

April 17, 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: Colossians

Room 15/16: Great Old Testament Texts (Exodus 34, cont’d)

Room 12: Young Adults Class

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

Title: “Jesus on the Cross: *What Difference Does It Make?*”

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

No class tonight

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: Colossians

Room 15/16: Great Old Testament Texts

Room 12: Young Adults Class

The Gospel is Always “Social”

David Posey

“He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place...” *Acts 17:26*

Yesterday, every major league baseball player wore number 42 to honor Jackie Robinson who broke the color barrier in 1947. The backstory is an interesting, humorous one. When, in the early 50s, the team traveled to Cincinnati to play a game, Robinson received a death threat that the team and police took seriously. As Vin Scully tells the story, there were sharpshooters all around old Crosley Field, the Red’s stadium, and large number of police officers were deployed in the stadium itself. The tension was nearly unbearable and as the Dodgers sat in the locker room, there was an eerie silence. All of a sudden, a big, blond, happy-go-lucky player, James Hermanski, jumped up and said, “*I’ve got it! We’ll all wear number 42 then they won’t know which one is Jackie!*”

He was kidding of course, since Robinson was the only black player on the Dodgers. But in 2004, the Commissioner of Baseball, Bud Selig, decided that there would be a Jackie Robinson day and all the players in the major leagues would wear number 42 on that day. If you watched any baseball on Friday, you saw that tremendous honor played out on every field in the major leagues.

For most of us living today, it’s hard to believe that there were actual death threats directed against a major league baseball player simply because he was black. But it happened because there were and are evil people in the world who base their opinion of a person on the color of their skin, something over which they have no control.

Paul could not have spoken with more clarity when he made his speech to a group of Gentiles in Athens recorded in Acts 17. In God’s world, all human beings come from Adam; we all have that in common. In Acts 17:28, Paul, a Jew speaking to Gentiles says “we are indeed his offspring.” All of us, in that sense, are God’s children.* Stating the obvious, race does not determine quality. There are no superior races, no race distinctions in God’s world. Recently, a black preacher made this astute observation:

If a preacher should open the Bible and speak against racial discrimination; or if he were to oppose the claim one human group makes to be superior to another— he is *not* preaching a “social gospel.” He is, in fact, preaching against a sin.

We expect gospel preachers to uphold what is right and to rebuke what is wrong. Preaching that men should not make arbitrary class and race distinctions; or decrying the conclusion some have reached that some humans are better than others— is the same

kind of preaching as crying out against murder, stealing, dishonesty, or sexual immorality. It upholds God’s created order.”

He’s right. We do not read anything about a “social gospel” in the Bible. The gospel is “social,” by definition since the good news is specifically directed to those in society, which is made up of people from all races, nationalities and walks of life. Paul made the point a couple of times in Romans that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, or even “Barbarians” (see Romans 1:14; 3:21-22; 10:12).

Teach this to your children; teach it frequently and teach it well. We are all God’s “offspring.”

*Of course, there is a special use of the term “children of God” to describe baptized believers; see 1 John 3:1, for example.

Changes coming in the format for the observance of the Lord’s Supper

The elders have decided to change the format of the observance of the Lord’s Supper, effective Sunday, May 1st. We are doing this for two main reasons: (1) to better focus our attention on this all-important time in our service and (2) to provide an opportunity for some of our younger men to participate in the public service. Here’s the new format:

1. The Lord’s Supper will be observed at the end, **after the invitation song.**
2. The man who heads the Lord’s supper will give a short talk.
3. Prayer is said for the bread and then the emblems are passed out. We are continuing to use the self-contained bread and fruit of the vine containers.
4. After passing out the emblems, the men reassemble at the front table and the prayer for the fruit of the vine is offered.
5. At this point the men will give a full minute for everyone to meditate.
6. The one heading the table will pass out the baskets for laying by in store to the men serving at the table and a prayer will be offered for the contribution.
7. Men will pass out baskets for the offering.
8. When that is complete the man heading the table will ask everyone to stand for the closing prayer.

Note: the men serving the Lord’s supper will meet in classroom 13-14 before services with one of the elders to make sure of assignments.

2022 Folsom Bible Boot Camp

What a Friend!!

April 29-May 1, 2022

Registration Link: <https://tinyurl.com/23995x79>

Interesting Evangelism Statistics

A few years ago we conducted a survey of 15 churches to obtain information about their 5 most recent converts. The results are interesting, and some positive conclusions can be made from them. Granted, this is from a different part of the country, but people aren't that different. Here are the results:

Sex

53% female
47% male

Race

89% white
11% black

Age

females:

31% less than 20 years old
46% 20 to 40 years old
13% 40 to 65 years old
10% over 65 years old
average age = 31.6

males:

37% less than 20 years old
46% 20 to 40 years old
8% 40 to 65 years old
9% over 65 years old
average age = 27.8

Marital Status (among those 20 years old or older)

females:

7% single
43% married
30% divorced
10% widowed

males:

27% single
57% married
4% divorced
12% divorced/remarried

How initially contacted

30% child of a member
19% friend of a member
15% relative of a member (not child/spouse)
10% spouse of a member
6% re-baptism of a member
4% advertising
1% door-to-door work
15% other

Number of one-on-one studies prior to baptism

37% zero
11% 1
10% 2
4% 3
3% 4
3% 5
32% more than 5

Time between conversions

- Reporting churches averaged 2.7 months between baptisms
- It took the average church 13.5 months to baptize 5 people, with one church reporting 5 baptisms in the last 6 months (quickest), and one church reporting 5 baptisms in the last 39 months (slowest).

So, Where Do We Find New Converts?

This survey of several churches of Christ turned up some interesting statistics about the people who are being converted to Christ. Some things didn't seem to matter much. For instance, there were about equal numbers of men and women who became Christians. And people from different races were represented in percentages that aren't far different than the general population.

The age of new converts showed an interesting trend. The highest percentages were among men and women from 20 to 40 years old. And among these, the highest numbers were for married people. This should tell us that we ought to be especially targeting young

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married people with the gospel message.

The second largest age group for converts was for those under 20 years old. Most of these were children of existing members. This is an extremely important group, and we should never fail to pay special attention to the conversion of our "own" children.

Without a doubt, the most strikingly obvious statistic is that new converts are, by far, most often among people who are friends or relatives of those who are already Christians. In fact, a look at the numbers shows that fully 80% of conversions are among those that we already know. Only 4% were reached by advertising efforts, and just 1% contacted by door-to-door work.

What does this tell us? It's clear that we need to be working hard to teach and convert our own family members, our friends and co-workers, our neighbors and other acquaintances. 4 out of every 5 conversions are likely to come from these folks who are already known to us. And yet we continue to target people we don't know with ads and door knocking. Let's change that. Let's get more efficient. Let's work energetically to teach and convert as many as we can— especially those we already know.

—Greg Gwin, Collegevue Beacon
Columbia, Tennessee, 02-22-22