

May 22, 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 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 when is passed.
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 (Jonah 3 & 4)

Room 12: Young Adults Class

The Gospel of Mark.

Does the evidence prove that Jesus is the Christ?

All young adults and college age are invited.

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: Scott Gardner

“The Heart of Servant Leadership”

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: Colossians

Room 15/16: Great Old Testament Texts

Room 12: Young Adults Class

Culture: Roe v. Wade

Due to an unprecedented and illegal leak of a Supreme Court majority opinion document, we have learned that it is likely that the court will overturn what may be the most notorious decision ever rendered by that court, at least since the landmark *Brown v Board of Education* decision in 1954. *Roe v. Wade* made abortion legal in the U.S. in 1973 and since then, over **63 million** babies have been aborted, as of January, 2022. One media outlet said the US Supreme Court is on the verge of “*scrapping a right enshrined in the constitution for nearly 50 years.*” Yet it will be overturned because it’s bad law: there is no “*right enshrined in the constitution*” to intentionally end a child’s life. That’s the media for you, though.

Paul predicted, “*...while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived*” (II Timothy 3:13) and that’s what’s happening; it getting worse. Legislation in some states allow the aborting of a baby right up to the time of birth. The previous governor of Virginia was poised to sign into law a bill allowing the termination of the life of a baby even *after* birth. There’s a name for that: “infanticide.” Fortunately, he was voted out of office, but how could a piece of legislation like that even get that far?

Even Bill Clinton said “abortion should not only be safe and legal; it should be rare.” He echoed this language frequently as president. Speaking to the Congressional Women’s Caucus at the New York Hilton in 1992 he said, “We have to remind the American people once again that being pro-choice is very different from being pro-abortion,” he told the. Now it’s unashamedly pro-abortion. For some, abortion is a religion.

What is abortion? The dictionary says, “the deliberate termination of a human pregnancy.” In the process a human — not just the “pregnancy” — is being terminated. The standard definition of “murder” is *the unlawful premeditated killing of one human being by another*. The Greek, *phónos*, means “murder, homicide; to commit intentional, unjustified, homicide.” So, I have some questions:

1. Is a baby in the womb a human being, a person?
2. Is killing a person a sin?
3. Is killing a person while in the womb ever justifiable?

Let’s look at these in order.

1: Is a baby in the womb a human being?

This used to be debated, but science has settled the issue — and, remember, we’ve heard “*follow the science*” repeatedly in the last couple of years. So here’s just one article on the science: “*Recognition between sperm and the egg surface marks the beginning of life in all sexually reproducing organisms*” Raj, I., Sadat, et al., *Structural Basis of Egg Coat-Sperm Recognition at Fertilization*, Cell, 2017. See <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18494705/> — or, better yet, read Psalm 139:13:

“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb.”

#2: Is killing a human being a sin?

Of course, unless the killing is “justifiable homicide” such as in an authentic case of self defense. War is another issue entirely. A law allowing the killing of a child in a womb does not con-

vert it to something other than sin. Exodus 20:13 is clear: “*you shall not murder.*” In the Hebrew, the word *rāsab* means putting to death *suddenly without justifiable cause*. The word also means causing death through carelessness or negligence. Psalm 10:8 says the wicked “*sits in ambush in the villages; in hiding places he murders the innocent.*” Who in the world is more innocent than an indefensible child in a womb? Jesus repeats the commandment not to murder (Matthew 19:18; cf. 5:21ff). Ironically, even under civil law, if someone murders a pregnant woman it is consider a *double homicide* in 38 states, including California — and it doesn’t matter how far along she is in her pregnancy.

#3: Is killing a baby (a person) in the womb ever justifiable?

Some say yes if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest. But it’s not the child’s fault, so there is no inherent right to end the pregnancy. And, as an argument to justify abortion-on-demand, it’s a smokescreen. 96.5% of abortions are for economic or social reasons; only 1% are because the mother’s life is in danger. To be candid, the loudest complaints about making abortion less available come from the “hookup culture” — youngish women who want to have casual sex and then “remedy” the “problem” with an affordable, convenient abortion and, since *Roe v Wade*, abortion is readily available and affordable. The average cost for an abortion is about \$600 - \$750; and there are charities that will take care of the fee if one is unable to pay. Planned Parenthood, which accounts for 40% of all abortions (about 350,000 per year) is even partially funded by tax dollars.

The founder of Planned Parenthood is Margaret Sanger, a eugenicist and racist. She wrote in her autobiography about speaking to a Ku Klux Klan group and advocated for a eugenics approach to breeding for “*the gradual suppression, elimination and eventual extinction, of defective stocks — those human weeds which threaten the blooming of the finest flowers of American civilization.*”

Several people who constantly cry “racism” try to suppress the truth about Sanger. Even so, an article by Kristan Hawkins in *USA Today* in July of 2020 asked, “*How a woman who advocated for the selective breeding of her fellow citizens came to be memorialized with those who built a country is hard to understand.*” (<https://tinyurl.com/2p97k4xx>). That’s an understatement. The founder of the major provider of abortion felt blacks were “human weeds” which threatened American civilization.

Speaking of things hard to understand, the abortion culture is mystifying. People have become “flippant” about killing a child in a womb. But among all the images we’ve seen in the news due to the “panic” created by the imminent demise of *Roe v Wade*, one photo stood out to me: A young woman is holding a sign that says, “*I wish my mother had aborted me.*”

How sad and “crooked” is that?

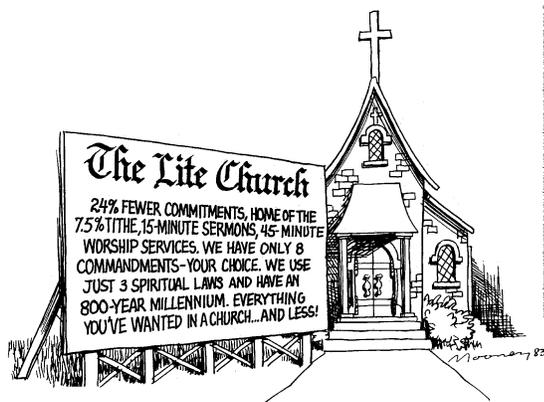
DAVID POSEY

* No one can accuse *USA Today* of being a conservative media outlet

“Church Lite”

The cartoon below is about 30 years old and satirizes a growing trend in churches at the time. That trend, technically, is called “reductionism” — reducing services and responsibilities in the church to the lowest common denominator in order to attract more people. In the 30 years since then, we have seen that theory blossom among thousands of evangelical “mega-churches” in the United States. These “churches” seem to be unique to America. When we visited Europe in 2018, we were struck by the many large cathedrals, even in the smallest cities. But these huge structures are empty and...

“...stand as mute but vivid reminders of the past...(and) bear witness to the fact that European society has undergone a gradual but far-reaching change which has displaced religion from the center of both public and private life” (Allen, Hughes, & Weed, *The Worldly Church*, 1988, page 11).



Those authors go on to say that (I’m paraphrasing), in the US, instead of padlocking our church buildings or turning them into museums, as they did in Europe, we opened the doors wider to accommodate and adapt to the pressures of an increasingly secular society. “*The process of secularization is thought by many to have advanced even further than in Europe*” (*The Worldly Church*, p. 12). There is evidence for that. There are plenty of “churches lite” to choose from today, including not a few churches of Christ.

Churches that seek to cater to the most secular people in our society may not look like the caricature in the cartoon but they do share some characteristics. For example, many offer a choice of service: “traditional,” “contemporary” and (in some cases) “progressive.” When I first encountered this years ago in Orange County, the difference was mainly in the type of music offered, from *acappella* to a choir to a full-blown 5-10 piece band. Music was the first domino to fall.

As this trend continued, there were changes in almost every element of the service, from the frequency of the Lord’s Supper to the methods of raising money to the oversimplification of Bible studies (all application, no doctrine) and to a dramatic change in the content and presentation of sermons (see sidebar). That all leads to a variety of troublesome trends.

This has been accentuated recently with the pending controversy about *Roe v Wade*. More than one high profile evangelical leader has made comments to the effect that

“churches should not destroy unity or fellowship over political differences.” But they include abortion as a “political” difference, some even calling the abortion issue “nuanced” and saying, in an effort to be “winsome” (appealing), we should be careful about how we talk about it.

God is not “nuanced” or “winsome” about taking the life of another. He is not nuanced or winsome about the definition of a man or woman or about who can marry or about a whole host of things. There is no “nuance” in Romans 1:18, where Paul says, “*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth*” nor in the list of sins that follows through v. 32. Paul also said, unabashedly, in Romans 3:4, “*Let God be true though every one were a liar...*” The prophet Jeremiah said, in Jeremiah 6:15-16:

Were they ashamed when they committed abomination?

No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush...

...Thus says the Lord: “Stand by the roads, and look,

and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and

walk in it, and find rest for your souls.

But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’

With all that, I stubbornly hold on to the view that there are many earnest people looking for the “ancient paths” to walk in. They are fed up with the vacillation and equivocation on clear biblical issues. They yearn for the spirit of Paul in Romans and Jesus in the sermon on the mount, instead of the pabulum being offered up inside the walls of so many buildings with “church” on their signs.

Those are the people God is looking for. Our role is to spread the seed (the word of God) far and wide so that it might fall upon those good hearts (see Mark 4:1-9). At Folsom, we are committed to keep doing that and “let the seed fall where it may.”

DAVID POSEY

Preaching today...

...has that kind of quality—you know, get it down to a bumper sticker or what you can put on a sign in front of the church building... But maybe the best evangelism is that which is larger... where people come and say, ‘I have my college degree and I’m intelligent and I’ve never heard anything like this before. I’m having difficulty with what you just said.’ I’d love a race of preachers who take that as a high compliment and say, ‘Of course, as if you could possibly understand after visiting only one time... Are you interested? We have a class you could attend.’ To me, that would be fairer to the gospel than bragging, ‘I am proud to say I have never ever confused anybody in a sermon...’ By the way, that’s liberal Protestantism, which has bled in now to the church growth movement in some of its aspects, and I think it’s ugly. I think it’s cheap, because it’s not fair to the gospel...

William Willimon