

January 29, 2023

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.**

Schedule

The Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Classes

Auditorium: "Love Your Bible"

Young Adult Class: "Love, Service & Culture"

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today

David Posey

Love Your Bible: Countering Culture Shock

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

Group Meetings Today

(Check with the deacon for your group)

Bible Class: 5:00 PM @ the Building

"Praying the Psalms" (Auditorium)

*High School Class @ 5 PM @ David & Christie Posey's home: **No Class Tonight***

Middle school class: monthly (contact David Sanderson (david.r.sanderson@intel.com)

or Seth Reagan (sethreagan@gmail.com)

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: Love Your Bible

Room 12: Young Adults Class: "Love, Service & Culture"

LOVE YOUR BIBLE

Supplemental Info

History

Apostasy

"But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction." *II Peter 2:1*

"Destructive Heresies" in Church Organization.

Early in the second century, "We begin to find congregations headed by a single officer for whom the name 'bishop' is exclusively reserved. The bishop becomes the most important man in the church" (C. M. Jacobs, *The Story of the Church*, pp. 19,20). City bishops soon extended their power over rural congregations and mission churches they had assisted in planting (John L. Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 1, p. 30).

Bishops were said to be successors of the apostles and the representatives of Christ over his church. Cyprian (248-258) championed this theory. Eventually the bishops of the major centers of Christian influence were elevated above other bishops and given the title of "Metropolitan." Bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, Jerusalem and Constantinople came to hold leadership positions for the whole church. (Ibid.). After a long and bitter struggle the bishop of Rome claimed and was recognized as the universal father or pope of all the church. Boniface III was thus honored in 606 A.D.

"Destructive Heresies" in the Roles of Preachers and Elders.

Christ rebuked those who sought exalted places in his kingdom (Matt. 20:25-28). Clerical titles and exalted stations are forbidden since "all of you are brethren" and the Father in heaven is our only Master (Matt. 23:6-10). All Christians are God's priests (I Pet. 2:9). With the rise of the episcopal bishops came a distinction between clergy and laity.

"Destructive Heresies" through Church Councils.

By the middle of the second century bishops began holding conferences to set policy and resolve problems in their dominions. In 325 A.D. the first general council was held at Nicea in Bithynia. It was convened and presided over by Emperor Constantine. Heretics (Arians) were condemned and banished and a binding creedal statement was adopted (The Nicene Creed). This was the first of a continuing series of councils. These decisions were often contradictory and they generally eventuated in persecution of dissenters.

Answers to Skeptics

"The Original Bible Has Been Corrupted"

Critics charge the original books of the Bible have been changed since the books were originally written. They claim it's like the game of "telephone": one person wrote down a book and through a series of copies and scribal errors and the Bible we now have is very different from the original.

Considering only the New Testament documents, this challenge is the weakest challenge to the authority of Scripture. The evidence is so stacked against it, it

There is no major doctrine of the Bible that is put in doubt as a result of the minor differences that exist between manuscripts.

makes the other side seem dishonest whenever they level this accusation. Here's a brief overview of why the Bible is (mostly) the same Bible the original authors composed (from Probe.org)...

- The New Testament is 99.5% pure comparing almost 6000+ separate documents.
- In 20,000 lines of text, only 40 are in doubt (about 400 words).
- None of the lines in doubt affect any major doctrine.
- If all the New Testament documents disappeared, the text could almost be reassembled through quotations of the early Church Fathers.

The challenge of a corrupt Bible is so fallacious it seems anyone who brings it up is either being intentionally misleading or doesn't know what they're talking about. GotQuestions.org sums it up well...

"There is absolutely no evidence that the Bible has been revised, edited, or tampered with in any systematic manner. The sheer volume of biblical manuscripts makes it simple to recognize any attempts to distort God's Word. There is no major doctrine of the Bible that is put in doubt as a result of the minor differences that exist between manuscripts."

Hebrews 4:12-13

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Culture Shock & the Bible

SUPPLEMENT TO THE SERMON BY DAVID POSEY

There's an old saying that the *"mind can absorb only what the seat can endure."* In preparing the sermon for this morning, I was struggling with the time issue. When talking about the negative influences of culture, where do you stop? There are so many aberrations of sinful behavior today, it's hard to keep track. But before I go on, a reminder: *immorality is not new*. Paul covered a lot of this in II Timothy 3:1-5 (and see Romans 1).

But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

If you are concerned about the influence of the current culture on your children, you should be. This is the point I'll be addressing in the sermon. There is the constant drumbeat in the media, both social and mainstream, that seeks to normalize sinful behavior.

How depraved are some schools and libraries that are parading drag queens in front of kindergartners? And if you find the persistent intrusion of LGBTQ (etc) "values" — not just *rights* — into everyday life distressing, then you are not alone.

Again, it's not new. Societies have always gone downhill morally; "normal" has always been replaced by a "new normal." America has gone through several cycles of moral decay. But if anything has changed in the last 50 years, it's the almost total secularization of America. The US has always been a nation that recognizes God — at least on the surface. "Under God" is still in the pledge of allegiance; "One nation under God" still graces our courtrooms and on the walls of congress. Micah 6:8 is one of the many quotes that appears in the Library of Congress. But slowly and surely, God is being systematically replaced: if you stop worshipping God you don't stop worshipping; you just find something else to worship.

Two idols of "worship" seem to dominate the landscape today: the god of broad sexual freedom and the god of abortion. The devotion to the latter has been sparked by the recent Supreme Court decision that struck down *Roe v. Wade* and returned laws on abortion back to the states. That has sparked outrage. Some of the comments, even from people in high levels of government, turn my stomach. The governor of Michigan said: "Protecting these [abortion] freedoms is the right thing to do, and it's just good economics..." Abortion is murder but it has become a matter of "economics."

Another pervasive idol in our culture flies under the banner of LGBTQ (plus a host of other initials). The letters represent gender "fluidity," homosexuality, same-sex "marriage," transitioning from a male to female or vice-versa and any other sexually deviant behavior "they" (the

radical LGBTQ community) decide fits their version of the world. But Genesis and Jesus settled all this thousands of years ago. Genesis 1:27,

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

And Jesus, in Matthew 19:4-5,

"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?'"

Male and female; that's two "genders" not 90. And marriage is for a male and female not two males or two females.

Seems so clear. Yet, church leaders that used to trumpet the importance of Bible authority are crumbling like stale cookies. They are giving in to, accommodating these idols. Some won't speak about abortion at all. Others are preaching that we should not only accept gay members

but *affirm* their gayness. If a person is struggling with homosexuality, but not practicing it, we would accept that person with the

aim of teaching him or her the truth, just as we would do that with an alcoholic, drug user or habitual gossiper... anyone who is open to change.

But that's not what's happening. Men who used to be pretty solid on staying with the Bible are beginning to change. A well-known denominational preacher who used to *claim* to speak where the Bible speaks recently said this:

"When you anchor your authority of your teaching to the Bible, you reinforce an assumption that the potential to weaken other than establish faith." — Andy Stanley

He, and others like him, are not like a first century saint declaring, "Thus saith the Lord," but like the ancient serpent asking, "Indeed has God said?" We're seeing this more and more. Another mainline denominational preacher's response to what "the Bible says" regarding homosexuality, said *"well, that's just Paul's view."* When you jettison Paul's teaching, you are abandoning the Bible.

Interestingly, many of these teachers embrace Calvinism which teaches that everything is in God's control, *even your sins*. One Calvinist put it like this, matter-of-factly:

"Of course it means that God willed that Adam would sin, just as He willed Satan would rebel. God is the playwright, and a drama requires a protagonist and an antagonist. There could be no salvation without sin. Do you think sin took God by surprise?"

What is the effect of telling people — church-going people — that even their sins are being orchestrated by God? I wonder where that might lead? (*He said sarcastically*). We are seeing an increase in what I would call evangelistic paganism and, apparently, since "God controls everything," God himself is behind it all.

We have to live in the world, but be careful out there.