

February 13, 2022

# The View

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

## Welcome Visitors

Our goal at the Folsom church of Christ is to do everything according to God’s word, including respecting its silence.

We are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church; we have no earthly “headquarters.

“The six elders oversee this church and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily for the benefit of 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 the preacher or 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

*Auditorium: A Study of Paul’s Second & Third Journeys*

*Room 15/16: Raising Faithful Kids*

*Room 12: Young Adults Class*

#### 10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

*Jesus on... the Fabulous Family of God (postponed to this week)*

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

**Bible Class @ 2:00 PM in room 12 on Judges**

**Bible Class @ 5 PM — A Study of Prayer in the Psalms (Auditorium)**

**Young Peoples’ 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

*Auditorium: A Study of Paul’s Second & Third Journeys*

*Room 15/16: Raising Faithful Kids*

*Room 12: Young Adults Class*

## Things to Pray About Before Worship

Lord, fix my heart upon Christ.  
Lord, open my mind to your Word.  
Lord, remind me of the good news.  
Lord, empty me of this world.

Lord, bless those who serve.  
Lord, help me to encourage others.  
Lord, equip me to respond in grace.  
Lord, help me remember I am your child.

# Imagine... a World Without Jesus

By David Posey

In 1965, I attended a Mamas & Papas concert at Melodyland Theater in Anaheim. The opening act was a new singing duo, Simon & Garfunkel. Paul Simon and Artie Garfunkel had started their two-man band years earlier under the name “Tom & Jerry” but the cartoon by that name got a lot more attention than they did. But they changed their name and, once they were discovered, everyone who listened to the radio knew who Simon and Garfunkel were. They were more popular than the cartoon and, eventually, were much more popular than the Mamas and the Papas.

I loved their music. Simon’s ability to write lyrics was genius. I rushed out to buy every album as soon as it hit the Tower Records album bins. I was happy that they were discovered. But what real difference has their discovery and their music made in my life? Am I a different person because of Simon and Garfunkel? I can’t say it changed me one bit.

In other words, if S&G had never been discovered, nothing in my life would have been different. But what about Jesus? Have you ever wondered what difference it would make if Jesus never came to earth, never died on the cross, never been resurrected? Can we even imagine a world without Jesus? Let’s see.

To prove the resurrection, Paul entertains the idea of a world without a resurrected Jesus.

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

*1 Corinthians 15:12-19*

Look at the text: no Jesus? We are still in our sins. No Jesus? Those who have died are dead and gone. No Jesus? Then people would be right to mock us; we should — of all people — be the most pitied! (V. 19).

If there is no Jesus what would we do? In one of Paul Simon’s songs there is a line, “*Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio? A nation turns its lonely eyes to you...*”<sup>\*</sup> With no Jesus, the only heroes we would have would be the Joltin’ Joe’s of our time.

Without Jesus, there would be no salt of the earth, no light of the world, no golden rule, no love your enemies, no extra mile, no build your house on the rock, no turn the other cheek. Thousands of people have devoted themselves to putting these words of Jesus into practice — and the world is a better place because of it.

Without Jesus, the world would be a rat race and the rats would win; it would be an even worse dog-eat-dog world — people trying to get an edge over others, demanding their rights, and doing whatever it takes to get

what they feel is coming to them. Many people are doing that anyway but the presence of Jesus lived through his disciples has kept our world from becoming the dystopian nightmare we see in some “God-forsaken” places (God has not actually forsaken these lands; they have forsaken God). Jesus’ influence is a leavening agent in society.

But imagine *no* Jesus. Strip every trace of Jesus out of our lives. What kind of world would this be? Just look at some of the godless nations and the power mongers who run them for a clue.

Without Jesus, there would be no real love. The greatest testimony we can offer about God is that He is love and that love is proved by the gift of Jesus. John 3:16 is famous for a reason:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

And then there is this:

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. *John 15:13*

We sing, with enthusiasm, “*What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear*” but if there is no Jesus, it’s all a lie — our preaching is vain, our teaching is false, our hope is nil. In a world without Jesus, loneliness rules. You’re like a rock sitting alone on the sand — no one cares for you (cf. Psalm 142:4).

A world without Jesus is a world without forgiveness: “you are still in your sins” (1 Corinthians 15:17). John 1:14-16 tells us that Jesus came to earth “full of grace and truth.” If there is no Jesus then there is no sacrifice for sins. Abraham, Moses, David — all are dead in their sins!

If there is no Jesus, there is no salve for your guilty conscience, no relief from blame, no balm for the weary, no grace, no acquittal. All of your sins stick to you like tar on blacktop. With no Jesus, there is no answer to the question “what shall we do?” Without Jesus, the operative text in scripture is Romans 3:23, “*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*” with no solution. Without Jesus, we are stuck in Ephesians 2:1-3:

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

...with no verse 4, (“*But God, being rich in mercy...*”). Just the “before” no “after.” *With* Jesus there’s a comma, but without Him, just a terrifying **period**. With Jesus, there is always a spring after winter, but without him just a *hazy shade of winter* all the time — darkness, gloominess, fog.

But it gets worse...

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<sup>\*</sup>If you are a Paul Simon fan, you will notice that some of the comments in the article come from his lyrics

A world without Jesus is a world without hope.

Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

*I Corinthians 15:18*

Without Jesus, my mother and father, and Christie's parents, Sam and Barb, and your parents, grandparents, friends — and, in some cases, even children — are all gone, never to be seen again. Treasure those photographs, your memories, your thoughts and imagination because, if there is no Jesus, that is all that's left.

Oddly, many think that's the best option; they are gambling that it is. Reference to Pascal's wager doesn't even move them (if you're not familiar with Pascal's wager, look here: <https://www-gotquestions.org/Pascals-wager.html>).

However, those of us who are committed to living "in Christ" are not doing it as a gamble. We are committed because Christ offers us a *living* hope. Peter said it this way:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

*I Peter 1:3-4*

If there is no Jesus, there no hope. Without Jesus, when trouble comes, we must face it without hope. If you've lived on this earth for any time at all, you've learned that hope is what sustains you in difficult times. Paul put it this way:

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,

*II Corinthians 5:1-2*

Hope gets us through the bad times but without Jesus, there is no *bridge over troubled water*. Three times in Psalm 42-43, the psalmist says, "*Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation.*" That hope would only be realized through Jesus.

Hope not only helps us through the tough times, it adds beauty to our good times, too. Hope gives us a taste of heaven. Without the hope of a resurrection to come, we should be pitied (I Corinthians 15:19). Without Jesus, our faith is worthless. We're not *homeward bound*, but just drifting toward eternal death.

With hope, death is not the end. We believe that we'll see and be united with those who have passed on. That list is growing by the day, it seems. I wouldn't attempt to list the people who have died in the last few years because the list is too long and I would leave someone off the list. We know who they are.

Jesus makes *all* the difference. If Simon & Garfunkel had never been discovered, it's no big deal. If the world never heard "*Sounds of Silence*" or "*Bridge Over Troubled Water*" or "*She Has Diamonds on the Soles of her Shoes*," it wouldn't matter. But if Jesus never came; and if Jesus was never raised from the dead, life would be without meaning. But he did come; he died and was raised from the dead — and he's coming back: (I Corinthians 15:20-25, 50-56).

Jesus is the only person every born that we could not live without. For us, a world without Jesus is unthinkable; too horrible to contemplate. Yet literally millions upon millions of people live as though Jesus never lived. We should devote our lives to doing what we can to help them see the truth (start with your children).

## "All This and Heaven Too!"

Christie's mother is one of most interesting people I've ever known. She had a difficult, challenging childhood, little formal education, married at (barely) 15 years old, a mother-in-law at age 36 and a grandmother at 38. She was an extremely talented artist. Some of you have her paintings since she gave all of them away. She was not a sports fan, but I have a paintings she did of Clayton Kershaw, Sandy Koufax and Ebbets Field in my office; paintings that I "requisitioned." Reichen has a huge, very nice painting of the Ram's former running back, Marshall Faulk that Barbara painted for him. Her china paintings on porcelain are amazing and decorate much of our home.

Barbara was also a great cook and, with Sam, the most hospitable people I've ever met. At times, Barbara was exuberant, enthusiastic, almost in the extreme. When I first met her, I was still very reserved so her enthusiasm almost scared me. She would get so excited and demonstrative when given a gift that I pressured to equal it when she gave me a gift, but I failed miserably (she was fine with that).

Her exuberance came out every Thanksgiving. The whole family would be sitting around the dining room table and she would, out of blue, enthusiastically exclaim, "AREN'T WE LUCKY??!!" Maybe she should have said "blessed" but that word is over- and mis-used. She was simply so happy to have such a great family, all together on that day that she couldn't contain her excitement.

We saw that every time we came to visit: Barb's contagious enthusiasm, balanced by Sam's steady, friendly demeanor, that never changed, no matter the circumstances. They were perfect for each other in a marriage that lasted 72-plus years.

One of the things that sticks in my mind about Barbara is a sign she had painted and placed prominently in her house on the peach ranch in Hughson. The sign said, "*All this and heaven, too!*" My overly analytical brain wondered if this was a scriptural motto. One could interpret it as "we have a great life here and, oh yeah, we get heaven too." But I knew that isn't what she meant. She and Sam clearly lived with heaven in the foreground but they thoroughly enjoyed life on the peach ranch in the process. That same attitude followed even after they left their beloved ranch and moved to the city.

Now, their earthly lives have ended but both of them are enjoying that eternal "heaven, too" part of life in which they placed all of their hope. So, we don't weep for them; we rejoice with them.

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