

July 10, 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 five 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: “Wisdom from Above”

Room 15/16: Old Testament Characters & Their Relationships

Room 12: Young Adult Class: Proverbs

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

Romans Series: “Truth Suppressed, People Depressed”

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

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: Wisdom from Above

Room 15/16: Old Testament Characters: Relationships

Room 12: Young Adults Class

Really Right

ED SANDERSON, SR.

Everyone wants to be right. Throughout history, all over the world, nobody sets out to be wrong. It seems to be a human characteristic. It doesn't matter if it is a big thing or a small thing, we want to get it right. That is why humans argue in every language, on every continent.

Most of us think that we are right. Whether it has to do with religion or philosophy, political preferences, taste in food, or which sports team is best, we form opinions and trust in "right" as we see it. Humans often wager valuables in support of what we think – from ball games to horse races to investment choices to ballot choices. And the biggest wager is one's life. That is why religious choices – even the choice to avoid traditional religions – are often very intense and intimate for us. And we are not alone. Our neighbors are the same.

Mature people recognize that. And since we talk with others who are committed to what they think is right, honest relationships develop personal trust so that people inevitably tip-toe into "politics and religion" and other risky areas. Sometimes. If we are merely using other people as tools for our agenda, real talk disappears. But human community grows from listening to one another so we understand while sharing what we see as right. Our integrity requires that we do what we see as right, and honoring the integrity of others helps us each grow faithfully and safely.

Jesus' apostle Peter wrote about this reality in his first letter, *I Peter*, and advises that Christians will be asked a "reason for the hope/expectation" that inspires our way of life, even in times when some people are persecuting us (I Pet. 3, esp. 3:15-16). He says that the key is to set Jesus Christ apart as lord/master of our heart so we live as He did and taught, and then being open to sharing our reasons. Talk connects humbly and empowers rather than pushing others around.

My experience in life has taught me that people who are not interested in Jesus or Peter are in the same boat as me. They also sometimes suffer when abusive, powerful people unjustly afflict them – as though that would change their mind about what is right. Might is not the measure of right.

All of us are annoyed by that kind of injustice – so annoyed that it makes it difficult for us to see any truth that they might be trying to teach. In our language, we call such people "self-righteous." My

dictionary defines this as "righteous in one's own esteem" (*Oxford Annotated Dictionary*, 1971, p. 425). Another defines it as "believing that your ideas and behavior are morally better than those of other people." And that is what is so annoying: believing that self is "better than." Ouch. Our family, clan, tribe, nation, team, party, religion – all are extensions of self. You vs. me, us vs. you, divisions justified by "what is right."

It is not nearly as irritating when others think that they are right, as long as they give us the same consideration. We who are Christians are told in II Timothy 2:24-26 that we must remember that we are the Lord's servants, not bosses of others. He says that we must not be quarrelsome people looking for strife.

He says that it is better for us to be kind to all and become skillful in teaching others. Know what we think so we can share it with others simply and gently. He says we need to be patient in when we are wronged – enduring the wrong we suffer. He says that we must correct others in gentleness, remembering that they are opposing their own best interests and not just "us." And he says that God is the one who can grant them repentance/change leading to knowledge of the truth – to the right. He says that they can recover themselves from the slanderer/devil, whose trap led them to be enslaved to do his will. God and them – they have all the power.

And that is the method that works. Intense commitments to what people see as right is a good and noble thing. That energy for right – righteousness – can be wrongly directed in any of us, but it needs to be honored. Gentle, enduring, non-abusive, non-bullying, non-intimidating sharing of that view of right is necessary to actually change minds and lives. It is a human thing.

But it is hard. It requires having confidence that I am right, so the universe fits with what I see. The gravity of life can bring us all toward right. As a wise lady once said, "if I'm not right, I change." I suspect that you do, too. Thinking that we might be wrong creates a hole in us that demands to be filled. But if I think that I am being intimidated, I defend myself, put my head down, and close my eyes. And when we people close our eyes and run into one another, we people get hurt. And that is just wrong.

"He says that we must not be quarrelsome people looking for strife. He says that it is better for us to be kind to all and become skillful in teaching others."

Not So Hidden Agendas

When we speak we are to speak “as one who is speaking actual words of God” (1 Peter 4:11, NASB). That means we sincerely aim to speak in a way that honors God’s words. One application of that is that we speak without a hidden personal agenda. The word “agenda” means “the underlying intentions or motives of a person.” That word “underlying” is the key. If I ask questions or make statements in a way that hides my motive, I am probably not being completely honest. Or, if I speak with the primary aim of increasing my popularity or stature within a group, I’m not being honest.

This shouldn’t happen in churches, but it does. People will ask questions that seem innocuous but they ask with the aim of gaining an advantage of some kind. In the 1970s, when there was so much talk about marriage, divorce and remarriage (“MDR” with the emphasis on the D & R) some men and women asked questions with the underlying agenda of trying to find a “scriptural” way to get out of their marriage — usually so they could marry someone else. This became a huge problem in many churches.

Honesty is an absolute prerequisite in any healthy relationship. That precludes discussing a matter with someone while concealing a “hidden agenda.” A person who conceals his motive when asking a question is lacking integrity and people without integrity cannot please God, no matter how large a role they play in the church. The Bible speaks of this no less than ten times in the book of Proverbs alone. Here are a few of those Proverbs:

Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out. *Proverbs 10:9*

Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is crooked in speech and is a fool. *Proverbs 19:1*

Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered, but he who is crooked in his ways will suddenly fall. *Proverbs 28:18*

There is a story about a little girl who did something wrong. Her mother punished her by making her sit in a corner. The girl sat for awhile and then said, “I’m sitting down on the outside, but I’m standing up on the inside.” She was outwardly doing what she was told, but in her heart she was not obedient. We expect that sort of behavior in little kids — they can be obstinate and are good at keeping their true motives under wraps. Loving discipline will change that. But when adults who claim to walk with Christ act that way, they need to change, in a hurry, or face those terrifying words from the Lord, “I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness...” (Matthew 7:23).

Christians are to be pure in heart (Matthew 5:8) — pure motives, pure intentions, no guile. Jesus recognized Nathanael as “an Israelite in whom there is no guile” (John 1:47) which suggests it may be a quality more rare than we think. All of us should work toward being a Nathanael in that regard.

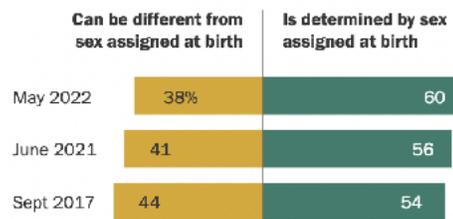
You can’t have a selfish agenda, hidden or otherwise, and still be pure in heart. But this can be difficult because the “self” keeps surfacing in most of us. Jesus acted and spoke with no hidden agenda — and he was crucified for it. To be pure in heart, we need to constantly check our motives.

dp

CULTURE

According to new polling from Pew, 60% of Americans believe that gender is determined by sex assigned at birth, in comparison to 38% who say otherwise. Since 2017, the electorate has shifted 12 points in favor of the position that gender is determined by biology.

% saying whether a person is a man or a woman ...



Note: For top panel, share of respondents who didn’t offer an answer shown but not labeled. For bottom panel, share of respondents who didn’t offer an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 16-22, 2022.

“Americans’ Complex Views on Gender Identity and Transgender Issues”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

- I think it’s common knowledge that Disney’s new Buzz Lightyear movie is laced with LGBTQ content. It may not be common knowledge that the movie has terrible box office results. For those who argued that “Lightyear” tanked because of confusion about streaming vs. theatrical, or because parents weren’t going to theaters as much: “Minions: The Rise of Gru” did more business in one weekend than “Lightyear” has over its entire theatrical run. People may be getting tired of the constant in-your-face tactics of the LGBTQ movement.
- Headline from *The Today Show*, “Eight dads opened up about how abortion has helped them become the fathers they are today.” Philosopher Eric Hoffer said, “We lie loudest when we lie to ourselves.”
- The cartoon below illustrates a young person’s attitude after spending countless hours on social media that leads to the belief that nearly everyone she interacts with on social media knows her better than anyone else, including her parents. That is a sobering, frightening reality.

