

June 6, 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
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

Where Do You Live?

Revelation 13-14

Young People's Classes Today

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

The middle school class will now be held on a monthly, instead of weekly, schedule. Contact Dan Stegall for information at (818) 209-9810

Weekly Classes

Tuesday 10 AM

Will resume in 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 state, which we are anticipating on June 15th.

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 13-14

BY DAVID POSEY

After viewing the great signs in heaven, John now stands on “the sand of the sea” (13:1, NKJV). From there he witnesses the rising up of two beasts, one from the sea and then, in v. 11, one from the earth. These beasts obviously represent some entity or “empire” that is opposed to God and his saints and are motivated and empowered by the “dragon” (v. 4) who we know is Satan.

Historically, each beast represents an aspect of the Roman Empire. The first beast is described very much like the dragon in chapter 12 (v. 3), though he is not identical. He comes from the sea, perhaps reflecting his world-wide renown among the nations (the sea representing commerce and interaction between nations). He has great power and might; he is tenacious (v. 3) and forceful. His message is the sin of “blasphemy” (13:1, 5-6). In Rome, it could apply to Nero (54-69 AD), who was called “Savior of the World” or, later, Domitian (81-96 AD), who was called “Our Lord and Our God.” Those are blasphemous claims directed toward God and “those who dwell in heaven” (v. 6).

This beast wages war against the saints and has dominion over every “tribe, tongue and nation” (v. 7). So, “all who dwell on the earth” will worship him. These are the people whose names are not written in “the book of life of the Lamb who was slain” (v. 8) also known as “those who dwell in heaven” (v. 6). This beast seems to represent the governmental aspect of Rome and, by extension, any and all “empires,” past, present or future that oppose God.

As Jesus often said, John repeats, “If anyone has an ear, let him hear” (v. 9). This is the Holy Spirit’s way of saying, “Listen!” He then encourages his fellow Christians to endure because that they are about to suffer. Some will be taken into captivity and some will be killed (v. 10). “This is a call,” John says, “for the endurance and faith of the saints” (see Matthew 10:21-22).

The second beast comes from the earth. His authority is exercised in the presence (or “on behalf of”) the first beast and is instrumental in causing the earth-dwellers to worship the first beast. He performs great signs and uses them to deceive the world and encourages “those who dwell on the earth” to make an image to the beast (v. 14). Those who fail to worship the beast are killed on his authority (v. 15). This is a “beast in lamb’s clothing” and probably represents the false religion in Rome which was the basis of Emperor worship (“the imperial cult”). It would extend to any and all “empires” that use religion to control people.

In 2018, when we traveled through central Germany, one thing stood out: in every city there was a “prince-bishop” who ruled the city and also was a leader of the church in the city. There no separation of church and state. In medieval times, religion was used as a tool of the city to tax and control the populace. There are some cities in Germany where the church is still taking taxes out of peoples’ paychecks (and the people are just now protesting this practice). This may be a more or less severe example of what Rome was doing throughout the world in the first century. The difference is

that, up until the fourth century AD, the “religion” was the Imperial cult, emperor worship. Sometime after that, the Roman Catholic Church began to dominate. Revelation seems to indicate an addiction to idols, but idolatry can take many forms (cf. Colossians 3:5).

Chapter closes with the famous reference to the “number of the beast...666” (v. 18). The attempts to interpret this number are legion and range from the sublime to the ridiculous. My view is that since 7 “stands as the numerical symbol of the complete and perfect” (Hailey, *Revelation*, p. 45) then 666 is simply a way to symbolize something strong, ungodly and complete in its class. Applied to the beast, it means that he represents complete evil. That’s just a guess, but it makes the most sense to me. Efforts to use alpha-numeric strategies to pin 666 to a particular person (e.g., Nero, Hitler, the Pope) are not convincing.

Chapter 14

14:1-5 From the depressing scene in chapter 13, John turns to witness a glorious scene in heaven. The Lamb stands on Mt. Zion, a common term for heaven (cf. Hebrews 12:22). The 144,000 who have the name of the Father and Son on their foreheads are there (cf. 7:3). John hears a mighty voice and the playing of harps and the singing of a new song (cf. 5:9) which only could be sung by the 144,000.

Who are the 144,000? We’ve argued earlier that the number is a multiple of the biblical number 12 (12 x 12 x 1000 = 144,000). This is not an elite group within the church, but represent the whole church at any given time. In chapter 7, we noted that the number symbolizes the church on the earth, protected by God as the gospel was being preached throughout “the whole creation” (Colossians 1:23). Now, the 144,000 appear to be those who have been redeemed from the earth (v. 3) and are the saved in heaven. Verses 4 and 5 describe them as “virgins,” as “those who follow the Lamb,” “redeemed from among men,” who do not lie and are “blameless.” The reference to them as “virgins” simply means they are faithful to God. The Old Testament often refers to Israel as “virgins” or the “virgin daughters of Zion” (cf. II Kings 19:21; Jeremiah 18:13; Amos 5:2) and when she committed the sin of idolatry, she was referred to as one who “played the harlot” (Jeremiah 3:6). In the New Testament, Paul’s hope was to present the church at Corinth as a “pure virgin to Christ” (II Corinthians 11:2). In Revelation, the church is called the bride, the Lamb’s wife (21:9), and is to be presented “without spot or wrinkle” (Eph. 5:27). Here there is a conspicuous contrast with those who have “committed fornication with the great harlot” (17:1-2). The meaning is that the church is faithful in following the Lamb and, as “firstfruits” (v. 4) has offered herself on the sacrificial altar to God.

To make this verse teach celibacy as a higher form of godliness is contradictory to the tone of the New Testament (cf. Hebrews 13:4) and forbidding marriage is evidence that some have “departed from the faith” (I Timothy 4:1-3).

Culture Corner

“Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” Romans 12:2

Following are some headlines I've seen in the last couple of weeks that may indicate where religion in American stands today. I'm presenting these clips verbatim, except for a Bible verse or two, or a short comment at the end.

“Kevin Max says he’s an ‘evangelical’: ‘Deconstructing’ and ‘progressing’”

“Grammy-winning vocalist Kevin Max, a member of the popular Christian band DC Talk...revealed over the weekend that he considers himself to be an “evangelical.” In another tweet he said he now follows “the universal Christ.” [Not sure what that is. But this is another celebrity who has chosen to distance himself from “church.” (See [Matthew 16:18](#); [Ephesians 1:22-23](#); [3:10](#) on the importance of the church). I still see many more conversion stories than “deconstruction” stories on social media.

“Baptist Church in Indiana Ordains the First Trans Pastor in Its Denomination”

Not long after the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America elected its first transgender bishop, a transgender woman was ordained in a Baptist church. At a May 23 ceremony, Laura Bethany Buchleiter was ordained at University Baptist Church in Bloomington, Indiana. [[Genesis 1:27](#); [I Timothy 2:11-12](#)]

Kentucky to Baptist Kids Agency: Place Kids in LGBTQ Homes or Lose Your Funding

A cultural clash pitting religious beliefs against gay rights has jeopardized Kentucky's long-running relationship with a foster care and adoption agency affiliated with the Baptist church that serves some of the state's most vulnerable children. The standoff revolves around a clause in a new contract with the state that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation and that Sunrise Children's Services is refusing to sign. [[Romans 1:26-27](#); [I Corinthians 6:9-10](#)]

The “DeTransitioners”

[From *Cultural Translator* newsletter] “A segment that aired on CBS during 60 Minutes on May 23 called attention to young people who began the medical process of gender transition, only to regret making the decision a short time later. This particular segment examined legislation in several states that would limit healthcare options for minors experiencing gender dysphoria, interviewing experts about the possible unintended effects of these new laws. In order to present another side of the argument, reporter Lesley Stahl also interviewed ‘detransitioners’ who told her that they felt ‘blindly affirmed’ when they expressed a desire to explore medical transition. These interview subjects noted the influence of transition transformations they had seen on the internet, and how they felt confused when their own transition experiences in no way measured up. Their stories of increased depression, disappointment and suicidal ideation even after that transition process was completed are heartbreaking.”

[14: 6-20] The vision now turns to earth again, as three angels proclaim judgment upon “those who dwell on the earth” (v. 6). The first angel brings the “everlasting gospel” which demands that all men give glory to God (v. 7). This is God's eternal purpose (cf. Ephesians 3:8-11). God is to be worshipped as Creator, something that people have completely ignored (Rom. 1:19-21). Another angel pronounces judgment upon “Babylon, the great,” using language reminiscent of Isaiah 21:9 and Jeremiah 51:7. “Babylon” probably symbolizes Rome, especially to first century readers, but note what Leon Morris says: “*It is the symbol of man in community opposed to the things of God.*” As we've argued earlier, the lesson applies to any human entity that thumbs its nose at God.

The third angel brings notice of judgment to all who worship the beast and receive his mark. He will be made to drink the “wine of the wrath of God,” and that will happen “in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb” (v. 10). Torment is everlasting (v. 11). Again, John encourages saints to endure, to keep the commandments and hold on to their faith in Jesus (v. 12). Meanwhile, everyone who dies “in the Lord” are blessed in that they will “rest from their labors” and “their works do follow them” (v. 13). “Labors” and “deeds” probably refer to the saints' faithfulness in the face of persecution.

John next sees “One like the Son of Man” with a sickle in hand preparing to reap the earth (v. 14). The picture is from Daniel 7:13-14 and undoubtedly refers to Jesus. “Son of Man” was his favorite title and occurs frequently in the gospels. An angel then comes out of the temple (which v. 17 says is in heaven) and gives the Son of Man the order, probably from the Father, to thrust in the sickle and reap the earth (vss. 15-16). Another angel comes out, this time from the “altar,” perhaps the place where the prayers of the saints had ascended (see 5:8; 8:3-4), and is instructed by still another angel to “thrust in your sickle” (v. 18). This time the image is of a cluster of grapes which is fully ripe and ready to be delivered to the “winepress of the wrath of God” (v. 19). The scene is one of terrible judgment and loss for those who deny Christ and worship the beast. So fierce is God's wrath that blood runs up to the “horse's bridles” for 1,600 stadia (v. 20), a distance of approximately 184 miles. This happens to be a square of the number four multiplied by the square of 10. Four is the “earth” number and ten is the number of completeness. Note that the judgment takes place “outside the city” (cf. Hebrews 13:12), which probably means outside “spiritual” Jerusalem (Hailey, *Revelation*, page 315).

The message of this chapter is clear: there is a severe judgment coming on those who “dwell on the earth” and blaspheme the name of God and persecute His saints. A doctrine which refuses to impute wrath to God or anger to Christ is not a biblical doctrine. The wrath of God (though decidedly distinct from human wrath) is as much an attribute of God as his love (cf. Romans 1:18). His love, coupled with our obedience and allegiance, causes him to voluntarily set aside his wrath for those who are “in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). To be accurate, his wrath was satisfied (“propitiated” — see I John 2:2) in the death of His only Son. But obstinate rebellion must meet God's wrath face to face, sooner or later. Ironically, there is a sense in which the saints can take comfort in that fact (cf. II Thessalonians 1:3-10).