

June 19, 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.**

Mark your calendars!

VBS: July 18-22, 2022, 9:30-11AM

Theme: Heroes of Faith, Hebrews 11

Schedule

The Lord’s Day

9:30 AM Bible Classes

Auditorium: Jude

Room 15/16: Great Old Testament Texts

Room 12: Young Adult Class

The Gospel of Mark

Does the evidence prove that Jesus is the Christ?

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: Scott Gardner

“Be Still and Know the I Am God”

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

2 PM Bible Class Suspended for the Summer

Bible Class @ 5 PM — Praying the Psalms (Auditorium)

High School Class, 5 PM @ David & Christie Posey’s home: NO CLASS TONIGHT (due to camp)

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

Room 15/16: Great Old Testament Texts

Room 12: Young Adults Class

Wise is as Wise Does – from the Inside Out

ED SANDERSON, SR.

Nobody likes to play the fool. It's a human thing. Male or female, young or old, educated or not, rich or poor, everybody cares about being wise. And almost everybody thinks that he/she is wise! Blogs and advice columns surround us like leaves in the autumn, and the "water cooler" and "sewing circle" buzz with everyone's views. It is therefore humbling when others ask us advice. It reminds me of the old saying attributed to the Chinese teacher from the 6th Century B.C., Lao Tse, in his *Tao Tè Ching*, "Those who say don't know, and those who know don't say."

And wisdom is a "high-risk, high-reward" business. It is not merely decoration of quotations for style. God warns us in Proverbs 14:12 that "There is a way *which seems* right to a person, But its end is the way of death." Some paths look promising and end up going nowhere – or worse. The slogans we memorize and the books we read are idle amusement unless we follow their ideas. We live out the consequences of ideas and teachings, for better or worse.

The Bible teaches us ways that work in the real world, even imperfectly in our sin-broken world. I should also say that my experience and secular studies have shown me that God's ways work – at least when I work them. Constructive activity makes creation better and destructive activity fosters worse outcomes. Loving service in marriage and the home cultivate positive outcomes, and a failure is dysfunctional. Loving service in the workplace and in government nurtures better results, while predatory attitudes and actions destroy. And I learned when I studied and taught comparative religion at C.S.U. Northridge years ago that Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and other widespread religions agree. It is a human reality, not merely linked to any one religious tradition. See for yourself.

But this is what God's *Torah/Law* – *Genesis* through *Deuteronomy* – teaches and what God's Law-authorized Prophetic History – *Joshua* through *II Chronicles* – illustrates, as well as what His authorized poetry – *Job* through *Song of Solomon*, teaches and illustrates. It is what God's authorized written Prophets apply from *Isaiab* through *Malachi*. And it is what Jesus lived and taught during His earthly life as well as through His authorized apostles and prophets in the *New Testament*.

Yet all religions also teach – as I have learned! – many types of human wisdom look wise for a while. Get-rich-quick schemes can permit us to prey upon others and "enjoy" the taste of temporary wins that turn sour in their after-taste or in my stomach. And almost every religious tradition shares similar warnings. Wise use of time, foods, drink, relationships look very similar in all the major religious traditions, though details may vary. The question of wise living, however, forces us beyond the "outside-in," "check-the-boxes" approaches where we start as children.

Wise living starts in the heart and moves to the hands, mouth/lips, and feet/paths – even as our hearts are formed by our practices, our language and our movements through life. And all human religions recognize this.

The Book of James teaches about ways that work by applying Jesus' teachings

that grow out of His fulfillment of the Old Testament. For example, He notes that even our use of words can be wonderful or terrible, and that this grows from the fountain and tree of our heart. In James 3, we read that we cannot "tame" the tongue, but we can bridle it. When we don't it can "burn down the house," but when we do, it can bless everyone. And human experiences confirms that truth.

The heart of this is James 3:13-18, where we learn that true wisdom is shown by actions that are "gently wise," and that they grow from "above." God's character and our imitation of that character begins with Jesus' purity that is peace-loving, gentle or bridled, reasonable (open to true arguments), filled with mercy and good consequences, sincerely producing right peacefully.

Both of these are visible in my neighborhood today. Both are promoted today. Both are tempting to me here and now. But only one is truly eternally wise. And my life is showing my heart's wisdom today. My actions are showing and building my heart's wisdom today.

What a choice! Grace and glory on my block, in my shoes, in my relationships, are available. And in every culture, every country, every language. Wow. Thanks, God!

"The slogans we memorize and the books we read are idle amusement unless we follow their ideas. We live out the consequences of ideas and teachings, for better or worse."

The “Culture” of the Church at Folsom

In my sermon last Sunday, I spoke briefly about the “culture” of the Folsom church. “Culture” means the attitudes and behavior characteristics of a group of people. That applies here, but I’m also using “culture” in the popular sense of a “vibe” or an “atmosphere” — a “mood.” I believe I can say, without fear of contradiction, that the culture of the church at Folsom — the “vibe” — is excellent.

Having said that, a disclaimer: I’m not talking about a banal, “happy-go-lucky” vibe or an atmosphere where we ignore reality — a “*whistling past the graveyard*” mood. And no church in the history of mankind, including Folsom, is perfect and, to be clear, the culture of a church — the atmosphere — is not the main criteria in judging whether a church is faithful. The church at Corinth may have had a great “vibe” but it was fraught with problems and the “mood” in the church at Galatia was beside the point when Paul said, “*I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel...*” Galatians 1:6. A church can have the best mood, atmosphere — *vibe* — in the world while failing miserably in its mission to teach the pure gospel of Christ. We are aware of churches full of smiling people that have jettisoned the truth and are serving up a “gospel” with no cross and no cost. That’s not the “culture” of the Folsom church. The first order of business here is to teach the pure gospel of Christ and reject *outright* any and all attempts to preach or teach a “different” gospel.

But — *this is important* — faithfully teaching the purity of the gospel and creating a pleasing, God-glorifying culture are not mutually exclusive. They should go hand-in-hand. After all, the last time I checked the term “gospel” still means “*good news*.” So, shouldn’t a gospel-centered church radiate that “good news”?

A culture of a church is formed by the attitude of the majority. If the majority is negative, critical and cynical, that becomes the “vibe” of the church; you can feel it when you walk through the doors. In churches that have a majority of people who are ultra-political, the mood is rarely positive because there is hardly anything to celebrate in the political arena so the outlook is naturally pessimistic. But when the majority of the people in a church desire to be there and when the majority considers other members their friends and when the majority is positive about the future and anxious to study God’s word, the mood will naturally be upbeat and positive.

I’ve been here 28 years and the church has seen a lot changes and been through several difficult situations. Through it all, the majority of people at Folsom have been upbeat, positive and confident. Yes, coming out of Covid,

several families have chosen to relocate to different parts of the country for a variety of reasons, but all left on good terms (the kind notes we have received from most seem to confirm this). Lately, we seen baptisms and we have welcomed some new families, with more to come. The majority of people who attend here love to study and discuss God’s word together.

Post-Covid, we are now back up to speed with several classes at the building and at members’ homes. Our most effective classes are those in which there is a rich discussion of God’s word and where students are asking questions, making comments and everyone is engaged. This creates a kind of synergy, where Christians are learning from each other, as well as from the teacher of the class.

It’s true that some classes can become something like a radio talk show, where people are just sharing opinions. I’ve been in classes in other churches where the teacher seems

Classes (as of June, 2022)

Classes at the building on Sundays (9:30 AM & 5 PM) & Wednesdays (7 PM).

See the View or the website at folsomchurch.com.

Home classes – those that are closed are only closed due to capacity limits. We will keep you informed if there are openings in these. If you are engaged in a home study, please let **Len Baker** know.

- Book of Acts: OPEN. (5:30-6:30) Contact Jack Horak (rotating host).
- Book of Acts: Closed.
- Book of John: Closed (2pm)
- Book of Romans: Closed. (5pm)
- Various Topics: OPEN. High School students class at David & Christie Posey’s home, 5 PM every Sunday. See David or Christie
- Monthly middle school student’s class, various homes. OPEN. See Dan Stegall

to validate every opinion, even contradictory ones. “Participation” can become an idol. I once was bragging to my dad about how much participation we had in a class I taught and he said, “*so did you actually **teach** anything?*” I’ve never forgotten that. The teacher is responsible for making sure the truth is taught and keeping the class discussion from becoming “pooled ignorance.” There are ways for a teacher to correct misstatements without being obnoxious.

We have many excellent Bible students here and I have never been disappointed in the quality of the comments in a class. If a comment is not on target, teachers here are great at gently correcting it and, when possible, turning it into a positive. We try not to discourage anyone from making comments and no teacher should ever embarrass a student and he should, as much as possible, avoid being “intimidating.”

The culture at Folsom can be summed up this way: we breathe in the pure air of the good news of Christ and exhale a commitment to obedience of the faith and a pure love for each other. That “atmosphere” makes the church at Folsom a “magnetic fellowship” that has drawn people here who care about truth and who love Jesus. That’s a culture worth maintaining and building upon.

DAVID POSEY