

November 13, 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.**

**Starts Today**

## “How We Got the Bible”

**Mike Wilson**

Santa Clara church of Christ

**November 13-16, 2022**

**“God Spoke”: Sunday 9:30 AM**

**“The Concept of a Book”: Sunday 10:30 AM**

**“Transmission of the Text Down Through the Ages”: Sunday 5 PM**

**“The Bible in the Middle Ages”: Monday 7 PM**

**“An ‘English’ Bible”: Tuesday 7 PM**

**“The End Result: ‘The World’s Greatest Book: — Wednesday 7 PM**

**No Bible classes today or Wednesday.**

**We will resume our regular schedule next Sunday**

**God has spoken. Let’s make sure we listen.**

With titles from “God Spoke” to “The World’s Greatest Book,” we are in for an inspirational and edifying four days. There is a strong apologetic flavor to this series and that’s important (1 Peter 3:15). After all, I don’t have to tell you that there are many in the world today who attempt to discredit the Bible. So, a review of it’s history, veracity and reliability is important.

There is another factor to consider: If God spoke through the “world’s greatest book,” to which we have unparalleled access, we should treasure it more than anything in the world. It’s not the goatskin leather cover or the special paper that you find on some of the more expensive Bibles. Those are nice (I have a few myself). But a worn out paperback copy contains the same word of God – and *that* is what counts. Read Hebrews 1:1ff and 4:12-13. – dp

# A WAY THAT IS RIGHT AND CANNOT BE WRONG

BY DAVID POSEY

Years ago, I was asked to preach a meeting at a church in the Northwest. When I got there, I was informed that the current preacher was causing division by preaching sermons that they described as “liberal” (in subsequent conversa-



tions with the preacher, I learned they were correct).

In the first sermon of the meeting, I drew a picture of Noah’s ark on the whiteboard. I drew it according to Genesis 6 & 8 — one door, one window and 3 decks, and said I believe it was actually 300 cubits x 50 cubits by 30 cubits. I said, “*that is good enough for me. It says all I need to know about what a picture of the ark should look like and it also tells you how I read the Bible.*”

There we’re some in that church, including the preacher, who thought that was too strict. I said, “why would I add or take away from what God clearly says here? Why would I choose to believe that the ark had more than one door? When I stick to what the Bible actually *says*, I can’t be wrong.”

This isn’t complicated; this is first principle, basic stuff. When it comes to how we live, how we function as a church including how we worship, **there is a way that is right and cannot be wrong.\***

It’s true that there are many things in life and even in the work of the church that are left to our judgment — things God has not spoken specifically about. For example, in the church, when it comes to assemblies, we are to meet on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1-2), but the Bible does not specify the “appointed times” within that 24 hour period.

So, when I say, “there is a way that is right and cannot be wrong,” I’m talking about the many things God has *specifically* addressed though precept or principle. We’ll look at some of those below but we must first agree that there is specific truth to be applied. Sometimes we call it “doctrine” — a word or command from God that we are bound to keep. If you have any doubt about this, please read the following texts. These are just a few of the many passages that speak to the reality and importance of the word of God: Psalm 19:7-11;

Proverbs 30:4-6; Matthew 4:4; Luke 8:20-21; 11:27-28; John 8:31-32; Acts 17:11; I Thessalonians 2:12-13; II Timothy 4:3-4; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 19:12-14. All of these passages affirm that God has revealed his will to us. If we follow his will in those specific areas of life and worship, we can know that we are *right and cannot be wrong.*

One other thing: there are many who love to think “outside the box.” That’s fine, but I’m sure you will agree that before you go outside the box you need to know what’s *in* the box — see I Timothy 6:3-5.



My point is simple: when it comes to religion, in most aspects of what we do, *there is a way that is right and cannot be wrong.* And if we intentionally speak as God speaks, that can’t be wrong, can it? I Peter 4:11 says, “*Whoever speaks is to do so as one who is speaking actual words of God...*” (NASB). How can we go wrong if we stick to that principle? The oft-repeated slogans in the past were helpful: “*we do Bible things in Bible ways, call Bible things by Bible names*” and “*speak where the Bible speaks, be silent where it is silent.*” Those slogans need further explanation, but they point to the need to stick to the Bible when making decisions that impact the church.

The majority of the religious world has rejected this fundamental principle. The Roman Catholics allow the Pope to add and subtract from God’s word. The Mormons have their “Book of Mormon” and the JW’s have their “discreet slave class” that rules on what the Bible “actually” says. Other churches are less obvious, but either ignore commands or twist them to make them say what they want them to say to rubber stamp their already-formed plans.

I taught a class at a prison several years ago and a young inmate came up to me and, almost in tears, said, “I’m so confused. So many men come here and teach classes from the Bible but much of what they say is different from what others say.” I found out that there were 33 different men engaged in “prison ministry” all from different religious groups and denominations. All I could say to the man was “make sure everything you listen to comes from this” as I pointed to my Bible.

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\* (1) I’m not sure I came up with that title, I may have heard it somewhere, but I don’t remember. (2) This is from a transcript of a sermon I did in 2019.

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Paul told Timothy, “*The Lord knows who are his.*” (II Timothy 2:19). Who do you think that is? Read II Timothy 2:14-19. It’s got to be those who listen to God and do what he says — when we know the right thing to do and we do it (James 4:17). There *is* a way that is right and cannot be wrong.

Let’s think about this from the standpoint of how the church should function. Can we know? Can we be sure? Are we doing the right things in the way we worship, in the way we use the Lord’s money, and in doing the work the Holy Spirit has assigned? How should we conduct our assemblies? Is there a way that is right and cannot be wrong? In many churches today, there is no true commitment to do only the things that are authorized by God in his word. In some, the focus seems to be on providing something that appeals to the flesh: entertainment and emotionalism.

For example, a popular denominational church features a youngish preacher who makes himself the center of everything. He is a talented speaker with lots of charisma but his sermons always challenging the plain meaning of the text. One Sunday, as he walked out on the stage, he did so to AC/DC’s song, “Highway to Hell.” That song includes the lyrics, “And I’m going down/All the way/ I’m on the highway to hell.” Why he did that, I’ll never know; but I think we would agree that that is a far cry from worshiping God in spirit and truth as John 4:24 instructs us to do.

Other churches go the other extreme of adding to God’s word, imposing laws and rules about how you should look when you enter the assembly. For example, we know of churches that have outlawed women wearing lipstick and jeans and have man-made rules about the “authorized” length of one’s hair, and a host of other issues.

The Bible is not hard to understand when it comes to what we do on the first day of every week — pray, sing, preach, take up a collection and observe the Lord’s Supper — doing Bible things in Bible ways. Every church that is aiming for truth does those things. When we stick to the things God has told us to do, and avoid those things about which God is silent, *how can we go wrong?*

***What we do in our assemblies:  
Is there are way that is right and cannot be wrong?***

In Philippians 3:1 Paul says, “*Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.*” I have heard brethren mock the idea of doing that which is “safe.” Now, I agree if “safe” means that we impose unrevealed rules and laws like those discussed above (lipstick and jeans). But some who mock the idea of doing what is “safe” are looking for a reason to allow women to teach in mixed company or to include programs for funding the work through means other than the freewill offering of the saints on the first day of the week, as authorized in the New Testament.

Why take a risk when it comes to things God has clearly spoken about? In I Corinthians 4:6, Paul warns against going beyond “what is written.” Why not stay with what is written and speak as God speaks, especially when it comes to how we function in our assemblies or in appointing who will serve or lead? After all, Christ is the King of his church; why risk going beyond his authority?

***Here are the things we do that are clearly authorized:***

- We preach and teach directly from the scriptures. II Timothy 2:15
- We choose a plurality of men who are married and have believing children to be elders, among the other qualifications specified in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- We sing songs, hymns and spiritual songs that communicate biblical truth, without a choir and without musical instruments. (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
- The Lord’s Supper is observed every first day of the week: not monthly; not quarterly; not annually. (Acts 20:7).

• All of our revenue comes from the free-will contributions of our members, collected on the first day of the week. I Corinthians 16:1ff.

• We follow the pattern as laid out in the scriptures for how we spend the money from the treasury — for edification of the saints here in Folsom, or for helping brethren — wherever they are

— when they are suffering loss; or for supporting individual preachers in other places.

- And, if you just call me Dave, David, Poppy, Mr. Posey, Brother Posey or even “preacher”... that can’t be wrong, can it? But calling me “**the** Pastor” (I’m just one of 5 “pastors”) or “Reverend” — as if I’m something special, or have some special title — is dead wrong (see Matthew 23:8-12).

Can anyone point to the Bible and contradict any of this? No one has ever done that, in my experience. So, why not stick to what right and cannot be wrong?

Why do leaders in some churches insist on doing things that contradict the pattern that’s given to us in the Bible? Our target what is written (I Corinthians 4:6). Our aim is to let the Bible speak: not men; not tradition, not emotion. In all we do in worship and the work of the church, there is a way that is right and cannot be wrong and that’s what we intend to do.