

January 17, 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 assemblies opportunities,
outside under the tent:

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

Livestream at 10:30 at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLemwy2lYxrL7ZUgTiZTVqA>

Speaking today: Scott Gardner
Revelation 2: "Ephesus: From Religion to Love"

Young People's Classes

High School & Up: 4 PM

Middle School: 5 PM

Contact Dan Stegall for Information
(818) 209-9810

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 (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 (Temporarily Suspended)

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 (Enter through side door; limit 2 at a time)

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 (Temporarily Closed)

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

It's Going to be Alright!

BY DAVID POSEY

Sometimes saying “it’s going to be alright,” can be cruel, an untimely, hollow platitude that hurts more than helps. Very few who are in the depth of sorrow believe, right then, that “it’s going to be alright.” So we must watch our words. But the truth is, if we stay in Christ, then it — whatever “it” is — is, in fact, going to be alright.

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8:38-39*

For Christians, a crisis has less impact than it does on the population at large. Why? Because Christians have never permitted the fear of death to define them. Paul said, “*to live is Christ, to die is gain*” (Phil. 1:21) and this quote from the martyr, Ignatius of Antioch (c. 110), should help us:

“The believing have, in love, the character of God the Father by Jesus Christ, by whom, if we are not in readiness to die into his suffering, his life is not in us.” The manner of his death is not known for sure, but he wrote this before he died: “*Now I begin to be a disciple ... Let fire and cross, flocks of beasts, broken bones, dismemberment ... come upon me, so long as I attain to Jesus Christ.*”

It’s no secret that Covid-19 has disrupted everyone’s life. For too many — nearly 400,000 — it has caused death and sorrow. Someone’s family member or dear friend or one of our brothers or sisters in Christ has lost his or her life to this virus. Our own Dennis McAdams, a fixture here at Folsom long before I arrived, passed on. We take comfort knowing that he is enjoying his Lord, up close and personal. Do we grieve? Of course, but “*we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope*” (1 Th. 4:13).

As members of the human race, we mourn everyone’s death, regardless of cause. When I was very young, I stumbled upon a poem that, for some reason, I loved and memorized. It was John Donne’s “No Man is an Island.”

*No man is an island,
Entire of itself;
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less,
As well as if a promontory were:
As well as if a manor of thy friend’s
Or of thine own were.
Any man’s death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind.
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee.*

The poem reminds us that every human being has something in common — we are bound together by our common humanity and our mortality. We suffer and experience joy differently, but death is the universal, unstoppable enemy that stalks every one of us. So, “any man’s death diminishes us” because every time a person dies (at the rate of about two per second in the world) that bell is tolling for all of us, too, sooner or later.

Depressing? Sure, at one level. Presumably, when we die, someone — maybe many — will care and be sad, at least for awhile. And most of us have good lives here, from what I can tell. We want to live, see our kids, grandkids and, if God permits, our great grandkids. But the defining difference in Christians is that we refuse to live our lives in fear of death. We know that we have eternal life (1 John 5:13) and if that’s true, then the day of our death will turn out to be the best day of our life. Irony? No. *Promise.*

For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“O death, where is your victory?”

O death, where is your sting?”

—1 Corinthians 15:53-55

It’s not just the Bible that promotes this outlook. *The Chief Tecumseh Poem*, from the Shawnee warrior who died in 1813, offers good advice. Here’s an excerpt:

“When it comes time to die, be not like those whose hearts are filled with the fear of death, so that when their time comes they weep and pray for a little more time to live their lives over again in a different way. Sing your death song and die like a hero going home.”

If we live our lives in preparation for eternity then, in life and in death, God’s got our back. So why fear?

“For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.” — Romans 14:8

Internalizing this can promote an indomitable spirit in us. Andy Stanley shared this story:

“Sometimes I just want it to stop — talk of Covid, looting, brutality. I lose my way. I become convinced that this ‘new normal’ is real life. Then I meet an 87 year old man who talks of living through polio, diphtheria, Vietnam protests... and, yet, is still enchanted with life. He seemed surprised when I said that 2020 must be especially challenging for him. ‘No,’ he said slowly, looking me straight in the eye. ‘I learned a long time ago to not see the world through the headlines; I see the world through the people who surround me. I see the world with the realization that we love big. Therefore, I just choose to write my own headlines: ‘Husband loves wife today.’ ‘Family drops everything to come to grandpa’s bedside.’ He patted me on my hand: ‘old man makes new friend.’ His words collide with my worries, freeing them from the tether I had been holding tight. They float away. I am left with a renewed spirit and a new way to write my own headlines.”

Changes are coming. Covid-19 will, at some point, go the way of polio, scarlet fever, whooping cough, small pox, diphtheria, yellow fever, and scores of other diseases — it will just be a bad memory. But since when does a Christian rely on a problem-free life to bring joy; that’s a futile quest if ever there was one. Our hope is in a God who loves us deeply.

“...do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.”

— Matthew 10:28-30

Notes on Revelation

Methods of Interpretation

The message of the book, which should not be lost in endless arguments about the date, is that Christians are to be comforted in their struggle against the forces of evil, if they remain “faithful until death” (3:10). Heaven is the hope and no earthly tribulation can take that away. Having said that, most interpreters take one of four approaches to the book:

Preterist: In this view, all of the book is fulfilled in the days of the Roman Empire and is only of literary/historical interest to us today. The main objection to this view is that the book has no real, continuing message for us today. The term “preterist” is also applied to those who believe that all of the prophecies have been fulfilled in the past. Some believe that Jesus’ second coming occurred in AD 70 at the Destruction of Jerusalem.

Continuous-Historical: A forecast, in symbols, of the history of the church, from John’s day to the end of time; some parts have been fulfilled, and some have not. This is the most popular theory from the Reformation (16th century to the present). Objections: if true, there would be little meaning for the original recipients and it is supported by the use of variant, subjective timetables.

Futurist: This view claims that all of the book, after chapter 4, is yet future, dealing with events “just prior to Christ’s second coming.” This is the most popular view today among “Premillennialists” and “Dispensationalists.” Objections: it is inconsistent with 1:1 and 22:10; it requires taking many statements literally that clearly seem to be figurative. That creates an arbitrary interpretative scheme and is overly materialistic and assumes that modern America is the target for Revelation, which is incredibly ethnocentric. If true, it has no meaning for the original recipients even though the book states that it was intended to be read by real people in real churches (Revelation 1:4).

Historical Background: This is a combination (“eclectic”) method. (1) It was written first in John’s day, so there is a need to understand the historical background and meaning to the original recipients. (2) Much of the book is written in symbolic or figurative language, so there is a “code” that needs to be deciphered. (Since it uses Old Testament terminology with a New Testament meaning, familiarity with the Old Testament symbols and figures will be a significant aid to the comprehension of the book). (3) Instead of pressing every detail into a literal message, we see visions as a whole — more like a movie than a book. (4) Therefore, it’s safe to say that the book is addressed chiefly to the imagination.

This is the method we will be using throughout this study.

David Posey