

February 19, 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

"Authentic Faith (Faithfulness)"

James 2:14-26

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

Bible Class: 5:00 PM @ the Building

"Praying the Psalms" (Auditorium)

High School Class @ 5 PM @ David & Christie Posey's home

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"

A Living, Active Faith

BY JEFF CANAVELLO

[I discovered this article written sometime before 1994. Jeff Canavello was my best friend when I lived and preached in Huntington Beach, from 1988 to 1994. Shortly after we moved here, Jeff passed away from cancer at the age of 42. The article fits with the sermon this morning].

The last half of chapter two of James is the more famous half of the chapter. We have all read it, referred to it, and quoted from it many times. The subjects of faith and works are famous because of the efforts of a large group of very religious people to separate them as necessities for salvation.

In the centuries old debate many have rightly rushed to these verses to defend God's truth. But in doing so we may have lost some of the meaning of these verses in our own lives. Please try to read verses 14-26 within the context, and without trying to mount a new argument to defeat the Baptists.

If we put these verses in context with what we have already studied, this important principle will come to life for each of us. In chapter one he told us to greet each temptation, trial, and difficult decision with the joy of knowing that we will learn and grow from the experience. Is that the way you view the tough times in your life? If not, James is saying to you that just agreeing with that principle is not enough. You must begin to put the practice of that principle into the way you live your life, or your belief in God is of no value.

Later in chapter one he said that we can depend on God to help us through our tough times. Do you depend on God? Agreement that you should depend on him is fine, but without the actual depending, it is worthless. And at the end of chapter one he tells us to be, "quick to bear, slow to speak, and slow to anger." Does that describe the way you live your life? We might all talk about how important those attributes are, but unless we adopt them into our lives, all of our talk is in vain and shows we are lacking the faith we claim to have.

Then in chapter two he starts by challenging us to look at what is really in our hearts when we show a preference for one person over another. As he goes on to tell us that the judgments we make about people are just as much a sin as murder and adultery. Is your life challenged by any of these statements?

Let's be honest with ourselves. We all agree with the principles James is teaching, but do we practice them? And, do we examine ourselves in the mirror of Christ's "Perfect Law of Liberty" to see how we are measuring up? James says in verse 21, "was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac on the altar?" What a demanding example of works to bring up!

Abraham told Isaac that God would provide the sacrifice then he raised the knife over Isaac to kill him. We all know that God stopped his hand, but the faith that this act displays is amazing. Abraham believed in God enough to know deep down inside himself, that God would provide. Belief, followed up by action. Abraham's faith was proved by his works.

Or how about Rahab! Forget all the discussions about whether or not she lied and how God reacted to it. When the moment of truth came for Rahab she didn't flinch. God's men came to her door, and she took them in. Her thoughts were not on the danger she might be in, or the consequences that might follow. She just trusted God. There was commitment in her belief.

Their faith was alive and valuable because they gave it life and value through their actions. The challenge is for us to do the same.

Self Denial

BY C.S. LEWIS

"The New Testament has lots to say about self-denial, but not about self-denial as an end in itself. We are told to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses in order that we may follow Christ; and nearly every description of what we shall ultimately find if we do so contains an appeal to desire. If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

"Twinkle, twinkle little star..."

A preacher was on a plane, making some notes for Sunday's sermon. The man next to him asked him what he was working on. "O, I'm a preacher," he said, "I'm working on my sermon for Sunday."

The man responded, "Oh, religion — I don't get all caught up in the in's and out's and complexities of religion. I like to keep it simple, you know, 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you — the Golden Rule — that's my religion.'"

"I see," said the preacher. "And what do you do?"

"I teach astronomy at the university."

"Oh Astronomy..." said the preacher. "I don't like to get all caught up in the in's and out's and complexities of astronomy... 'twinkle, twinkle little star;' that's my astronomy."

A Cogent Reason for Empty Pews

...empty pews can often be attributed to the church's preoccupation with causes other than than the Great Commission. In many denominations the pulpit has become a soapbox whose primary message is social justice, anti-capitalist ranting under the banner of liberation theology, and a relentless crusade to normalize homosexual relations. This has led to schisms in the body of Christ as politics and false doctrine conspire to supplant the clear teachings of Scripture. Churches with such an agenda have seen their flocks scatter while congregations true to the word have experienced growth in weekly attendance.

What keeps people coming to Sunday services isn't the question, "Is it true?" but the sublime power of truth proclaimed with glory and honor.

KEN POWELL, MUNSTER, IN
Things haven't changed much. This is from a Letter to the Editor in the Wall Street Journal, January 2011

There is no God?

BY JIM BISHOP

Author of The Day Lincoln was Shot, and many others

All of the wonders around us are accidental. No almighty hand made a thousand-billion stars. They made themselves.

No power keeps them on their steady course. The earth spins itself to keep the oceans from falling off toward the sun. Infants teach themselves to cry when they are hungry or hurt. A small flower invented itself so that we could extract digitalis for sick hearts.

The earth gave itself day and night, tilted itself so that we get seasons. Without the magnetic poles, man would be unable to navigate the trackless oceans of water and air, but they just grew there.

How about the sugar thermostat in the pancreas? It maintains a level of sugar in the blood sufficient for energy. Without it, all of us would fall into a coma and die.

Why does snow sit on mountain tops waiting for the warm spring sun to melt it at just the right time for the young crops in farms below to drink? A very lovely accident?

The human heart will beat for 70 or 80 years without faltering. How does it get sufficient rest between beats? A kidney will filter poison from the blood, and leave good things alone. How does it know one from another?

Who gave the human tongue flexibility to form words and a brain to understand them, but denied it to all other animals?

Who showed a womb how to take the love of two persons and keep splitting a tiny ovum until, in time, a baby would have the proper number of fingers, eyes, ears and hair in the right places, and come into the world when it is strong enough to sustain life?

There is no God?

The Bible Story in 50 Words

God made, Adam bit, Noah arked, Abraham split, Joseph ruled, Jacob fooled, Bush talked, Moses balked; Pharaoh plagued, people walked. Sea divided, tablets guided, Promise landed. Saul freaked, David peeked, prophets warned; Jesus born, God walked, love talked, anger crucified, hope died. Love rose, Spirit flamed, Word spread, God remained.