

April 16, 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” (Part II).

Young Adult Class (room 12): “A Study of Ruth, and 1 John: Trust & Love”

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today

David Posey

How to Love Your Neighbor

Romans 12:1-21

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, Part II

Room 12: Young Adults Class: “A Study of Ruth, and 1 John: Trust & Love”

Articles published in the View reflect only the thoughts and opinions of the author alone, not necessarily the editor, the elders or any member of the church at Folsom

Words on the World

“They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.” *Jesus, John 17:16*

View of the Resurrection

A stunning 66% of Americans said “biblical accounts of the physical resurrection of Jesus are completely accurate,” a notable proportion considering the ever-increasing secularization of American culture. Lifeway’s “[2022 State of Theology](#)” study also found an additional 23% disagree the biblical account unfolded and 11% stated they’re unsure.

According to Lifeway, the percentage affirming the resurrection has remained “unchanged since 2018,” and is accepted by majorities in all geographical areas of the nation.

Jesus’ resurrection is more accepted in the Midwest (70%) and South (70%). But majorities in both the West (62%) and Northeast (60%) also affirm it.

Younger Americans are the least likely age group to say they believe in a historical resurrection. Still, 58% of those 18-34 accept it as fact.

Self-identified evangelicals (90%) and Black Protestants (89%) are more likely to affirm Jesus’ resurrection than Catholics (79%) and mainline Protestants (74%).:

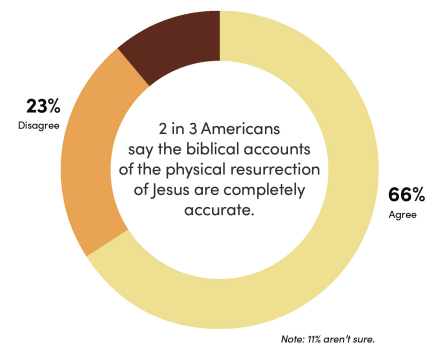
Despite accepting the biblical accounts of Jesus’ resurrection, many Americans have conflicting thoughts about the Bible and seem to see little connection between Jesus rising again and their daily lives.

In 2022, for the first time in the history of the State of Theology study, a majority of Americans (53%) say the Bible, like all sacred writings, contains helpful accounts of ancient myths but is not literally true. And 40%, the highest percentage yet, say modern science disproves the Bible.

A growing percentage, up to a high of 32%, says God is unconcerned with their day-to-day decisions. And 3 in 5 (60%) say religious belief is a matter of personal opinion, not objective truth.

Most believe Jesus’ resurrection happened as described in the Bible.

Among U.S. adults



Lifeway research

Comments

This is both hopeful and depressing. It’s encouraging that people believe the Bible account of the resurrection but discouraging that they don’t put 2 + 2 together and see the application to their lives. Besides proving that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Romans 1:4) the resurrection also is a precious source of hope. Let’s let Paul make that point:

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“O death, where is your victory?”

O death, where is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

– I Corinthians 15:50-58

We Are One: The Beauty of Community

Today, the sermon will be on the beauty of community. Paul says in Romans 12:5, “so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” In our Love Your Bible class a few weeks ago, Garrett Smith talked about all the beautiful things we see in the Bible. The Bible itself is beautiful and a church functioning as the body of Christ is supposed to function is beautiful. Our oneness sustains us. Consider the following:

A few winters ago, heavy snows hit North Carolina. Following a wet, six-inch snowfall, it was interesting to see the effect along Interstate 40. Next to the highway stood several large groves of tall, young pine trees. The branches were bowed down with the heavy snow so low that branches from one tree were often leaning against the trunk or branches of another.

Where trees stood alone, however, the effect of the heavy snow was different. The branches had become heavier and heavier, and since there were no other trees to lean against, the branches snapped. They lay on the ground, dark and alone in the cold snow.

When the storms of life hit, we need to be standing close to other Christians. The closer we stand, the more we will be able to hold up. — CARL G. CONNER, Elizabeth City, North Carolina

Excerpt from Screwtape Letter #2 by C.S. Lewis

[If you are not familiar with the “Screwtape Letters” it is a satirical novel written by C.S. Lewis, first published in 1942. The book is comprised of a series of letters written by a senior demon named Screwtape to his nephew, Wormwood, who is a junior tempter responsible for leading a human being known as “the patient” astray and away from their faith. The “patient” is a Christian, the “Enemy” is Jesus and Our Father Below is Satan.]

When he goes inside [the church building], he sees the local grocer with rather an oily expression on his face bustling up to offer him one shiny little book containing a liturgy which neither of them understands, and one shabby little book containing corrupt texts of a number of religious lyrics, mostly bad, and in very small print. When he gets to his pew and looks round him he sees just that selection of his neighbors whom he has hitherto avoided. You want to lean pretty heavily on those neighbors. Make his mind flit to and fro between an expression like “the body of Christ” and the actual faces in the next pew. It matters very little, of course, what kind of people that next pew really contains. You may know one of them to be a great warrior on the Enemy’s side. No matter. Your patient, thanks to Our Father Below, is a fool. Provided that any of those neighbors sing out of tune, or have boots that squeak, or double chins, or odd clothes, the patient will quite easily believe that their religion must therefore be somehow ridiculous. . .

. . . I have been writing hitherto on the assumption that the people in the next pew afford no rational ground for disappointment. Of course, if they do – if the patient knows that the woman with the absurd hat is a fanatical bridge player or the man with squeaky boots a miser and an extortioner – then your task is so much the easier. All you then have to do is to keep out of his mind the question “If I, being what I am, can consider that I am in some sense a Christian, why should the different vices of those people in the next pew prove that their religion is mere hypocrisy and convention?” You may ask whether it is possible to keep such an obvious thought from occurring even to a human mind. It is. Wormwood, it is! Handle him properly and it simply won’t come into his head. He has not been anything like long enough with the Enemy to have any real humility yet. What he says, even on his knees, about his own sinfulness is all parrot talk. At bottom, he still believes he has run up a very favorable credit balance in the Enemy’s ledger by allowing himself to be converted, and thinks that he is showing great humility and condescension in going to church with

these “smug,” commonplace neighbors at all. Keep him in that state of mind as long as you can.

Comment

Lewis’ point is that Satan’s view of the average Christian is that he is naive, not very Christ-like and is “in the church” to chalk up some brownie points with God and render judgments on those in attendance. This is Lewis’ roundabout way of teaching how important our relationship with each other really is; the church is the company of the redeemed. When the spiritual powers see the church in all her beauty, it is amazed — Ephesians 3:10, “...through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.” Listen to Screwtape’s approach:

One of our great allies at present is the Church itself. Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean the Church as we see her spread out through all time and space and rooted in eternity, terrible as an army with banners. That, I confess, is a spectacle which makes our boldest tempters uneasy. But fortunately it is quite invisible to these humans.

His point, of course, is that while he Screwtape, is aware and even afraid of the beauty and majesty of the church he is counting on Brother Average Christian to be blind to it. He instructs Wormwood to tempt us to more judgmental than merciful and to be proud of our “progress” instead of dependent on the “Enemy.”

Here are the facts: the church is the Lord’s company of committed people: it’s a spiritual army; it’s a school, a body of people that Christ has purchased with own His blood and of which he is the Head. It’s something else, something we all understand. Paul, in I Timothy 3:15, calls the church “the household of God.” Think about what that means — household = *family*. *This is family!*

Elders must be good managers of their household because this is more than an analogy or metaphor: there is a genuine link between how we function in our own physical families and how we function in this family called the church. Likewise, elders are to be hospitable, not because people need somewhere to eat or to have some company, but to get to know the people so they can lead them adequately.

To be a member of the church is not an individual thing; it means we’ve chosen to be united with others in a common faith (II Peter 1:1) for a common cause, serving the one One. There’s something precious about this commitment that we have made to each other. It’s much more than being on the church directory or occupying a pew two or three hours a week. It’s a commitment of love, faith and honor; a commitment to other people, to serve their best interests, to set your own priorities and desires aside in favor of helping your friends John 15:13. When a church the functions like that, Satan has no claim on it.

I’ll have more to say about the application of this in the sermon this morning.

DAVID POSEY