

December 12, 2021

The View

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

Welcome Visitors & Returning College Students!

We always love to see visitors and for the next month or so, we'll get to be with our college students who are home for the holidays. As a reminder, 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 located near the entrance.
We do not solicit donations from visitors. See page 4 for more information.**

Schedule

The Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible classes for all ages

*Auditorium: A Study of Paul's Letter to the **Philippians***

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today

Scott Gardner

“A Time to Laugh”

Livestream at 10:30 <https://tinyurl.com/5f2cbm3y>

Bible Class @ 1:30 PM in room 15/16 **Hebrews**

Bible Class @ 5 PM — A Study of Prayer (Auditorium)

Young People's Class, 5 PM @ David & Christie Posey's home

Middle school class: monthly (contact Dan Stegall at 818- 209-9810)

There are several on-going Bible classes in the homes of members. Check with David Posey or one of the other elders if you would like to join one of those classes.

Wednesday 7 PM @ Building

Bible classes for all ages

Check out this article
by Camille Rico

*Auditorium: A Study of Paul's Letter to the **Philippians***

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How Do We Know What is True?

BY CAMILLE RICO

In my generation, there are a lot of questions about what is true or false, right and wrong, real or fake. In the middle school class this quarter, we're studying absolute truth. It reminds me of the question Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" in John 18:38. In John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." The answer to Pilate's question is Jesus is the truth.

So then, how do we know the truth? In John 8:31-32, Jesus says, "If you abide by my words, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." If we follow Jesus' words we will know Him and we will be set free from sin.

We can be confident Jesus' words in the Bible are true because "all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that every man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

"The belt of truth is listed first in the armor of God because it holds everything else up. When we are questioned or criticized for our beliefs, the belt of truth holds us up and helps us know what we stand for is true."

Many kids I know often doubt or criticize the Bible and attack Christian values. Knowing the truth is important because we can use the words of Jesus to make a defense. Ephesians 6:13-14 says, "Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth...." The belt of truth is listed first in the armor of God because it holds everything else up. When we are questioned or criticized for our beliefs, the belt of truth holds us up and helps us know what we stand for is true.

Whether my generation knows it or not, we are desperately searching for the truth. This generation may search in a lot of places, but we know there is only one way to find the truth. When we live by the words of Jesus we will know Him and we can be confident we've found what is true.

Commentary

No Surprise: There's a Mental Health Emergency

[From *Cultural Translator*, December 10, 2021] "The US surgeon general issued an advisory this week, warning of a massive mental health crisis amongst young people, including an increase in suicidal ideation, depression and anxiety. The advisory cites several data sources that show an uptick in youth emergency room visits related to mental health. This advisory comes after the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the Children's Hospital Association jointly declared a 'national emergency' in youth mental health earlier this year.

"The *New York Times* reported that the reasons for this emergency are complicated, but the underlying causes are likely related to last year's massive increase in screen time and social media use, combined with pandemic restrictions and youth anxiety and depression that were already rising rapidly. Mental health should always be evaluated on an individual level, but it's essential that people who care about teens be aware that Gen Z's risk factors for developing serious mental health conditions are at an all-time high.

Comment

There has been, for some time now, a debate about the effect of lockdowns. Various studies like this one and similar ones from other countries and certain other areas in the U.S., show that they have done some serious damage as noted the

article. But this raises another issue. During the lockdowns, certain businesses were deemed "essential," but churches were not on the list. But what "business" or institution helps people maintain their mental health better than churches?

Jesus wasn't kidding when he told his disciples, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Attending an assemblies helps us, not just spiritually but mentally. I'm guessing that faithful Christians are much more mentally stable than the general public. They should be. Bible studies and the fellowship we share with each other keeps us grounded, focused. In our songs and prayers and our Bible studies, we are reminded of the peace that Jesus spoke about above. So much so, that we probably take it for granted.

Trying to live a life without human interaction or, worse, without exposure to a word from God, has to take a toll. I'm not suggesting that is the sole cause for this mental health crisis, of course, but that is evidence of a practical problem in living life without Jesus. Where, on earth, can you find peace without Jesus? Social media? No. Like Peter, I would not know where else to go but to Jesus.

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life..." (John 6:68).

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A Compassionate Desire

By Terry Raposa

“When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt. 9:36). Jesus was moved with a deep love and pity for the crowd. This passage is a powerful illustration on the importance of the role of a shepherd.

Shepherds in the New Testament

Elders are commanded to shepherd the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:2). Shepherds in the New Testament are also referred to as elders, overseers, pastors, or bishops. Paul and Barnabas returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch and appointed elders in every church. This was something that Paul did after being stoned at Lystra previously; apparently, appointing elders was of enough importance to return there to do this after being left for dead outside the city (Acts 14:19-23). Paul also directed Titus to appoint elders in every city; Titus remained on Crete for this purpose and was plainly instructed that things were not in order in the churches until this task was done (Titus 1:5). Also, it must have brought Paul great joy to know that the Philippian church had elders. The Philippian letter is the only epistle that mentions saints, overseers, and deacons in the greeting (Phil. 1:1).

What were these elders supposed to do?

A brief job description might go like this: must be able to collaborate with other elders to care for the church of God (Acts 20:28), must be able to chase away fierce wolves and rebuke false teaching while being an example to the flock (Acts 20:29-30, Titus 1:9-14, 1 Pet. 5:3). Must watch over souls and be prepared to give an account to the Chief Shepherd (Heb. 13:17).

Continuous leadership in a local church

Christ is the head of the church and the chief Shepherd (Eph. 1:22-23, 1 Pet. 5:4). Elders will not always remain in office, but the office of an elder and the instructions in the New Testament for the Lord’s church will remain until the Lord comes. The church of Christ in Folsom has been blessed and fortunate to have an eldership since 1979 which is remarkable and something to be thankful for, but does the past ensure future stability in maintaining a continuous eldership? Men eventually become unable to perform the duties of service as an elder due to physical limitations, illness, or end of life; and a lapse in leadership is not beneficial for the church. This means a continual effort is

needed to maintain qualified men who can be appointed to the eldership.

It begins at home

When reviewing the qualifications of elders mentioned in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:1-9 we can see that all of the characterizations and personal attributes seem to apply to all Christians except for two that involve marriage and children. These two specified requirements do not apply to all because not all Christians are required to marry and not all who marry have children. This presents an area of greater vulnerability concerning the continuity of appointing and replacing elders. The additional challenge to this is how do you teach one to “aspire” when that is something that arises

from a deep conviction that has been instilled, developed, and cultivated?

“The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task” – 1 Timothy 3:1

To aspire (GK: *orego*, Strong #3713), as the word is used in the above passage, means to stretch one’s self out in order to touch or to grasp

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something. It requires stretching and reaching. It is a reaching “to” the office, not “for” the office. It is not the office that fulfills the desire; it is the incredible opportunity to serve along with and as one of the shepherds in a local congregation.

It is a compassionate desire that comes from deep down that is not easily extinguished. Jesus looked upon the crowd and was moved with compassion when He saw people like sheep harassed and helpless without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). It was this same compassion that moved Him to feed 5,000 (Mk. 6:34-44). A man who aspires *to* the office of an elder desires a noble task and is reaching *to* the office because of compassion and a deep desire to help the church. This type of drive is instilled and cultivated; the best time and place in which to foster this attitude is in children though this endeavor is not exclusive to this particular time and instance. This fact is evident by the example of the Philippian church which had only been in existence for approximately ten years and had developed an eldership. There will be a continuous eldership when there are men moved with compassion to reach to the office with a desire to help the Lord’s people.