to see cancelation as an unjust punishment or censorship attempt.

A major factor shaping these respective points of view might be what participants believe about spirituality and justice. Prominent Christian commentator Michael Wear tweeted on Tuesday, “Politics is causing great spiritual harm in Americans’ lives, and a big reason for that is Americans are going to politics to get their emotional and spiritual needs met.” If we accept that line of thinking, it makes sense that “cancel culture” can be seen, by teens and younger adults in particular, as a crusade for moral justice. Whichever side of the spectrum your family falls on, we can strive to

keep a compassionate perspective as the culture wars seem to claim another “canceled” personality every week.

Teaching kids how to think

[This seems obvious to me but I’m glad someone is saying it out loud. **dp**]

This week, *The Atlantic* published an interview with Erin McLaughlin, an educator who believes that teaching students *how* to think instead of *what* to think can help them become stronger and more thoughtful in their convictions. As she puts it, “Advocacy-based teaching deprives them of the skills [they need] to reach their own conclusions. Instead they learn to parrot what they know they’re supposed to say to get a good grade. Kids are really good at that, but it doesn’t translate to actually believing what they are saying or knowing why it’s supposed to be important.” For this reason, she believes that some forms of antiracist curriculum are actually having the opposite of their intended effect. But the interview also got us thinking about Christian education as a whole: what if teaching students *how* to think more than just *what* to think was a better way to pass on faith? Obviously passing on Christianity (and not just

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry once said, “If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.”

“faith” in general) requires doing both to some degree; following Jesus means living a life that looks more and more like Him, and to do that we need to know what His life looked like. But for many Christians (including C.S. Lewis, John Lennox, and Lee Strobel), being given thinking tools and permission to “test” Christianity for themselves became a crucial part of their faith journey. They came to trust in new ways the faith system that otherwise might have just seemed like something that was being forced on them. Giving students the opportunity to discover faith for themselves is the doorway to delight, and delight always takes us farther than duty. As Antoine de Saint-Exupéry once said, “If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.”

TikTok Stars

In a piece for *Vox (language)*, internet culture reporter Rebecca Jennings reflects on how similar Tik Tok’s biggest breakout stars seem to be. The same factor that pushes these types of conventionally attractive, cheerleader-esque teenagers to the top of the For You Page seems to appeal to marketing companies and brand sponsorships.

Conversation Starter: Is there a “formula” for the ideal influencer? Why do so many of the most popular Tik Tok accounts seem to look a lot like the “popular girl” table in high school?