

August 7, 2022

The View

“Sir, 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 when it is passed.

We do not solicit donations from visitors.

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 Adults Class

Proverbs

10:30 AM Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

Sermon: “Another Beautiful Church”

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

2:00 PM Bible Class Suspended for the Summer

Bible Class @ 5:00 PM - Praying the Psalms (Auditorium)

High School Class, Class 5 PM @ David & Christie’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 7PM @ Building

Bible classes for all ages

Auditorium: Wisdom from Above

Room 15/16: Old Testament Characters: Relationships)

Room 12: Young Adults Class

The Patience of Jesus

Jeff Herrin

English classes were a long time ago for many of us. Perhaps you recall that one of the primary characteristics of literature (fiction or nonfiction) is conflict. Characters who create conflict are called antagonists and the “good guys” are the protagonists. What if we apply that to Mark? The protagonist/primary focus of the gospel is Jesus. There are several antagonists creating conflict that Jesus overcomes. You can start with Satan. Jesus goes into the wilderness to be tempted and later casts out demons on several occasions. As the story of Mark unfolds we see the religious and political leadership of Galilee and Judea emerge as another group of antagonists. This group includes the scribes, Pharisees, Herodians, chief priests, and elders. They opposed Jesus’ teaching, tried to entrap him, and plotted his crucifixion.

But what about Jesus’ disciples in Mark? Are they protagonists (helping Jesus) or antagonists (increasing Jesus conflict)? Jesus love for his disciples is unquestionable, but they were a challenge. Mark portrays the disciples in a more negative light than the other gospel writers and highlights the great effort that Jesus invested to transform his disciples. At many points in the text you can feel his frustration as he patiently continued to shape their character into the kind of people that God wanted them to be.

The disciples are slow to understand (Mk. 7:18) and hindered by hard hearts (Mk. 6:52). After Jesus feeds the five thousand in Mark 6, they are stumped about how to feed only four thousand (Mk. 8:1-4). Jesus essentially repeats a miracle because they missed the point the first time. Then, they miss it yet again when he brings up the leaven of the Pharisees (Mk. 8:17-18).

Once Jesus sets his course for Jerusalem and the cross, the disciples begin a new struggle. Peter outright rebukes Jesus in opposition of his mission to go to Jerusalem (Mk. 8:32). All of the disciples struggled with Jesus’ teaching concerning his suffering (Mk. 9:32). It seems like it must surely be the last straw when, on the road to Jerusalem, they begin to argue which of them is the greatest (Mk. 9:33-34, Mk. 10:35-41). But even then, Jesus responds with patience and correction. As the gospel concludes, Judas betrays Jesus, Peter denies him, and the other disciples flee.

Throughout his gospel Mark contrasts the failures of the disciples with the unceasing faithfulness of our Lord. Jesus patiently nurtures them through every struggle. He never loses sight of their capacity for future service in the kingdom (Mk. 10:39, Mk. 13:9-13). Are you struggling? Lean on the patience and love of our Savior? Are you frustrated with a brother or sister? Don’t give up on them! Remember the example of Jesus.

Blessed Is He Who Reads

Gary Henry

Reading is a lost art, I fear. It’s a very ancient art, of course, but in our multimedia age, many have forgotten the importance of it. The skill of reading, the value of reading, and even the enjoyment of reading are lost on most of us nowadays.

But developing a deeper devotion to God is impossible without a good bit of reading: we must either read the Scriptures for ourselves or have them read to us. As John began the great prophecy of Revelation, he wrote, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy” (1:3). There is a blessing that comes from the reading and hearing of God’s word that can’t be gained by any other means.

Private reading. There are very few of us who are reading the Scriptures privately as often as we need to. We may study a Bible lesson or two for attendance at the local congregation, and we may follow along as the preacher reads a passage from the Bible now and then, but not many of us make the reading of God’s word a regular part of our daily routine.

If you’re serious about spiritual growth, you need to read the Bible every day. You need to read through the entire Bible on a regular basis, at least once a year. You need to read longer sections of the text, taking in whole books of the Bible at one or two sittings whenever possible. And while a detailed “study” of the Bible is also important, you need to simply read the Bible as often as you can, so that the sense of the text as a whole can make its proper impression on you.

In addition to your reading, you will also profit from listening to recordings of the Bible being read by readers who really know how to read. Audio recordings of the entire Bible are readily available, and if you’ll learn to use these regularly, you may find that you enjoy hearing God’s word read while you’re driving, doing chores around the house, and so forth.

Public reading. When John said, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy,” he probably had in mind the public reading of inspired writings in the Christian assembly. And when Paul directed Timothy to “give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:13), he may also have had in mind the reading of the Scriptures when the saints assembled.

Today, many congregations include a “Scripture reading” as a part of their assembly, but unfortunately, the reading rarely includes more than a few verses. Wouldn’t it be profitable to have longer readings, even if it meant the preacher had to abbreviate his lesson to make room for the reading?

And wouldn’t it also be profitable if those who accepted the responsibility to read took that duty more seriously, carefully preparing and practicing the reading so that the real meaning of the text was made evident to the hearers by the manner in which it was read?

As a preacher, I’ve decided to slow down and actually turn to more of the passages that I cite. I urge my listeners to turn to the passages in their own Bibles, and I read not only the verse that pertains to my point but also the surrounding context, with as little comment from me as possible. I believe that I’ve been depriving my hearers of hearing the text read, and I’ve decided to rectify that. I’ve actually come around to this radical position: neither quoting the passage from memory nor projecting it on a PowerPoint slide is a good substitute for the preacher and the audience both turning to the text and reading it together in their own Bibles.

“Blessed is he who reads and he who hears,” said John. Personally, I’m going to do more reading from God’s word, both privately and publicly, and I’m going to seek out more opportunities to hear God’s word read by others. How about you?

Amazing Race

Bubba Garner

Sports are not a recent phenomenon. Man has long been interested and engaged in athletic contests. Their influence is even reflected in the language of the Scriptures, particularly Paul's writings. "I press on to the goal" (Phil. 3:4). "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1-2). "I have finished the course" (2 Tim. 4:7).

In 2 Corinthians 9, the apostle devoted an entire paragraph to the comparison of the Christian life with "the games." The Isthmian Games were held every two years at the Isthmus of Corinth, eight miles outside the city. They were modeled after the Olympic Games and included events such as footraces, boxing, wrestling, and chariot races. In such an environment, Paul's Corinthian audience would have had little trouble making the jump from the physical games to their own spiritual contest.

All Christians are involved in a race. It is not a sprint or a dash, but a marathon to be "run with endurance." It is a race that has hurdles and twists and turns and one that must be conducted according to the rules. And unlike sports seasons and games held every two or four years, this is a race that is ongoing.

What does it take to be successful in the race of life?

You have to finish what you've started. "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win" (1 Cor. 9:24). Running is not the same as winning. Just because you got out of the starting blocks does not mean that you have crossed the finish line. Just because you have run for a little while does not mean that you have gone far enough. In this race, you win when you finish what you've started.

In the next chapter, Paul used the Israelites as an illustration of this point. They all left the bondage of Egypt. They all passed through Red Sea. But they did not all make it to the Promised Land. Because of their disobedience along the way, most of them "were laid low in the wilderness" (1 Cor. 10:5).

The Christian race involves determination to complete the journey you have begun. Otherwise, you lose.

You must see the need for discipline. "Everyone who competes in the games exercises self control in all things" (1 Cor. 9:25). There were specific requirements for the athletes who entered the Isthmian Games. They had to prove that they were of pure Greek blood. They had to show that they had not forfeited their citizenship through misconduct or improper behavior. And they had to demonstrate that they had submitted themselves to ten weeks of training, willingly foregoing things that would interfere with their goals of competition. Otherwise, they were disqualified.

In our culture of convenience, everything must be obtained immediately. We want quick fixes, overnight success, and ten minute abs. But the Christian race is not run this way. It takes time, effort, energy, and deep concentration. It takes a willingness to bring your heart, soul, strength, and mind into subjection to a new Master. It takes a decision to follow the guidelines specified in the Word of God. To run without discipline, as even Paul admitted, is to run the risk of disqualification.

You have to keep your concentration on the prize. "They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable" (1 Cor. 9:25). The reason an athlete subjects his body to exercise and training is the reward that awaits him. When Craig Biggio was interviewed near the close of his career, he was asked if he would rather be elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame or win the World Series. He didn't skip a beat when he answered, "I want that ring."

In the Isthmian Games, the winner of the contest received a crown made out of olive branches and, in later years, pine leaves. And that was well worth it to them. How much more, then, our "crown of life" (Rev. 2:10) and our "unfading crown of glory" (1 Pet. 5:4)? It's the reason we started running in the first place. How tragic to forfeit the prize for something of far less value. Don't take your eye off of where you're going. When you do, you start running in the wrong direction.

We have all overcome obstacles to get this far down the road. There are likely other trials that await us up ahead. But let's not stop until we get home. This is a race to the finish.



Read your Bible